

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, FEBRUARY 21, 2002**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on February 21, 2002.

Board Members Present: Marc Orlow, Robert Carroll, Thomas Davis, Valerie Flounders, Gary Johnson, Hugh Lipshutz, and Susan Moore.

Board Members Absent: Thomas Marchozzi and Thomas Yunker.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; R. Scott Klinger, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administrative Services and Personnel; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Director of Educational Services – Elementary; Patricia Iannelli, Director of Educational Services - Secondary; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph Bickleman, Director of Financial Services/ Treasurer; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Jeffrey Sultanik, Solicitor; Michael Fazzini, Student Board Representative; Sue Castle for the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation; Stuart Kessler; Michelle Mowad; Paolo and Donatella Pilleggi; Jack Pinheiro; Umberto and Donatella Santore; and Mary Theiss.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance. He also advised that the Board had met in executive session immediately preceding the meeting to discuss legal matters and personnel issues.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the minutes of the Work Session of 01/14/02, the General Meeting of 01/17/02, the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 01/23/02, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 01/30/02, the Special Meeting of 02/04/02, The Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 02/13/02 and the Special Meeting of 02/14/02, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #5, #36 and #37. Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented in the agenda. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the financial reports that were listed as Enclosures #6 through #17 of the agenda. They included Budget Transfers, the Bond Fund Report, Capital Projects Report, General Fund and Program Bills; and Capital Reserve Fund Report for the months ending 01/31/02; the Food Service Report for the month ending 11/30/01; Outstanding Investment Report, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes, Real Estate Escrow Report and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the months ending 01/31/02; the Budget Analysis/Deficit Status Reports through 01/31/02; and the Treasurer's Report for

the month ending 01/31/02. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the reports as presented in the agenda. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: Mr. Pinheiro expressed his views of the position of Director of Transportation, his temporary assignment to that position and the Board's consideration of candidates to fill the position on a permanent basis. He felt that board members should consider his qualifications for the job and his integrity. He stated that, despite some comments by a local resident, he had done nothing illegal or unethical in applying for the position. He outlined how, in fact, he had proceeded in accordance with state code requirements. Mr. Pinheiro believed that his honesty and integrity were above reproach and that he should not be removed from a position in which he had performed well over a number of months. Mr. Orlow summarized the process that the Board had followed in interviewing potential candidates for the position and reported the Board's interest in completing the process with credibility and integrity. He indicated that board members had given an incredible amount of thought to filling the position with the best candidate.

Mr. Santore asked the Board to deny the request of the developers of the Manderachi Tract in Plymouth Township for an easement to accept storm water run-off from the property into the storm water management system of Colonial Middle School. He expressed concern about water damage to the school and the possibility of increased mosquito activity in the area of a proposed storm water retention basin. Mr. Santore also spoke against possible noise and odor problems from a proposed sewage pumping station. Mr. Orlow reported that the district was aware of the proposed development, that district officials had met with the township and developer and that the district shared some of the local homeowner's concerns. Mr. Orlow also indicated that the district would be represented at the Planning Commission Meeting on 02/27/02 and had no intent of granting a storm water easement to the developer. He noted, however, that the developer might find a way to meet township requirements without the easement.

Mr. Kessler questioned the accuracy of the minutes of the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 02/13/02. He believed that there was no consensus on allowing Mr. Pinheiro to continue to discussing an extension of the transportation contract with Romano's while he was working on an RFP to see what other companies might be able to offer. He also stated that Dr. Cotter had misled the committee when he reported that the solicitor's retainer covered the cost of legal representation at meetings on the development of the Manderachi Tract. He also believed that the committee had directed that the roof at Plymouth Elementary School be removed from the list of summer projects and that Mr. Bell had failed to do so. Several board members in attendance at the committee meeting spoke up to say that the minutes accurately reflected what had been said and done at the meeting and did not need to be amended. Mr. Orlow sought and received confirmation that Mr. Bell had accurately recorded what Dr. Cotter had reported

about legal representation. Mr. Sultanik noted that what had been reported was in error and that the district would be billed separately for the legal representation at meetings on the Manderachi Tract. Mr. Orlow advised that the minutes of the meeting then underway would serve to correct the misstatement and document the correct information on the legal fees.

Staff Report: Dr. Cotter reported on the current status of the district's *Above and Beyond* program and highlighted the eight key components of the program and the progress being made in many areas. The complete text of his presentation is attached to these minutes as Attachment #1.

Old Business: Mr. Orlow reviewed the history of Board review of a number of calendar options and Board instructions given to administration. He stated his belief that current discussion would center on whether there would be 184 or 185 student days in the calendar. Dr. Cotter reported that the CEA was in favor of an option with 184 days. He advised that administration was comfortable with either option and could work with a 185-day calendar and an early dismissal on 01/24/03. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve calendar option 3D with an early dismissal day on 01/24/03. Dr. Lipshutz raised some concerns about snow make-up days. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the listing in the draft was accurate. Dr. Lipshutz wanted to grant Dr. Cotter the flexibility to change the planned early dismissal days as he felt necessary to meet educational goals. Mr. Johnson and Mrs. Moore agreed to amend their motion to permit that flexibility. On a roll call vote, all but Mr. Carroll and Ms. Flounders voted in favor. Mr. Carroll and Ms. Flounders voted in opposition. The motion was carried. See Attachment #2.

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow called upon Ms. Castle of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation to present a mini-grant proposal for Board consideration. See Enclosure #19 of the agenda. Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the grant. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Santoro presented his perspective on the development of the Manderachi Tract during public comment earlier on the agenda.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter briefly recapped his comments on his Superintendent's Report, as shown in Enclosures #20 through #22 of the agenda. He noted that the recommendation to fill the position of Transportation Supervisor on a permanent basis and added a recommendation to fill the slot of Facilities Manager as well. Dr. Cotter stated that Terry Yemm was being recommended as Facilities Manager effective 03/25/02 at a salary of \$79,500. He advised that the recommendation followed a thorough search and interview process culminating with an interview by the Personnel Committee and a consensus of those participating in the interview that Mr. Yemm was the best candidate for the

vacancy. Mr. Orlow suggested that the Board take action on appointment of the Facilities Manager and Director of Transportation separately from the basic Superintendent's Report. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report minus the two appointments. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mr. Carroll moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to approve the appointment of James Willgruber as Director of Transportation as outlined in the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all except Ms. Flounders voted in favor. Ms. Flounders voted in opposition. The motion was carried. Mr. Carroll moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to appoint Mr. Yemm as Facilities Manager as discussed earlier in the meeting. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Board Student Representatives Report: Mr. Fazzini highlighted recent activities at the high school, including the Mr. PW pageant, the band and football banquets, finals, the SADD volleyball tournament, the student council dance and the PWHS town meeting. He reported that the town meeting went well and that the students liked it and hoped for more meetings in the future. He also indicated that the students would like more ways to communicate with Administration and the Board and that student council would be reactivating the suggestion box. Mr. Fazzini went on to highlight the standardized math exams, the PSSA writing assessment, Valentine's Day activities, the progress of the boys' basketball team in playoffs, the wrestling team's involvement in sectionals and regionals, the swim team's performance at district's, the Montgomery Foreign Language exam, the second semester open house and the upcoming spring musical, *Grease*.

New Business: Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on a recommendation to support the Summer Consortium of the Arts with funding in the amount of \$6,300.00. He noted that board members had discussed the program at the work session earlier in the week. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the funding. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a recommendation to extend Montgomery Early Learning Center's lease of space in Colonial Elementary School for its day-care program for six months. He noted that the recommendation had been discussed at the work session. See Enclosure #23. Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to approve the extension. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a Certified Corporate Resolution for Depository because of administrative changes at the middle school. See Enclosure #24 and work session comments. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the resolution. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on a recommendation from the middle school to use state performance-based grant funding to support several conference requests. See Enclosure #25 and the minutes of the work session earlier in the week. Dr. Cotter indicated that the cost to the district for substitutes to cover the classes of those who attended the conferences would be approximately \$3,200. He also confirmed that grant funds could be used to cover these costs, if necessary, but using the funds in that fashion would reduce the number of staff who could attend the staff development conferences. He also noted that grant funding was to be used for efforts above and beyond what the district normally funded. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to authorize attendance at the conferences. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that several trip requests were on the agenda for Board action as Enclosures #27 through #29. He noted that the Board had discussed the trips at the work session and asked for Board action on all of the proposed trips. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Ms. Flounders seconded a motion to approve trips to state and national DECA competition from 03/06/02 through 03/08/02 and from 04/19/02 through 04/24/02, respectively, Adventure based weekend from 05/17/02 through 05/19/02, and a regional choral festival from 03/21/02 to 03/23/02. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow advised that the Board would be deferring action on a resolution to proceed with the preparation of documents for a 2002 bond issuance. The Finance Committee was to look at the resolution and report back to the Board at its March meeting.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Committee Reports: Mrs. Moore reported that the I.U. Board had met in January and was working on a budget for the coming year. She advised that the Board would be looking for an increase in district contributions for the first time in eight years. She indicated that changes in retirement costs and decreases in funding were the two big factors driving the need for increased contributions of approximately 2.85 percent. The Board was notified of its ability to nominate an I.U. board member. Mr. Orlow asked if Mrs. Moore was interested in a nomination and she indicated that she would like to have time to think about it.

CMCAVTS: No report.

Personnel: No report.

Finance: No report.

Curriculum and Program: Dr. Lipshutz reported that the committee had met on Monday to discuss the math initiatives being piloted, including the LaSalle Math

Program. The committee also reviewed that the status and plans for in-service programs and ways to better secure community input on curriculum issues.

Buildings and Grounds/Transportation: Ms. Flounders reported that the committee had reviewed bond issue projects that administration would like to schedule for the coming summer and provided direction on which projects to pursue. She also indicated that the committee would be looking at operating budget projects for the coming summer at its next meeting on 03/04/02.

Community Relations: Mr. Johnson reported that the committee had met to discuss the quality and type of programming on CITV. He noted that a video interview of Dr. Cotter and Mr. Bell on the district facilities issues was currently airing.

Legislative: Mr. Carroll provided an update on PSBA issues, including retirement funding, special education budgets, and cyber and charter schools. He noted that districts paid 90% of the costs of charter schools. Dr. Cotter reported that a survey on charter schools was included in Board Notes. Mr. Carroll reported that PSBA had asked districts to send letters to legislators on the cost of regular education, special education and charter schools and noted that the I.U. would be forwarding forms for that purpose. Mr. Sultanik reported that the recent changes in the retirement program would result in huge increases in costs for districts for several years to come. Mr. Carroll wondered if districts should ask the state to rescind the changes to the program. Mr. Sultanik thought that the state would be unlikely to take that step for actuarial reasons.

Public Comments: None.

Announcements: Mr. Orlow advised that the Board had met in executive session at 6:00 p.m. that evening to discuss personnel matters and would meet again briefly after the meeting to discuss personnel and legal issues.

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