

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
COMBINED SESSION MINUTES, JUNE 17, 2010

President Johnson convened the combined session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:03 p.m. in the District Office General Meeting Room on June 17, 2010.

Board Members Present: Bernie Brady, Gary Johnson, Hope Luken, Susan Moore, Tom Sigafos, Beth Suchsland, Alan Tabachnick and Mitch Zimmer.

Board Members Absent: Kathleen Oxberry.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Mark Fitzgerald, Solicitor; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; Richard Hartz, Director of Human Resources; John Quinn, Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Dr. Elizabeth McKeaney, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Maria Bellino, Science Curriculum Supervisor; Tom Davis; Dave Santoro; Cindy Cox; Alan Fiermonte; Melissa Sterling and Trevon Kanavy.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on May 26, June 9 and June 17.

Minutes: Mr. Johnson sought Board action on the minutes of the Work Session of May 17; the General Meeting of May 20; the Special Meeting of May 26; the Human Resources Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee of June 1; the Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee of June 3 and the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee and the Curriculum Committee of June 4. See enclosures #1 through #8.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Financial Reports: Mr. Johnson asked the Board to examine and act on 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 Trust Fund Report, the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending May 31. See enclosures #9 through #21.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Sigafos seconded a motion to approve the financial reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Old Business: Mrs. Luken asked the Board to consider the 2010-2011 Final Budget. See enclosure #22. She stated that the 2010-2011 budget totals \$94,059,000, which is an increase of \$1,479,000 or 1.6 percent over the 2009-2010 spending plan. The Final Budget includes a real estate tax rate of 18.025 mils, an increase of 4.5%. Mrs. Luken added that the new real estate tax equates to an additional \$78 per year for each \$100,000 of assessment or an increase of \$114 on the district's median assessed value of \$146,990. The Final Budget also utilizes \$4,500,000 of fund balance. She stated that the 2010-2011 Final Budget Report, on the state required form PDE-2028, is available for public review in the administrative offices and on the district's Web site.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the following resolution:

“Be it resolved that the Colonial Board of School Directors adopts the 2010-2011 Budget in the amount of \$94,059,000.”

Mrs. Luken wished to thank the District cabinet, administration and staff for their hard work on a long and difficult budget process. She noted that money is tight and the staff collaborated on a variety of ways to cut costs. Dr. Cotter confirmed that with the help of all involved the District succeeded in cutting \$2.5 million from the initial budget projections. He commented that the total spending increase of only 1.6 percent from the previous year was significant.

Mrs. Luken also thanked Mr. Bickleman for his tireless work on the budget.

Mr. Johnson thanked Mrs. Luken and the members of the Finance Committee for their work.

Mr. Sigafos called attention to the fact that the District was using a significant portion of its fund balance and stated that he realized that any tax increase is difficult to bear. He stressed that more difficult times are ahead.

Mr. Tabachnick spoke of his first experience with the budget process and noted that he understood the efforts of the administration. He expressed concern over the uncertainty of the state employees' retirement fund and the fact that the Board was using a significant portion of the fund balance in the budget. He said he would vote against the budget for those reasons.

There was considerable discussion from Board members regarding current legislation that would adjust the system and what effect that it may have.

Mrs. Moore asked other Board members who planned to vote against the budget to explain why.

Mrs. Suchsland said that she had previously expressed her concerns regarding the use of the fund balance. She reiterated that she felt the District is using too much of the fund balance to supplement the budget.

On a roll call vote, all but Mrs. Suchsland and Mr. Tabachnick voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-2.

Mrs. Luken sought Board action to establish tax rates for the 2010-2011 school year including a millage rate of 18.025, an Act 511 Earned Income Tax Rate of 1.0 percent, a Real Estate Transfer Tax Rate of 1.0 percent, an Amusement Tax Rate of 10 percent, a Real Estate Tax Certification Fee of \$20.00 and a billing rate for 2010-2011 real estate taxes of July 1, 2010.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Tabachnick seconded a motion to approve the rates as presented.

Mrs. Suchsland asked the Board to consider voting on the millage rate separately.

Mrs. Luken amended her motion and Mr. Tabachnick amended his second to include all but the millage rate. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the millage rate of 18.025. On a roll call vote, all but Mrs. Suchsland and Mr. Tabachnick voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-2.

Mrs. Luken asked the Board to set the maximum property tax reductions for its approved Homestead properties at \$258.84 and the maximum property tax reduction for its farmstead properties at \$258.84 for the Act 1 property tax relief. See enclosure #23. Mr. Bickleman confirmed for Mr. Johnson that the amount is slightly more than \$10 from the previous year.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Brady seconded a motion to approve the reduction levels. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Correspondence: Mr. Johnson noted that the Board will table consideration of a gift from the

Plymouth Soccer Club to Colonial Middle School. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the enclosure has not been received and the District is awaiting more information.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a request to accept a \$500 gift to Conshohocken Elementary School from the Glaxo Smith Kline Corporation. See enclosure #59.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to accept the donation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson stated that Board approval was sought for a donation of a pallet of poster board valued at \$1,400. See enclosure #60. Dr. Cotter stated that the donation value should be \$1,500.

Mr. Tabachnick moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the donation valued at \$1,500. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter stated that his report included the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the Long Term Substitute List, Master Teacher designations and a blue page. See enclosures #24 through #26. Among the 32 personnel actions, Dr. Cotter noted, were seven resignations, one furlough, four leaves of absence, 10 completed assignments three replacements and three positions furloughed. Dr. Cotter also noted at this time of year the District traditionally returns long term substitutes to per diem status. He added that six teachers have been designated as Master Teachers per the Colonial Pathways to Excellence agreement. He said that the teachers went through a rigorous evaluation process. Dr. Cotter also called Board members' attention to the Blue Page containing a request for a professional development sabbatical. He noted that Board policy and the Pennsylvania School Code require Board approval of the request.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Sigafos seconded a motion to approve all items of the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

New Business: Mr. Johnson sought Board action on revisions to the following policies on a second-read basis: Conflict of Interest (#318, #418, #518); Tutorial (#116); Behavior Support (#219) and Unlawful Harassment (#348, #448, #548). See enclosures # 27 through #30.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Tabachnick seconded a motion to approve the policy revisions on a second-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider the new policies on Blood Borne Pathogens (#515) and E-Mail Usage and Retention (#817) on a second-read basis. See enclosures # 31 and #32.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the new policies on a second-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mrs. Moore asked the Board to act on an addendum to the Colonial Administrators and Supervisors Association (CASEA) Meet and Discuss Agreement. At Mrs. Moore's request, Mr. Hartz explained that the addendum addresses a revision of the evaluation model to include a fixed rate of salary increase and additional concessions in the area of benefits. Mrs. Suchsland expressed thanks to CASEA for voluntarily making the concessions.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Sigafos seconded a motion to approve the addendum. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mrs. Moore asked the Board to consider a Southeastern Pennsylvania School Trust Agreement. See enclosure #33. She noted that this is a dual funding agreement in conjunction with Montgomery County Schools and the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. She stated that the Board is further requesting to appoint Mr. Hartz as the District's primary representative and Mr. Bickleman as the secondary representative to the trust. Mr. Hartz explained that the agreement was an effort to provide cost savings with regards to a self-insured prescription plan. He advised that

there was no change in the District's insurance provider.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mrs. Moore sought Board action on a tentative agreement between the Colonial School Board and the Colonial Food Service Association subject to solicitor review of the contract language. She stated that the details of the three-year agreement are available for review in the District Office. She also thanked the food service personnel for their willingness to make concessions in light of the tight budget.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the agreement subject to solicitor review. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on legal services agreements with Sweet, Stevens, Katz and Williams, LLP for standard fees, costs and expenses and for legal services consultation. See enclosures #34 and #35.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Tabachnick seconded a motion to approve the agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a series of medical contract renewals in one motion. Included are contracts for general physicians, dental exams and sports physicals (see enclosure #36), an agreement with Colonial Medical Group to conduct employee physicals (see enclosure #37) and an agreement with C&K Therapy Associates, LLC to provide occupational therapy services at a rate of \$73 per hour (see enclosure #38).

Mr. Sigafos moved and Mr. Brady seconded a motion to approve the contract renewals. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on educational services contracts with TALK, Inc. at an annual tuition of \$60,150; Comprehensive Learning Center for tuition for two students at a cost of \$82,250 each and Wyncote Academy for tuition for one student at \$25,850. See enclosure #39.

Mrs. Suchsland moved and Mr. Tabachnick seconded a motion to approve the contracts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a number of school and institution contract agreements in one motion. They include contracts with the Lakeside Educational Network with an increase of approximately three percent for both regular education and special education slots bringing the total cost of the contract to \$365,580 (See enclosure #40), the Silver Springs/Martin Luther School at a rate of \$187 per student per day (See enclosure #41), the Academy at a rate of \$117.50 per student per day (see enclosure #42) and the Lifeworks Alternative School at a rate of \$158 per student per day (see enclosure #43).

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the contract agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on Placement and Release agreements reviewed in executive session.

Mrs. Suchsland moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a special education consulting services agreement with Cathy Grayson at a rate of \$120 per hour. See enclosure #44.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Tabachnick seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Zimmer asked the Board to approve placement of a foreign exchange student from Korea in Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) for the 2010-2011 school year. He stated that details were discussed in executive session.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the foreign exchange students. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on a pricing schedule for food service prices in the 2010-2011 school year. See enclosure #45.

It was noted that elementary and middle school prices will increase 10 cents per lunch and high school lunches will increase five cents per tier.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Sigafos seconded a motion to approve the pricing schedule. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Tabachnick asked the Board to consider professional conference requests for PWHS counselor Pat Tamborello to attend the National Association for College Admission Counseling Conference in St. Louis, Missouri from September 29 through October 2 (see enclosure #46), for PWHS counselor Stacy Anderson to attend the National Career Pathways Network Conference in Dallas, Texas from October 22-23 (see enclosure #47) and for a Technology Project Coordinator to attend Power School University training in Boston, Massachusetts from July 25-29 (see enclosure #48).

Mr. Tabachnick moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Zimmer stated that Board permission is sought for two PWHS Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) staff members to plan and coordinate an overnight field trip for senior AVID students to visit colleges in northeastern Pennsylvania on September 15 and 16 (see enclosure #49).

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the trip request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Brady sought Board action on bids for the Victory Field comfort station and a boiler feed system for Whitemarsh Elementary School. See enclosures #50 and #51. He noted that detailed copies of the bids are available for public review in the District Office.

Mr. Brady moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the bids. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Brady asked the Board to act on a bid for technology education equipment for PWHS. See enclosure #61. Mr. Boegly explained that federal stimulus funds were used to purchase a molding printer for the technology education and engineering programs. Mr. Sigafos stated that he was glad Mr. Boegly noted that the equipment is being purchased with stimulus money.

Mr. Brady moved and Mr. Sigafos seconded a motion to approve the equipment bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Fitzgerald asked the board for a motion to waive a reduction in the real estate taxes for the 2010-2011 school year for the leased premises having parcel no. TMP 65-00-04570-50-4 (616/618 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania, owned by Whitemarsh Township) so that the premises for the purposes of taxation would be reduced to 1,500 square feet (a 57% reduction in area) in accordance with the letter dated June 4, 2010, from the Whitemarsh Township Board of Supervisors. See enclosure #62. An explanation was made

that the bank adjoining the Whitemarsh Township building has been reduced in size with the Township acquiring part of the building. Mrs. Luken clarified that the District has similar agreements with all municipalities.

Mr. Sigafoos moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion as worded by the solicitor above. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit: Mr. Zimmer reported that the IU Board recognized winners of the Cynthia E. Welder award honoring an individual and an organization for outstanding and dedicated service to the exceptional children of the IU. Mr. Zimmer also noted that the IU Executive Director plans to meet with the county's superintendents to assess services provided by the IU.

CMTHS: No report.

Human Resources: Mrs. Moore sought board action on the administrative salaries, administrative assistants and confidential secretaries salaries and non-bargaining group salaries for the 2010-2011 school year. She noted that all salary information is available for review in the District Office.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Suchsland seconded a motion to approve the salaries. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Finance: Mrs. Luken reported that the committee reviewed the budget at length as well as the increase in school lunch prices.

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Tabachnick reported that the committee reviewed a secondary special education action plan designed to enable students to attain post-secondary goals. He noted a change in the health and physical education curriculum at Colonial Middle School. Dr. Gorodetzer confirmed that classes have been expanded from one semester to two semesters doubling time for students. Mr. Tabachnick also touched on a Active Schools Grant designed to increase students' activity levels in grades K-6. He noted that 25 girls are signed up to participate in the District's Girls in Technology Summer Academy. Mr. Tabachnick added that he attended a Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation meeting where planetarium funding was on the agenda. He noted that there was no discussion on the topic.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mr. Brady noted that the next committee meeting has been moved up to Wednesday, June 23 at 7:30 a.m.

Community Relations and Student Life: Mr. Zimmer noted that the spring community newsletter will be in the mail shortly. He also congratulated the recent graduates of PWHS.

Safety and Wellness: No report.

Legislative: No report.

Municipal Liaisons: No report.

Mr. Johnson stated that it was with regret that the Board must take action on the resignation of Mrs. Luken effective June 30. He noted that she has served on the Board since August of 2004. Mrs. Luken sadly stated that circumstances in her life have changed and that she can no longer serve. She thanked the Board, administration, staff and community for the opportunity to work on behalf of the District. Mrs. Suchsland, Mrs. Moore and Mr. Zimmer also spoke highly of Mrs. Luken's service.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to accept Mrs. Luken's resignation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the administration to advertise the vacancy and set the application deadline for

noon on Friday, July 9.

Public Comment: Mr. Fiermonte sought official status of the District's planetarium effective July 1. He was informed that the facility is available for use but will not be used as part of the curriculum. Mr. Fiermonte expressed his continued disappointment in the planetarium closure and continued to push for alternative funding.

Mr. Kanavy commented on his concerns for the budget and future budgets given the current financial economic crisis. He stated that the Board should look at a number of alternatives for funding. He stated that serious reform, even perhaps the privatizing of education, was needed.

Mr. Fiermonte returned to the podium and continued to present financial data to show that the Board has enough funds to keep the planetarium open but chose to spend in other areas.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman
Board Secretary