

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462**  
**MINUTES, APRIL 16, 2009**

President Johnson convened the business meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:02 p.m. in the Colonial Instructional Television (CITV) studios in Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) on April 16, 2009.

**Board Members Present:** Tom Davis, Gary Johnson, Kelly Jowett, Susan Moore, Hope Luken, Dr. William Ryan and Mitch Zimmer.

**Board Members Absent:** Lenore Bruno and Steven Slutsky.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; Richard Hartz, Director of Human Resources; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Kim Newell, Assistant Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Jason Bacani; Brian Adams; Amy Venkus; Rachel Milleo; Cathy Campbell; Beth Miller; Erin Dooley; Lauren Stern; Marcia Conston and Joseph Barberi.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on April 1, April 13 and April 16 to discuss legal and personnel issues.

**Minutes:** Mr. Johnson asked Board members to act on the minutes of the Board Work Session of March 16; the General Meeting of March 19; the Special Meeting of the Board and the Safety and Wellness Committee of April 1; the Human Resources Committee and the Community Relations and Student Life Committee (CRSL) of April 2; the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of April 3 and the Curriculum Committee of April 13. See enclosures #1 through #7 and #40.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Johnson directed the Board to consider the financial reports on the list for approval. They 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 month ending March 31 as shown in enclosures #8 through #19.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the financial reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

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

**Staff Report:** Ridge Park Elementary School Principal Jason Bacani and teachers, Brian Adams and Amy Venkus, reported on technology usage in their building. They thanked the Board for enabling them to engage students through technology rich classrooms. A video featured the integration of technology in curriculum delivery and highlighted the morning announcement program.

**Old Business:** Mr. Johnson stated that the Board would table Policy #201.2 regarding student admissions and refer it to the CRSL committee for future consideration. See enclosure #20.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to table the policy. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

**Correspondence:** None

**Budget Report:** At Mr. Johnson's request, Mr. Bickleman presented the 2009-2010 Preliminary Budget for Board action. Mr. Bickleman stated that the budget totals \$92,852,000 which is 3.31 percent or \$2,975,000 higher than the current year's budget. The real estate tax mil rate is established at 16.90 which represents a 2.0 percent increase in local real estate taxes. The rate translates to an increase of \$33 for every \$100,000 of property assessment or \$48 on the district's median assessed value of \$146,990. Mr. Bickleman reported that the District is faced with a decline in revenues. He stated that real estate assessment is down \$418,000, real estate transfer taxes are down \$500,000 and revenue from the Act 511 earned income tax is also decreased. Mr. Bickleman reported that \$8.75 million of the more than \$10 million projected fund balance is included to balance the budget. Responding to a question from Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bickleman confirmed that this represented the first time in his nearly 30-year tenure that revenues are down in every category.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the preliminary budget. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter led Board members through his report that included the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List and a list of Summer Program Staffing. See enclosures #22 through #24. He stated that the Personnel Report and Substitute List contains seven new actions since Monday evening including two leaves of absence, one return from leave, one replacement, one completed assignment and two extensions of assignment. He noted that the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List is the same as Monday evening and includes a revised stipend and a resignation. Dr. Cotter stated that the Summer Program Staffing list is updated and includes personnel for programs at PWHS and Colonial Middle School (CMS).

Dr. Ryan noted that a relative of his was on the Summer Program Staffing list and he would be abstaining from that vote. Mr. Johnson noted that the Board would vote separately on that list.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report minus the Summer Program Staffing List. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the Summer Program Staffing List. On a roll call vote, all but Dr. Ryan voted in favor. Dr. Ryan abstained. The motion was approved, 6-0.

**Board Student Representatives Report:** None.

**New Business:** Mr. Johnson sought Board action on a contract for solicitor's services for the 2009-2010 school year. See enclosure #25. He noted that the agreement calls for a 2.48 percent increase in retainer over the current contract, and provides for a base rate of \$180.00 per hour on items not covered under the retainer and alternate rates in accordance with the fee letter dated March 23, 2009 and the rates as established by the insurance carrier where Fox Rothschild, LLP is an approved provider.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the solicitor's contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0. Mr. Sultanik thanked the Board.

Mrs. Luken stated that Board action was requested for two contracts related to Human Resources. The first was an agreement with FILE-X for the electronic storage of personnel records. See enclosure #26. She stated that the District is experiencing a lack of storage space for files of former employees. Mrs. Luken noted that the second agreement is with Global Compliance

Network to provide online training for relevant personnel issues. See enclosure #27. She reported that the agreement is a licensing fee for unlimited access to tutorials at a cost of \$1,400.00.

Mrs. Luken moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the contracts with FILE-X and Global Compliance Network. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on two private school renewal contracts for the 2009-2010 school year. One contract was with the Quaker School at Horsham for two students at \$27,820.00 per year. The rate represents a 3.5 percent increase over the current school year. The second contract was with Wyncote Academy for two students at \$24,600.00 per year. That rate is 4.25 percent higher than the rate for the current school year. Mr. Johnson reported that both contracts were reviewed in executive session.

Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the renewal agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on a negotiated settlement agreement. He noted that the agreement was reviewed in executive session.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the settlement agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Davis asked the Board to consider two professional conference requests. The first was for a PWSH teacher to attend the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference in Washington, D.C. from April 22-25. See enclosure #28. He noted that the high school administration supports the request, and building professional funds are allocated to cover expenses. The second request was for Ed Swetkowski to attend the Northeast AVID District Director's Meeting in New York City on May 1. See enclosure #29. Mr. Davis stated that the high school and middle school administrations support the request which would be paid for by Career Counseling Grant funds.

Mr. Davis moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the professional conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mrs. Jowett stated that Board action was needed regarding two student trip requests. The first was for Colonial Middle School students to attend the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. on May 26. See enclosure #30. She stated that expenses are the responsibility of students and their families. The second request was for three PWSH students to attend the DECA National Conference in Anaheim, Calif. from April 29 through May 3. See enclosure #31.

Dr. Cotter noted that there was a blue page for a third student trip request. Mrs. Jowett noted that the additional request was for the PWSH Science Olympiad Team to compete in the state competition at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa. on May 1.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the three student trip requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mrs. Moore asked the Board to act on a bid for the replacement of an underground fuel tank at Conshohocken Elementary School. See enclosure #32. She reported that the recommended low bid was from Ferrick Construction at a cost of \$124,240.00. Mrs. Moore stated that the bid is available for public inspection in the District Office.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mrs. Moore asked the Board to consider a bid for the purchase of PWHS athletic and physical education equipment and supplies. See enclosure #41. Dr. Cotter confirmed for Mrs. Moore that the supplies are for the next school year but need to be ordered now so that they arrive in time for the beginning of practices in August. Mrs. Moore noted that this bid is also available for review in the District Office.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik asked the Board to approve Assessment Stipulation #65-00-09754-00-9 regarding the Green Valley Country Club property in Whitemarsh Township. He stated that the stipulation was reviewed in executive session.

Dr. Ryan moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the assessment stipulation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit: Mr. Zimmer reported that the Board reviewed guidelines for the election of candidates to the Board. He noted that Colonial was one of 12 districts that needed to nominate a member to the Board.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to nominate Mr. Zimmer to another three-year term on the IU Board. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Zimmer stated that the IU Board also renewed a contract with Fox Rothschild for solicitor's services and heard a presentation on technology, that included a secure Web site to view and pool video.

CMTHS: Mr. Davis noted that the Central Montco Technical High School was honoring its distinguished graduates, among whom is a PWHS graduate. He also noted that PWHS and the tech school were working together to develop career pathways for students who attend CMTHS. Mr. Zimmer offered his personal congratulations to his neighbor, Dave Bramowski, the PWHS graduate to be honored as a CMTHS Distinguished Graduate.

Human Resources: Mrs. Luken reported on the committee meeting of April 2. In addition to contracts approved earlier in the meeting by the Board, she noted that Mr. Hartz shared information regarding the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act as it applies to COBRA notices. She also highlighted a review and revisions of two Extra Duty/Extra Pay positions and stated that the committee had requested a comprehensive review of all Extra Duty/Extra Pay positions.

Finance: No report.

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Davis and Dr. Gorodetzer alternately reported on: a new Grade 9 orientation program at PWHS that will occur before the start of the school year in late summer; a sheltered instruction program for English Language Learners and a number of teachers receiving professional development specifically for that program; an update on the math and language arts curriculum review process; construction on new classrooms for the PWHS Tech Ed Department scheduled to begin in March of 2010; an update of the Science Supervisor Position and professional conference requests.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore reported on an Arbor Day tree planting ceremony that will include kindergarten students from RP on April 24. Mr. Yemm noted that the trees will be planted in the area of Victory Fields near the bike path and Colonial Drive. Mrs. Moore added that the fire alarm installation at CMS was completed and that the same system is being installed in Colonial Elementary School.

Community Relations and Student Life: Mr. Zimmer reported on Whitemarsh Day activities and listed the times of performances by student groups. He added that residents should look for a copy of the special publication on secondary success in the mail within the next week.

Safety and Wellness: Mr. Zimmer stated that the committee was advised of increased involvement between the Whitemarsh Police Department and the District, including coordinating activities and functions concerning community relations, community partnerships, crime prevention programs and grants. He also noted "Go for the Greens" day was held in all elementary schools on March 17. The program initiated by the Food Services Department and school nurses promoted healthy eating. He added that whole wheat dough was now being used in pizza served at CES.

Legislative: Dr. Ryan reported on ACT 32, the countywide collection of earned income taxes. He stated that the School Board needed to nominate a representative to a county committee that will negotiate the collection of taxes. He stated that the business manager was the logical choice to serve in that role. Dr. Ryan stated that the appointment needs to be made by the middle of September. Dr. Ryan also added that the state has offered to track high school graduates for four years after graduation. He also noted that the state is considering increasing the minimum dollar value to be met before projects and items to be purchased are sent to bid.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary