

Colonial School District
District Operations
Facilities Management/Transportation Committee
Meeting Minutes
3/2/2012

Committee Chair Bernie Brady called the meeting to order at 7:34 AM.

Other Committee Members Present: Sue Moore, Kathy Oxberry, Julie Knudsen, Mel Brodsky

Other Board Members Present: Chris Frangiosa, Alan Tabachnick

Also Attending: Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Superintendent; Terry R. Yemm, Director of Operations; Ms. Linda Doll, Community Resident

Public Comment on the Agenda: None

The Committee reviewed a chart that provided the fluctuations of costs for fuel oil and natural gas over the last few months. The cost for fuel oil has increased while the cost for natural gas has decreased. This information was presented in support of a plan to install natural gas lines for the boilers in the Colonial, Plymouth and Ridge Park Elementary Schools. Based on the current costs of fuel oil, natural gas and the costs to install the natural gas lines, the return on investment for all three schools is less than two years. The installation of the natural gas lines and the installation of the necessary natural gas piping at all three (3) schools will be put out for bid and a recommendation for awarding a contract to proceed will be presented to the Board this spring. The construction work required for this installation will be completed in the summer months limiting disruption to the learning environment. Upon completion of this project all seven (7) schools will be heated with the use of natural gas eliminating our dependency on fuel oil. In addition to substantial financial savings related to the lower cost for natural gas, there is an added benefit as burning natural gas is much friendlier to the environment than burning fuel oil.

The status of an agreement for managing the electric demand for the District was provided for the Committee. The details of this agreement were presented and discussed at the July 2011 Committee meeting. The agreement is with Tangent Energy for three (3) years and is an additional benefit to our current contractual relationship for the solar energy project. Tangent Energy will install monitoring equipment in several schools. This equipment will automatically shut down certain pieces of electric equipment in order to lower our total electric use in the summer months. The electric utility will pay a fee based on the amount of electricity that we are able to reduce. The payment will be shared between Tangent and the District. There is no cost to the District for this agreement and Tangent estimates that the demand agreement will result in a savings of approximately \$160,000 over the term of the agreement.

Information was provided about a proposed agreement between PW and Germantown Academy whereby, in the event of an emergency, each school could relocate to the other school in the event a total evacuation is required. A meeting took place to discuss specific details of the agreement. Several items need further investigation but overall it appears that an agreement would be mutually beneficial. One specific topic that warrants further consideration is communicating specific details of an emergency directly to students. The District does provide details of a situation to parents via an e-mail or voice message. Providing a message directly to students may limit or eliminate the misinformation that occurs when students formulate their own opinions of what is occurring and communicating same to others. The Committee provided support in moving forward with developing this communication process.

Three (3) different opportunities for generating additional revenue for the District were provided for committee consideration. The first was an increase in the amount charged for the summer camp held at the PWHS. The results of an analysis performed provided that other Districts charge a much higher fee than what we charge. Accordingly, the Committee recommended that the annual cost be increased to \$5,000 which is an increase of approximately \$1,500. The second was a recommendation to increase the cost of parking permits at PWHS from \$10 to \$25 and the cost of parking tickets from \$5 to \$10. The Committee agreed to move forward with the increase. The third item was informational. The Food Service Department implemented a “grab and go” system for serving students at CMS. Certain foods are prepared and wrapped and placed in the new food slide, eliminating the need for a server. In addition, the students can move through the line much faster as they do not have to wait for someone to serve them. The system has been very successful to date as the ala carte sales have increased by over \$100 per day.

The status of a safety review, requested last fall, of the crosswalk at Germantown Pike and Mayflower Drive was provided. Included in the review was a determination for the need of a crossing guard. The crosswalk has the proper signage and is located within a 15 mile per hour speed zone. The crosswalk is used by students attending PW and CES who opt not to ride a bus. As Germantown Pike is classified as a hazardous road, the District is required to provide bus service to the neighborhood that is accessed by Mayflower Drive. Mr. Traister discussed this situation with the Police Chief of Whitemarsh Township and they agreed to perform an analysis to determine the amount of students that use that crossing during morning rush hour and after school. An analysis was performed and provided that on two different days there were less than ten (10) students that used that crossing in the morning for over a twenty one (21) minute span of time for PW and no students used the crosswalk for CES. The analysis of the afternoon yielded similar results. All members of the Committee agreed that the amount of students using the crosswalk over the span of time monitored did not warrant the hiring of a crossing guard. As an alternative to a crossing guard, the Committee reviewed information on a traffic safety device. The device is a stationary sign depicting a crosswalk that has blinking lights energized when a button switch is pushed. Students using the crosswalk would be instructed to press the button for each crossing alerting drivers to the crosswalk. The unit is solar powered limiting the amount of maintenance required. All members of the Committee were favorable to exploring the use of the units and determining if same

would be acceptable to all regulatory agencies. The cost for the new signs could be substantial. The Committee members felt that there may be an opportunity to secure some public funding to cover the cost of the signs. Accordingly, District Administration will explore any/all opportunities for public funding.

The status of the repair of a storm water pipe was provided for the Committee. While the repair is complete, a brief conversation took place regarding the responsibility for payment of the repair. The storm pipe is designed to handle storm water from Belvoir Road as well as water from roof drains and athletic fields on the Colonial Middle School campus. The District had a discussion with Plymouth Township regarding the possibility of contributing to the repair costs as the pipe serves a road that is the responsibility of the Township. The Township checked and found that they do not have an easement for the pipe and indicated that they did not feel responsible to contribute to the repair. The Committee asked that the District reach out to Plymouth Township to revisit the request for contribution for the repair. The request for shared cost was discussed with Plymouth Township Council and they decided to stay with their original position and not share any costs for the repair.

Additional Public Comment on the Agenda: None.

There being no further business before the committee, Mr. Brady adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:04 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry R. Yemm
Director of Operations