

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, January 16, 2007.**

President Orlow convened the work session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:39 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on January 16, 2007.

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

Board Members Absent: None.

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; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary and Kim Newell Assistant Director of CITV.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 12/14/2006, 12/20/2006, 01/10/2007 and 01/16/2007 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow asked Board members to review the minutes of the Work Session of 11/13/2006, the General Meeting of 11/16/2006, the Reorganization Meeting and the Special Meeting of 12/04/2006, the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 12/07/2006, the Curriculum Committee, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee and the Special Meeting of 12/14/2006 and the Special Meeting and the Personnel Committee of 12/20/2006. See enclosures #1 through #10. He noted that minutes from the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 01/10/2007, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee and the Finance Committee of 01/11/2007 and the Curriculum Committee of 01/16/2007 would be available on Thursday night as yellow pages. Mr. Johnson noted that the Finance Committee of 01/11/2007 had been postponed.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow reviewed the financial reports on the list for approval on Thursday Evening. The reports included the Budget Transfers, 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 months ending 11/30/2006 and 12/31/2006, as shown in enclosures #11 through #22.

Mr. Orlow questioned why expenses related to the Colonial Elementary School (CES) playground appeared on the Bond Fund Report instead of the Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Bickleman and Dr. Cotter explained that the reference was to fencing that needed to be installed around the playground for security reasons because top soil from the Victory Fields project was being transported and stored behind the CES playground.

Mr. Orlow questioned Bond Fund expenses related to air quality monitoring and testing. Mr. Bickleman and Mr. Yemm explained that the item referred to air quality testing that was necessitated by concerns with the removal of old boiler units. They confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the testing was not regular annual testing.

Mr. Orlow also questioned expenses for carpeting, fiber optics and security related to Victory Fields. Mr. Yemm explained that those expenses were related to the renovation of the Facilities Management Center within the Victory Fields complex.

Mr. Orlow noted an approximate \$500,000 difference in the Bond Fund balance and projects yet to be completed. He suggested that the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee prioritize the remaining projects.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Staff Report: Mr. Orlow noted that CES Principal Terese Boegly will provide a report on that building's initiatives at Thursday's meeting.

Budget Report: Mr. Orlow stated that several committees will be providing budget reports. He noted that the Curriculum Committee and Facilities Management and Transportation Committee will present their reports this evening and that the Personnel Committee will present its report on Thursday evening. He added that the Finance Committee would report on the budget at the Feb. 12 meeting.

Dr. Gorodetzer reported that the curriculum budget provided for excellent learning opportunities for all students. She noted that the on-cycle purchase of K-12 science and grade 11 math materials were scheduled as were materials for K-5 writing and supporting resources for libraries. Dr. Gorodetzer added that professional development, especially on the secondary level, also accounted for a large portion of the budget. She concluded by stating that the Curriculum budget increase was just 1.38% over the previous year.

Mr. Orlow questioned what affect programs still in development for the PWPrEP initiative may have on the budget. Dr. Gorodetzer explained that the college counseling initiatives were funded by state grants and that the staff development needed for other programs was included in the budget.

Mr. Yemm reported that the Facilities Management and Transportation budget included savings to both the district's umbrella insurance policy and the automobile insurance policy. He stated that an additional \$50,000 to \$60,000 in utility savings was expected as he has budgeted for 20,000 fewer gallons of fuel oil. He noted that the overall budget increase was less than 3.0%.

Mr. Orlow stated that it was important to note that a recent increase in Facilities Management staff was offset by the savings in energy costs. He stressed the benefits received from the additional resources devoted to the department.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow stated that Thomas J. Gentzel, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) estimates the district's PSBA dues for the 2007-2008 school year at \$12,000. See enclosure #23. Mr. Orlow noted that was roughly the same cost as last year. Dr. Cotter noted that the Board usually acted on the dues payment in March and that this was simply an estimate to help in budget preparation. He stated that the estimate was for informational purposes and no Board action was need at this time.

Mr. Orlow reported that Plymouth Elementary School art teacher Laura Gojeski had received funding from the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation to decorate a wall in the school's cafeteria. She recently completed the second year of the project and wished to provide the board

with an update on the project. Dr. Cotter confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the Board had officially accepted the grant money from the Foundation to fund this project. He noted that the teacher was simply providing information on what was completed in the form of a staff report at Thursday's meeting.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter outlined his report which included the Personnel Report and Substitute Additions, the proposed Extra Duty/Extra Pay List, a list of New Activities and their corresponding Unit Value and the Adult Evening School Instructors list for the Spring 2007 semester. See enclosures #24 through #27. He noted that the Personnel Report included 26 actions, including one new position. He added that 10 new substitutes were added to the Substitute List. Dr. Cotter reported that the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List included seven new positions, six of which were related to music. He reminded the Board that Adult Evening School classes were not held without sufficient enrollment to support the class.

Mr. Berger stated that if the Board agreed to take action on the establishment of the new activities, the administration could present sponsors for those activities for approval on Thursday evening. Mr. Orlow noted that the request had been reviewed by the Personnel Committee and saw no reason not to take action at this time. Mrs. Luken moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the new activities and their corresponding unit values as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Board Student Representatives Report:

New Business: Mr. Orlow asked the members to direct their attention to a series of policies before the Board on a first-read basis. See enclosure #28. He noted that revisions are requested to the By-Laws, #001, to reflect current practice and that an amendment is requested to the Committee Functions, #004, to establish a new Safety and Wellness Committee of the Board. Mr. Orlow stated that the committee was something that the Board had been interested in creating for some time. He said that in the past several years there has been a lot of discussion on school safety and security in various committees, but there was not one committee solely devoted to the issue. He added that the idea had been discussed in executive session.

Dr. Ryan asked if the By-Laws themselves were being revised. Dr. Cotter noted that the changes were grammatical in nature.

Mr. Slutsky stated that since the Board was cleaning up the policy, he recommended changing the name of the Personnel Committee to the Human Resources Committee to be consistent with Mr. Berger's title. Mr. Orlow agreed.

Mr. Orlow noted that the second policy for review was the District Wide Parent Involvement Policy, #121. See enclosure #29. He questioned the need for the policy. Dr. Cotter explained that the policy was mandated under the No Child Left Behind Act for districts that accepted Title I funding. He stated that the policy had been reviewed by the district solicitor and that it met the requirements of the act. He also noted that the policy for the most part reflects practices that are already in place throughout the district. He then reviewed the seven key components of the policy.

Mr. Orlow questioned the meaning of the acronym LEA which appears on the first page of the policy and requested that the administration provide clarification.

Mr. Orlow stated that the final policy for review with the Use of School Facilities and Equipment, #707. See enclosure #30. The revision to the policy updates the applicable timeframe and inserts a

provision regarding municipality utilization. Mr. Orlow reported that the Board wants to get a handle on the equity of use of district facilities among community organizations.

Dr. Cotter reported that Mr. Yemm was working on a matrix detailing usage of each district building. Mr. Yemm added that the matrix also included the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School swimming pool and all athletic fields. He confirmed for Mrs. Moore that the matrix would be broken down by school and event to distinguish what groups are using what facilities.

Mr. Orlow acknowledged the scope of the project and inquired as to when it may be completed. Dr. Cotter assured him it would be ready for review at the February meeting.

Mr. Orlow noted that the policy included specific language related to waiving of construction-related, permits and/or utilization fees to assure that there is equal treatment between the district and its municipalities.

Dr. Scoles inquired as to the timeframe for Mr. Yemm's usage matrix. He noted that usage has not changed much in the past few years and that the data was from this year and last year.

Mr. Slutsky noted that the fee structure for facilities rental has not changed in recent years and asked that it be revisited.

Mr. Orlow asked Board Members to review a Special Education Solicitor Contract for the 2007-2008 school year. He noted that a contract from the law firm of Sweet, Stevens, Tucker and Katz, LLP was presented. Mrs. DeLong noted that the firm's name was recently changed to Sweet, Stevens, Katz and Williams. Mr. Orlow reported that this is the same firm that the district has used for the past couple of years. He cited the high quality of the firm's work and noted that their rate has not increased. He added that the contract was reviewed in executive session. Mr. Orlow wanted to be sure that the contract stated that the firm must be on the approved vendor list.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a series of four special education settlements and contract agreements. He noted that the agreements were reviewed in executive session and that student names were not released for privacy reasons.

Mr. Orlow stated that the Board would take action on Thursday evening on two professional conference requests. The first request is for PWHS Counselor Pat Tamborello to attend the College Board Middle States Regional Meeting in Baltimore, Md., from Feb. 14-16, 2007. See enclosure #31. The second request is for PWHS Counselor Martin Grouke to attend the American School Counselor's Association Annual Conference in Denver, Colo., from June 22-26, 2007. See enclosure #32. Mr. Orlow noted that both requests had the support of the PWHS administration, were to be funded through budgeted professional development funds and had been reviewed by the Curriculum Committee of the Board.

Mr. Orlow called Board members' attention to three trip requests for approval at Thursday's meeting. The first request was the PWHS Class of 2008 trip to Disney World from April 11-15, 2008. See enclosure #33. Mr. Orlow noted that the Friday morning departure time was different from years past and asked if missing the extra class time was of concern to the administration. Dr. Cotter reported that the missed class time was not an issue for seniors and noted that the change was made to enable students to maximize their dollar value. He stated that the per-student cost was significant. Mr. Orlow questioned whether or not the cost was too much for some students. Dr. Cotter noted that there were fundraising opportunities throughout the year for students to raise the necessary monies.

Mr. Orlow stated that the second trip request was for 40 students to attend the Annual State DECA Competition in Hershey, Pa., from Feb. 28-March 2, 2007. See enclosure #34. Mr. Orlow noted that the trip costs were budgeted for and that the request had the support of the PWHS administration. Dr. Cotter added that fundraisers were held throughout the year to reduce the cost of the trip, which provided practical business experience and extensive educational activities for the students.

Mr. Orlow noted that the final trip request was from Colonial Middle School art teacher Julie Horwitz to take members of the 8th Grade Art Show Activity Club to participate in a field trip to the "Grounds for Sculpture" in Hamilton, N.J., on May 11, 2007. See enclosure #35. He stated that Board approval was needed since the trip was out of state. Dr. Cotter noted that the total trip cost was just \$183 and students packed their own lunches.

Mr. Orlow reported that the final item of new business before the Board was the approval of a bid award for the installation of roofing trusses related to the enclosure of the CES courtyard. He noted that this was an extensive renovation project and asked Mr. Yemm to provide an overview.

Mr. Yemm explained that phase one of the renovation project entailed installing a roof over the CES courtyard and moving the current CES library and the Board Room to the courtyard area. The Board Room will then be transformed into two classrooms, while the library will be transformed into two or three smaller classrooms. Mr. Yemm stated that the second phase of the project included the replacement of exterior windows and the installation of air conditioning on the second and third floors of the building.

Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the district would recoup significant energy savings from the enclosure of the courtyard and the replacement of the exterior windows. Mr. Yemm also added that the entrance way and reception area on the first floor of the building would be reconfigured to further increase building security. Mr. Yemm concluded by reminding the Board that the bid was for structural steel trusses for the courtyard enclosure.

Mr. Orlow inquired if steel was necessary. Dr. Cotter confirmed that other materials were considered and added that wood was too heavy and aluminum was too expensive. He noted that no inner columns would be needed to support the steel and that extensive studies were conducted to determine whether or not the building could handle the weight of the roof.

Mr. Yemm explained why only one of four qualified vendors bid for the project and noted that it was \$10,000 under budget. He stated that the architect saw no reason to re-bid the job and stated that the project was scheduled to be completed over spring break.

Committee Reports: None.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman
Board Secretary