

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, AUGUST 14, 2006.**

President Orlow convened the work session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:37 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on August 14, 2006.

Board Members Present: Marc Orlow, Gary Johnson, Tom Davis, William Ryan, Pascal Scoles, Steven Slutsky and Mitch Zimmer.

Board Members Absent: Susan Moore and Hope Luken.

Also Attending: Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Gerald E. Berger, Director of Human Resources; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; John Quinn, Director of CITV.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 08/09/2006 and 08/14/2006 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow called the Board's attention to the minutes of the General Meeting of 07/20/2006 and the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 05/04/2006. See enclosures #1 and #2. He noted that the minutes of the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 08/09/2006 were before members as a separate attachment and that the minutes of the Curriculum Committee of 08/14/2006 would be available for Board review and approval on Thursday evening. Mr. Slutsky pointed out that the minutes from the Finance Committee of 08/09/2006 were also before the Board as a separate attachment.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow reviewed the financial reports on the list for approval on Thursday Evening. The reports included the Bond Fund Report, the Capital Projects Report, the General Fund/Federal Program Bills, the Capital Reserve Fund, the Food Service Bills/Cafeteria Report, the Outstanding Investment Report, the Cash Flow Summary, the Comparison of Taxes Collected, the Real Estate Tax Escrow Report, the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 07/31/2006, as shown in enclosures #3 through #13.

Dr. Ryan noted that the Comparison of Taxes Collected reflected a 2006-2007 budgeted amount of \$3.9 million for the Act 511 Earned Income Tax but that only \$208,458.40 was collected in July. He asked if more money was collected in certain months than others. Mr. Bickleman stated that most of the money is collected in April, May, June and even July after individuals file their annual income tax returns in April. Dr. Ryan asked why the Act 511 EIT collections for July were recorded as \$274,849.53 in the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Bickleman reported that the amount included a two percent collection fee.

Mr. Orlow referred to the Bond Fund Report and noted that there were several different vendors identified as providing equipment for the technology upgrade. He asked if they were all on the state bid list. Mr. Bickleman confirmed that the vendors were on the list. Mr. Orlow asked if the different vendors were selected based on differences in warranties or service. Mr. Bickleman explained that each vendor specialized in providing and servicing different products. Mr. Boegly

confirmed for Mr. Orlow that “ELMO” was the brand name of a digital video presenter and explained what product and service each vendor provided. He also noted that the district had received three quotes on each product.

Mr. Orlow noted a payment of \$202.50 to Preferred Construction Services, Inc., for lighting upgrades and questioned whether that expense should be charged to a line item in the budget rather than the Bond Fund. Mr. Bickleman stated that the project was budgeted for as part of the Bond Fund and was related to the district-wide lighting upgrade. Mr. Yemm confirmed that was the case.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Staff Report: Mr. Orlow announced that Dr. Gorodetzer will report on the district’s summer programs during Thursday’s meeting.

Old Business: Mr. Orlow called the Board’s attention to policy #249, Video Recording of Students, which was before the board on a second-read basis. See enclosure # 14. He asked Dr. Cotter to bring the Board members up to date on the status of the policy. Dr. Cotter noted that the policy had received extensive reviews in committee, executive session and by the solicitor. He stated that the policy addressed three main areas, including authorization, parameters of recording and retention of recordings. He noted that recordings were for monitoring purposes, safety and disciplinary investigations. Dr. Cotter also stated that the recordings were to be destroyed after their use for the purpose for which the recording was made. He noted that recordings could be retained longer for legal proceedings or as part of a student’s educational record. Mr. Orlow asked if students and parents would be notified of the policy in the informational packets they receive prior to the start of the school year. Dr. Cotter confirmed that that was the case and noted that an item concerning the videotaping of students was added to the handbook form that parents are required to sign and return to their child’s school.

Correspondence: None.

Superintendent’s Report: Mr. Orlow stated that the Board would take action on the Superintendent’s report at the work session to assure that a quorum was in place. He noted that Mr. Zimmer needed to abstain from voting on an item for personal reasons. Dr. Cotter outlined his report which included the personnel report and substitute list, the proposed extra duty/extra pay assignments, the Plymouth Whitmarsh High School Adult Evening School fall class and teacher list, and the enrollment report. See enclosures #15 through #18. He stated that the personnel report included 25 actions and that evening school classes were self sustaining and would be held only if enrollment supported the class. He also noted that kindergarten enrollment for Conshohocken Elementary School remained low but had doubled in the past month. Dr. Cotter stated that the administration was also monitoring the second grade enrollment at Whitmarsh Elementary School.

Mr. Orlow asked if the decision to hold a night school class was determined on a class by class basis or income generated by the program as a whole. Dr. Cotter confirmed that decisions were made on a class by class basis.

Mr. Johnson stated that the personnel report could be split apart from the other items on the Superintendent’s Report for voting purposes. Dr. Cotter informed the Members that additional personnel actions could be brought to the Board for approval on Thursday evening. Mr. Slutsky

stated that further actions would be in the form of a new item. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the personnel report and substitute list. On a roll call vote, all but Mr. Zimmer voted in favor. Mr. Zimmer abstained. The motion was carried. Mr. Orlow asked the administration to provide Mr. Zimmer with the necessary form to fill out as required by school code so that he could publicly state why he abstained.

Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the remaining items of the Superintendent's Report. On all roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

New Business: Mr. Orlow noted that a series of transportation contracts were before the board for approval. He noted that the first two contracts were with the Devon Preparatory School at a rate of \$15.50 per student per day and with St. Joseph's Preparatory School at a rate of \$5.82 per student per day. He asked Mrs. DeLong why the rates were different. Mrs. DeLong stated that she could not comment on the transportation contracts. Dr. Cotter noted that Transportation Director Kathy Ellis was involved with coordinating the contractual agreements and that the administration would check on the reason for the rate disparity. He noted that the contracts involved different numbers of students which could contribute to the gap in prices. Mr. Orlow added that the difference in distances could also be a factor.

Mr. Orlow also stated that the Board was to take action on two parent transportation contracts. One agreement involved the Pittsburgh School for the Deaf at a rate of \$0.445 per mile and the other was for transportation to the George Crothers School at the same rate. Mr. Orlow asked if any thought was given to the type of liability insurance listed in the contracts. He referenced the variety of policies available and stated that a discussion with the solicitor would be prudent to ensure the contracts provided the right kind of coverage. Dr. Cotter noted that both contracts were renewals.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a series of Special Education Service Agreements. He stated the agreements with the Magnolia School, Lakeview Neurorehabilitation Center, and Upper Merion School District were for Colonial students taking classes at those locations. An agreement with the Methacton School District was for a Methacton student to attend an autistic support class at Ridge Park Elementary School. He asked the Board to consider those agreements together. Mrs. DeLong stated that the Magnolia and Upper Merion agreements were renewals and that the Lakeview agreement was a new settlement agreement and that no IEP was involved.

Mr. Orlow noted that in agreements where IEPs were involved, Colonial was relying on other institutions to meet the requirements of the IEP but that Colonial was responsible. Mrs. DeLong restated that the Lakeview agreement did not involve an IEP. She also noted that the Magnolia agreement was a settlement agreement and involved no IEP. She stated that Colonial was responsible for meeting the IEP requirements of the Upper Merion agreement. Mr. Davis asked how the district knew if the requirements were being met. Mrs. DeLong explained that there was interaction between Upper Merion and Colonial's supervisory staff on a regular basis and that progress reports were provided.

Mr. Orlow stated that the fifth agreement before the Members was a settlement of a due process agreement in which the Board had been actively involved and was discussed in executive session.

Mr. Orlow noted that a copy services agreement would be before the Board for approval on Thursday. See enclosure #26. Mr. Orlow asked if the agreement represented a replacement or upgrade of equipment or a lease renewal. Mr. Boegly explained that the agreement was for an

upgrade in equipment as the district prepared to move the copy center to the new Facilities Management Center. He also noted that the district was moving from a 72-month contract to a more standard 60-month contract. Mr. Orlow asked if the agreement covered the bulk of the equipment in the copy center. Mr. Boegly confirmed that that was the case and reported that the new copy center would include a color copier and be fully digital, giving each school the ability to send jobs to the center electronically.

Mr. Orlow stated that August was the time of year that the Board was asked to review and approve professional conference requests from district administrators. See enclosure #27. Dr. Cotter reported that each request receives administrative review and falls within the budgeted guidelines of \$2,200 per CASEA member and \$3,200 for Cabinet members. Mr. Orlow noted that some administrators had requested attendance at more conferences than others. Dr. Cotter said that that may be the case but that the requests still fell within the budgeted guidelines. Mr. Orlow inquired as to what happens if requests are made during the school year. Dr. Cotter stated that additional requests are brought back to the board for approval on an individual basis.

Mr. Orlow turned the Board's attention to a student field trip request for two students and a chaperone to attend the PSBA Student Delegate Program in Hershey, Pa., in October. See enclosure #28. Dr. Cotter confirmed for Mr. Orlow that students had attended the conference in past years and that it was a privilege and honor to be nominated to attend. Mr. Zimmer noted that the students selected were not the Board's student representatives. Dr. Cotter stated that they were more likely involved in student government in some capacity.

Mr. Orlow noted that a fuel purchasing bid was before the Board for approval. See enclosure #29. He asked Mr. Bickleman to explain the bid. Mr. Bickleman stated that the bid was a cooperative bid by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. He reported that no fixed price for gasoline was received. The base price of gas was to be the price published each Thursday in the Oil Price Index. He stated that fixed prices were received for other fuels. The heating oil price increased 17 percent, the diesel fuel price increased 35 percent and the diesel fuel winter mix used in cold weather increased 32 percent. Mr. Bickleman reported that the district was o.k. in terms of the 2006-2007 budget except for gasoline, where he expected a \$6,000 shortfall. He noted that the installation of new boilers in several of the district's schools would reduce fuel consumption. Mr. Slutsky noted that despite the increased prices, the district was still paying significantly below retail for gasoline. Mr. Bickleman added that \$30,000 was budgeted for gasoline to be used primarily for district maintenance vehicles. \$600,000 was budgeted for heating oil and \$425,000 was budgeted for diesel fuel. Mr. Orlow asked how close to the budgeted amount was actual usage for the previous year. Mr. Bickleman stated that the 2005-2006 budget included 275,000 gallons of heating oil at \$2.18 per gallon and 246,000 gallons were actually used. He added that 161,000 gallons of diesel fuel was budgeted and 151,000 gallons were used. He stated that 155,000 gallons of diesel fuel were included in the current year budgeted at a cost of \$2.75 per gallon.

Mr. Orlow noted that the last item of new business was the approval of a bid for milk and juices and ice cream. The milk and juices bid can be found in enclosure #30 of Thursday's agenda. Mr. Slutsky asked if the district had previous experience with the low bidder, Cream-o-land Dairies. Mr. Bickleman reported the district had not used the vendor before but that the Lower Merion District has used and had a good experience with the vendor. Mr. Slutsky noted there was no bid enclosure for ice cream. Dr. Cotter stated that the bids were scheduled to be opened on Tuesday and a report would be available at Thursday's meeting. Mr. Bickleman explained the district had to re-bid the ice cream component as there were no responses to the original bid.

Committee Reports: Mr. Orlow noted that committee chairmen usually give their reports during Thursday's general meeting. However, he asked Mr. Slutsky to give the Finance Committee report so that the Board could discuss Act 1 and take action on a resolution. Mr. Slutsky noted that Act 1, the Property Tax Relief Act, was actually a tax shift to an earned income or personal income tax. He stated that the Board was required by the law to form a Local Tax Study Commission (LTSC) which will make a recommendation on how to handle the tax shift. He reported that the commission was to include five, seven or nine individuals. The Board decided to appoint nine members in order to include as broad as possible a cross section of the district. Mr. Slutsky stated that the Board had aggressively advertised the formation of the committee and had received a number of applications. He reported that the applications were reviewed by the Finance Committee on August 9 and noted that seven Board Members were in attendance at the meeting. He stated that all three municipalities were represented on the committee and that there was as much gender and age diversity as possible. Mr. Slutsky stated that the following persons were appointed to the LTSC: Dominic J. Aprile, Leslie C. Finegold, Thomas Flynn, Robert Franz, Claire C. Meashey, Jack Pinheiro, Stanley Rosenau, Craig L. San Pietro and Thomas J. Speers.

Mr. Slutsky also noted that the Board has appointed the following officers to the commission; Thomas J. Speers, Chairperson; Claire C. Meashey, Vice-Chairperson and Jack Pinheiro, Secretary

Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve a resolution appointing the tax study commission and detailing its responsibilities. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow mentioned that dealing with Act 1 will take the Board through most of the school year. He noted that the law requires School Boards to provide the LTSC with a budget, yet the legislature provides no funding for the mandate. Mr. Orlow also reiterated that the Board was limited to appointing nine members to the LTSC and that those not selected were also highly qualified. He asked the administration to contact all applicants to inform them of the Board's decision and to begin scheduling meetings with the LTSC.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman