

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, MAY 17, 2001**

Vice President O'Neill convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:12 p.m. in the Auditorium of Colonial Elementary School on May 17, 2001.

Board Members Present: Robert O'Neill, Robert Carroll, Gary Johnson, Stuart Kessler, Hugh Lipshutz, Thomas Marchozzi, Jack Pinheiro and Thomas Yunker.

Board Members Absent: Marc Orlow.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; R. Scott Klinger, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administrative Services and Personnel; Patricia Iannelli, Director of Educational Services; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; Judi Lipson, Principal, Plymouth Elementary School; William Wells, Colonial Foundation of Educational Innovation; Jill Hallman, student grant recipient; Allan Dovberg, President, Colonial United Taxpayers; members of the Colonial Education Association; sponsors, coaches, family and friends of students receiving recognition; local residents, and local media representatives.

Mr. O'Neill led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session to discuss legal and personnel matters from 6:45 until 8:30 p.m. at the work session the preceding Monday and from 7:30 p.m. to just before the general meeting then in progress. Mr. O'Neill then introduced coaches and sponsors of student groups who in turn introduced students who were given certificates of achievement in sports, music and the arts. A complete list of those offering and receiving recognition is attached to these minutes as Attachment #1.

Mr. O'Neill advised that he was not participating in the negotiations process with the CEA because he had a son who was a teacher in the district. He recognized Mr. Pinheiro who read a prepared statement indicating that the Board continued to be ready to meet with the CEA and discuss all aspects of the collective bargaining agreement but that the union was unwilling to do so. The complete text of Mr. Pinheiro's statement is attached to these minutes as Attachment #2.

Minutes: Mr. O'Neill asked for a Board motion on the minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting of 04/11/01, the Work Session of 04/16/01, the General Meeting of 04/19/01, and the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting of 04/24/01 the Personnel Committee Meeting of 05/01/01, and the Curriculum Committee Meetings of 05/01/01 and 05/07/01, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #5, #39 and #40. Mr. Kessler asked Mr. Bell about the changes that had been made in the

minutes since the work session the previous Monday. Mr. Bell advised that the change that Mr. Pinheiro had requested had been made and that a spelling error had been corrected. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Pinheiro seconded a motion to approve the minutes as amended. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. O'Neill requested a motion on the financial reports which were listed as Enclosures #6 through #17. The reports included the Budget Transfer Reports for 05/01; the Bond Fund Report, Capital Projects Reports, and Capital Reserve Fund Reports for the month ending 04/30/01; General Fund and Program Bills; the Food Service Report for 03/01; the Outstanding Investment Report, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes, Real Estate Escrow Report and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the month ending 04/30/01; the undated Budget Analysis; and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 04/30/01. Mr. Pinheiro asked if the changes to Enclosure #7 included the change orders affecting the WFIL Tract. Mr. Bickleman advised that they did not. Mr. Marchozzi moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the financial reports as amended. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Staff Report: Judi Lipson, Principal of Plymouth Elementary School, and some of her professional staff gave a Power Point presentation on Plymouth Pride Day. That day is an opportunity for students to showcase their work throughout the year in academics, music and art. Each year, over time, students develop portfolios that document their personal growth and set goals for their future achievement. Toward the end of each year on Pride Day, they share their professionally published books with family and friends. A third grade musical performance and an art festival are also part of the Pride Day celebration.

Public Comments on the Agenda: Mr. O'Neill asked if there were any public comments on agenda items. Don Scholl, a science teacher at the high school, rose to address the Board but his comments were not on items on the agenda. Mr. O'Neill ruled him out of order. Mr. Sultanik advised Mr. O'Neill to recess the meeting when Mr. Scholl declined to leave the podium. Mr. O'Neill announced a brief recess. Mr. Scholl left the podium, and Mr. O'Neill reconvened the meeting. The recess lasted about three minutes. Board members, the solicitor and administrative staff remained in place during the brief recess.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: Mr. O'Neill recognized Bill Wells, President of the Executive Committee of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation. He, in turn, presented Jill Hallman, mini-grant recipient and student at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, to the Board. Ms. Hallman gave a brief presentation on her grant to establish a high school chapter of Habitat for Humanity and briefly described how the grant was used to get the chapter up and running and the work that students in

the chapter were doing in the local community. Board members joined Mr. Wells in commending Ms. Hallman and a growing number of her classmates joining Habitat for Humanity for their fine work.

Mr. O'Neill noted that correspondence from Joseph C. Oravitz, Executive Director of PSBA, concerning PSBA dues. He briefly recapped Board discussion on the subject of PSBA dues and reported that the Board had deferred action on them until its June meeting after PSBA passed its annual budget.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter briefly reviewed his comments at the work session the preceding Monday on his Superintendent's Report, as shown in Enclosures #19 through #21. He noted the recommendation to fill the position of assistant principal at the middle school and fill summer school positions in the "Read to Succeed" program at Conshohocken Elementary School. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the report as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Student Board Representatives Report: Ms. Fabrizio provided an update on senior class activities, including the prom, AP exams, and the class trip to Florida. She also highlighted the junior prom, the spring concert and musical, the academic awards dinner, the exchange club dinner, and the spring arts show. She noted that the meeting would be her last and thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve. Ms. Kurtz reported on the spring sports programs, the annual foundation walk-a-thon, survivor's weekend, class elections and graduation projects. She also paid tribute to Ms. Fabrizio for her work as a student representative to the School Board. Mr. O'Neill thanked Ms. Fabrizio on behalf of the Board for her fine work over the preceding two years and presented her with a plaque in appreciation for her efforts.

New Business: Mr. O'Neill asked for a motion to re-elect Mr. Bickleman as Board Treasurer of 2001-02 at an annual rate of \$6,900.00. Mr. Johnson so moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill noted that Barbacane, Thornton & Co., the firm that had been the district's independent auditor for a number of years, had submitted a new proposal to continue to perform the district's audit for the next three years at annual fees of \$12,500.00, \$13,000.00 and \$13,500.00, respectively. See Enclosure #22. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the election of Barbacane, Thornton & Co. as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill asked for a motion to reappoint Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Esq. of Fox, Rothschild, O'Brien & Frankel as solicitor at a retainer to \$19,500.00 plus out-of-pocket expenses and litigation rates of \$140.00 per hour, effective July 1, 2001. Mr.

Kessler so moved and Mr. Yunker seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill requested a motion to name First Union the depository for district funds during the 2001-02 school year. Mr. Johnson so moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill requested a motion to approve the list of investment banks, trusts, and savings and loans in Enclosure #24. Mr. Carroll so moved and Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill recognized Mr. Pinheiro who reported that the Board had interviewed two very qualified candidates for the position of Student Board Representative and had found it difficult to choose between them. He made a motion to appoint Colleen Dougherty as Student Board Representative and Jeff Borkowski as alternate. Mr. Kessler seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill asked for a motion to reappoint Mr. Bell to the position of Board Secretary for a four-year term starting 07/01/01 at an annual rate of \$5,520.00 for the 2001-02 school year. Mr. Johnson so moved and Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill had Mr. Shipman briefly summarize his earlier remarks on the 2001-02 MCIU Special Education Services Agreement. See Enclosure #25. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill sought a motion to approve the annual Allocation for Federal Programs shown in Enclosure #26. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the allocation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill sought Board input on the list of textbooks contained in Enclosure #27. Mr. Yunker questioned the publication dates of several science books and a social studies text. He noted that they had been printed in earlier years and wondered why the district was not purchasing up-to-date editions. Dr. Cotter suggested that the editions being recommended might indeed be the most current ones available but noted that Ms. Iannelli could seek confirmation. Mr. Yunker suggested deferring the vote on those texts until a future meeting. Dr. Cotter indicated that there would be no problem in deferring the vote on the texts in question until the June meeting but advised that a decision should be made at that time so that the books would be on hand at the start of the new school year. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve all of the textbooks on the list,

except the texts with publication dates earlier than 2001. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill referred the Board to the proposed increases in some facility rental fees in the coming school year. Mr. Bell shared information on the outside organizations using the stadium and football field the previous fall. He also responded to questions on the use of the field and the ability of the district to recoup sufficient funds to maintain the fields under such heavy use. Mr. Bell felt that the rental and custodial/grounds fees covered the additional cost of caring for the fields above and beyond what the district invested in the fields for its own use. In response to additional queries from board members, he indicated that he was not opposed to limiting future use of the stadium or any other district facility provided that the district gave advance notice to its long-term users of the change in its rental practices. Mr. Bell clarified for Mr. Yunker the actual increase being proposed. Mr. Marchozzi asked the Buildings & Grounds Committee to look into the issue further. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the increases proposed in Enclosure #28. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill sought Board action on a joint purchasing agreement with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and a resolution to participate in Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit's PEPPM Bid Plans. See Enclosures #29 and #30. Mr. Kessler moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the agreement and resolution. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill sought Board approval of five bids for instructional supplies and one bid for janitorial supplies, as shown in Enclosures #31 and #32. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the bids. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. O'Neill requested Board action on a request to modify the approved schedule of School Board meetings to hold the September work session on September 13, 2001 rather than on September 17, 2001 because of a conflict with a religious holiday. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit Board: Mr. Pinheiro reminded board members to return their ballots for members of the I. U. Board to the I. U. by the end of the month. He also provided information on the extent to which the I. U. supported non-public schools – 169 schools with approximately 13,330 students out of 34,000 students receiving I. U. services.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported a collective bargaining agreement with the teacher through the year 2004 and support service personnel through 2005. He also announced the re-election of Mr. Yunker as Treasurer.

Personnel: Mr. Pinheiro sought Board approval of the 403(B) retirement plan for the CASEA group (Enclosure #33) and a \$7,600.00 stipend for the Director of Technology for his ongoing work on securing federal grant funds. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the retirement plan and the stipend. On a roll call vote, all except Mr. Kessler voted in favor. Mr. Kessler voted in opposition. The motion was carried. Mr. Pinheiro announced that the committee had interviewed candidates for the position of assistant principal at the middle school. He also advised that the Board would be evaluating the superintendent on May 30th.

Finance: No report.

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Yunker advised that the committee had met twice since the last general meeting of the Board. He reported that the committee had looked at math grouping at Colonial Elementary School, including a proposal for the coming school year and some added in-service work. He also indicated that the committee had discussed summer reading in grades 4 through 6, LaSalle math, primarily at the secondary level, reading K-3, the four summer classes of SAT preparation, and the summer music program and how it relates to its target audience.

Buildings & Grounds/Transportation: Mr. Kessler reported that the committee had looked into the re-paving of Colonial Drive from Flourtown Road to Germantown Pike, on both sides of the new work being done as part of the development of the WFIL Tract. He explained the options to re-build or re-coat and the committee recommendation to rebuild only where the road had failed and to re-coat elsewhere. He also suggested curb work only where the curbing had been damaged. Mr. Kessler noted that the data being received appeared competitive but suggested that the Board defer action on the work until a final survey of the work and an updated estimate of costs were available. The Board reached a consensus on that approach.

Mr. Kessler raised the issue of two change orders for work on the WFIL Tract. He asked the Board to ratify the expenditure of \$20,554.00 for a change order to remove unsuitable soils. Board members briefly discussed the work. Some felt that the contractor should have known about the problem. Others indicated that contractors would not have known about debris that had been buried. Mr. Kessler moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to ratify the expenditure to cover the change order. On a roll call vote, all but Mr. Yunker and Mr. Carroll voted in favor. Mr. Yunker and Mr. Carroll voted in opposition. The motion was carried. Mr. Kessler briefly raised the issue of changes that Whitmarsh Township had required to the storm water retention basin that resulted in a change order of over

\$80,000.00. Dr. Lipshutz expressed frustration that a change of that magnitude may have benefited a bureaucrat but did not benefit the taxpayers of the district. The consensus of the Board was to send the change order back to the Buildings & Grounds Committee and administration for further review.

Community Relations: No report.

Legislative: Mr. Carroll reported on bills in the House increasing the multiplier for retirement, defibrillators in schools, independent schools within public school districts, teacher assessment programs and charter schools.

Other Comments: Mr. Pinheiro raised a question about interest on student activity accounts. Mr. Bickleman reported that interest earned was run through the general fund and not the individual accounts. He also reported that funds from prior years should be used by the end of the current year. Mr. Carroll had a question about the fund balance for the DECA club. Mr. Bickleman reported that the club had a positive fund balance.

Public Comments: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. O'Neill adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**James M. Bell
Board Secretary**