

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, DECEMBER 3, 2001**

President Orlow convened the special meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:37 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on December 3, 2001.

**Board Members Present:** Marc Orlow, Robert Carroll, Thomas Davis, Valerie Flounders, Gary Johnson, Hugh Lipshutz, Thomas Marchozzi, and Thomas Yunker (arrived late).

**Board Members Absent:** None.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; R. Scott Klinger, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administrative Services and Personnel; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Director if Educational Services – Primary; Patricia A. Iannelli, Director of Educational Services - Secondary; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Wendy Rothstein, Esq., for the Solicitor; Judge Bernard Moore; Ron DeRosa; Allan Dovberg, President, Colonial United Taxpayers; Penny Levin; Cynthia Lipshutz; and Ken Parsons.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow asked if there were any questions or corrections on the minutes for the work session of 11/12/01, the Community Relations Committee Meeting of 11/13/01, the general meeting of 11/15/01 or the Personnel Committee Meeting of 11/19/01, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #4. There were none. Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. On a roll call vote, all in favor. The motion was carried.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow reported that monthly financial reports were current through 10/31/01 and that reports for the month of November would be provided for Board action at its January 2002 meeting. He also noted that administration was requesting authorization to pay November bills in December. Dr. Lipshutz so moved and Mr. Carroll seconded his motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the annual audit report was on the agenda for Board action. Mr. Marchozzi briefly reviewed the audit report. He noted that the report was a good one and that there were just a few minor issues that Mr. Bickleman had looked into. Mr. Marchozzi complemented Mr. Bickleman on his work. Mr. Marchozzi moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to accept the audit report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** None.

Mr. Yunker arrived at the meeting.

**Staff Report:** Dr. Cotter reported that he had given all board members binders outlining the district's "Above and Beyond" program. He briefly highlighted the various sections of the report and noted that they were the district's road to the future. At Mr. Orlow's request, Dr. Cotter also outlined the collaborative process through which building and district teams mapped out the goals and pathways for the coming years.

**Old Business:** None.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow noted, but the Board took no action on, correspondence from Dona L. Kraus, a district resident, commenting on the district holding classes on national holidays but exempting religious holidays. See Enclosure #5. Mr. Orlow asked about the potential for absenteeism if classes had been held on the religious holidays in question. Dr. Cotter acknowledged the possibility but noted that the calendar had been designed to minimize such problems. Dr. Lipshutz noted that only one religious holiday was a factor in the calendar since the other had come during the strike. He expressed the belief that staffing could have been an issue if classes had been held on that holiday. He felt that the district and the Board had done their best in a difficult year.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter briefly outlined his report. He noted that the personnel report contained the retirement of Ms. Romano as Principal of Colonial Middle School and the appointment of Ms. Newman as her replacement. He advised that he had known both individuals for many years and praised them for their talents and accomplishments. He also recapped the process that the district had used in selecting Mr. Pinheiro as the candidate to replace Mrs. Johns as Director of Transportation. Dr. Cotter also noted the additions to the substitute list and the recommendation on the varsity baseball coach at the high school. Mr. Yunker suggested that the Board first take action on all parts of the superintendent's report except the appointment of the new Director of Transportation and then deal with that appointment in a separate motion. The Board also reached a consensus on deferring action on a request for professional leave. Mr. Marchozzi advised that he would abstain on the vote because he had a family member listed for promotion. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Marchozzi seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Personnel Report, additions to the Substitute List and extra-duty/extra-pay assignment as shown in Enclosures #6 through #8, except for action on the position of Director of Transportation and the request for professional leave. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Board members discussed the recommendation to appoint Mr. Pinheiro to the position of Director of Transportation and the possibility of offering a temporary position while another search was conducted. Mr. Orlow asked if the position were a professional one covered by certain rights under the school code. Mr. Klinger indicated that it was not a professional position under the code. Ms. Rothstein reported that an employee in the position would have certain rights but that the Board could appoint an individual for a specific period of time. The Board heard a couple of possible scenarios. Mr. Klinger suggested that the Board fill the position on an acting or interim basis. Dr. Lipshutz asked

about the value of re-interviewing and having an ad hoc committee that included community members as part of the interview team. Dr. Cotter spoke in favor of having community members involved in the process of recommending qualified candidates. Mr. Davis asked about the possibility of Mrs. Johns staying on until the process was complete and learned that she was not interested in doing so. Mr. Carroll summarized earlier meetings when board members discussed candidates for the vacancy and suggested that the Board should have input on the community members asked to be on an interview committee. Mr. Orlow commented on the need for the Board to act on the final decision in public in accordance with the Sunshine Law. Mr. Marchozzi advised the Board to avoid any appearance of impropriety and allow Dr. Cotter to determine the composition of the ad hoc committee. After some discussion of the appropriate length of any interim appointment, Mr. Klinger suggested that the Board authorize an interim appointment through March 31, 2002. He noted that that would allow sufficient time for the search and allow the interim appointee time to demonstrate performance in the position. Mr. Yunker moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to approve the interim appointment of Mr. Pinheiro to the position of Director of Transportation through March 31, 2002. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Student Board Representatives Report:** No report.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the School Directors Meeting Schedule for calendar year 2002. He noted that the meeting time for regular Board meetings would be 8:00 p.m. and that the times for public work sessions that preceded the regular meetings and any required executive sessions would be listed as 8:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. respectively. Dr. Cotter walked the Board through the meeting schedule. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the meeting schedule. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

<b><u>Board Work Session</u></b>	<b><u>Regular Board Meeting</u></b>
8:30 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Mon., 01/14/02	Thurs., 01/17/02
*Tues., 02/19/02	Thurs., 02/21/02
Mon., 03/18/02	Thurs., 03/21/02
Mon., 04/15/02	Thurs., 04/18/02
Mon., 05/13/02	Thurs., 05/16/02
Mon., 06/17/02	Thurs., 06/20/02
Mon., 07/15/02	Thurs., 07/18/02
Mon., 08/12/02	Thurs., 08/15/02
*Tues., 09/17/02	Thurs., 09/19/02
Mon., 10/14/02	Thurs., 10/17/02
Mon., 11/18/02	Thurs., 11/21/02
*Mon., 12/02/02**	

\*Denotes deviation from third Thursday or prior Monday.

**\*\*Board Reorganization Meeting followed by Special Business Meeting.**

**Appointment of Representatives:** Mr. Orlow explained the composition of the CMCAVTS Joint Operating Committee and announced that the district would be filling one seat on the committee, the three-year term of the seat occupied by former board member, Robert O'Neill. Mr. Johnson nominated Mr. Davis to a three-year term and Mr. Marchozzi seconded the nomination. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow outlined the duties of the legislative chairperson representing the district at county level meetings and noted that Mr. Carroll had held the position the preceding year. Mr. Johnson nominated Mr. Carroll to the position for the year 2002 and Dr. Lipshutz seconded the nomination. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow outlined the duties of the PSBA Representative who attends a minimum of two regional cabinet meetings annually to promote communication between the district and PSBA. He noted that the duties of the Employee Relations Contact with the PSBA seemed related and suggested that the Board appoint one individual to cover both positions. Mr. Yunker nominated and Mr. Johnson seconded Mr. Carroll for the combined appointment. Mr. Carroll declined to serve. Ms. Flounders noted that the Board would be filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Kessler and suggested that the Board defer action on this appointment until after that vacancy had been filled. It was the consensus of the Board to follow the suggestion and defer action.

**Solicitor's Report:** Ms. Rothstein recommended that the Board approve her recommendations to appeal assessments on five of the six properties discussed during executive session earlier that evening. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Marchozzi seconded a motion to appeal the five assessments. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit Board: No report.

CMCAVTS: No report.

Personnel: No report.

Finance: Mr. Marchozzi moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to appoint Saul Ewing as bond counsel at a cost of \$11,000 plus out-of-pocket expenses. Mr. Yunker questioned the need to appoint counsel when the Board had yet to receive a final list of projects to be funded by the bond. Mr. Marchozzi noted that the Board had been discussing the subject and that the motion merely authorized the hiring if counsel was needed. On a roll call vote, all except Mr. Yunker and Mr. Carroll voted in favor. Mr. Yunker and Mr. Carroll voted in opposition. The motion was carried.

Curriculum and Program: No report.

**Buildings and Grounds/Transportation:** Mr. Johnson moved a motion to authorize the hiring of substitute Facilities Engineer from Gilbane at a cost of \$3,160 per week while the district conducted a search for a replacement for Mr. Morcombe. Board members questioned the cost and the need. Mr. Bell advised that he had followed direction to contact Gilbane for a proposal to provide the coverage. He then outlined the need for a technical person who could write bid specifications for upcoming projects and estimate project costs as the district identified facility projects for a future bond issue and for the operating budget for the coming year. Mr. Bell also indicated that, while he could make and monitor staff assignment to routine maintenance work, it would be advisable to have a technical person on board to confirm that the work was being performed according to industry norms. The motion failed for the lack of a second. The consensus of the Board was to direct Mr. Bell to place a hold on work by Gilbane until options other than a full-time substitute could be explored. Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Bell to contact Gilbane and explore options that would involve less substitute time and/or lower costs.

**Community Relations:** Mr. Johnson reminded the Board and the community of the previously advertised town meeting coming up the following evening.

**Legislative:** No report.

**Public Comments:** Mr. Dovberg advised that he knew of two individuals that felt would be qualified to serve as a Facilities Engineer and offered to share that information with the Board. He went on to note the resignation of Mr. Kessler and to praise him for his long-term service to the community as a member and former president of the School Board. Mr. Dovberg also thanked the Board for acting responsibly on filling the vacancy for a Director of Transportation. He suggested that it would be a good idea to include local residents who did not currently have children in the schools on ad hoc committee that would be interviewing candidates. Mr. Dovberg announced that he might be moving out of the area but would continue his interest in the district as president of the local taxpayers group.

Mr. Orlow sought guidance from the Board on filling the vacancy created by Mr. Kessler's resignation. After some discussion, the consensus of the Board was to advertise the vacancy in the local media, on the district website and on CITV and to issue a press release on the subject. The Board agreed to set the application deadline for 12/14/01 and to take action to fill the position by 12/21/01.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell  
Board Secretary