

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA**

Finance and Audit Committee Chairperson, Hope Luken, called to order a meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee at 6:15 P.M. on Wednesday, February 3, 2010 in the Superintendent's Conference Room located in the Colonial Elementary School at 230 Flourtown Road, Plymouth Meeting, PA.

Finance Committee Members Present: Kathleen Oxberry, Tom Sigafos, Mitch Zimmer

Other Board Members Present: Gary Johnson, Bernie Brady, Sue Moore, Beth Suchsland (Until 7:20 P.M.), Alan Tabachnick

Also Present: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent, Dr. Mary Ellen Gorodetzer, Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, Loren Szczney, Esquire Fox Rothschild, Tom Davis, Kelly Jowett

Mrs. Luken began the meeting by asking for any public comments. There were none.

Mrs. Luken then called for an executive session to discuss legal matters related to real estate tax assessment appeals and personnel items.

After the executive session, Mrs. Luken asked Mr. Bickleman to proceed with the remaining items on the agenda.

Mr. Bickleman reviewed the critical dates related to the 2010-11 Preliminary Budget. He noted that the preliminary budget is scheduled for board adoption at the work session to be held on February 16th. The Act 1 deadline is February 17th. In order for the board to have the flexibility to increase taxes above the Act 1 index of 2.9% the district must file for exceptions by March 4th and advertise the intent to apply by February 25th. PDE is required to notify the district of its actions on the exceptions by March 24th. Mr. Bickleman stated that the district will be filing for exceptions for the retirement contribution increase, special education expenditure increase and exceptions related to the decline in local revenue.

Mr. Bickleman reported that the current fund balance estimate for June 30, 2010 is \$8.9 million with an update scheduled for the week of February 8th.

A report of projected real estate tax increases for MONTCO districts was distributed to those present. The list is incomplete with 17 of the 21 districts reporting. Real estate tax increases range from a low of 2.9% to a high of 12.68%.

Mr. Bickleman explained that the Single Audit Report for June 30, 2009 will be presented by Pam Baker, CPA/Partner, Barbacane, Thornton & Co., at the work session on February 16th with board action for acceptance. A draft of the report will be distributed to the board next week.

The State Audit Report for fiscal years 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07, and 2007-08, was distributed to the committee and others. Mr. Bickleman stated that the state audit contained no findings and no observations. The state audit was a performance audit conducted by the Auditor General's Office during the 2008-09 fiscal year. The state audit report will also be considered for board acceptance at the February 18th regular meeting.

Mr. Bickleman commented on the outstanding student lunch account balances. He stated that the district's Food Service fund is currently carrying negative balances totaling nearly \$2,000 for students who have received lunches but have not paid. Lori McCoy and her staff have made numerous attempts to collect the debt or to have the parents apply for free and reduced price lunches. The committee agreed

that a truly needy child should not be denied lunch and that continued attempts should be made to have the parents apply for the free and reduced price lunches. It was also suggested that the Lori McCoy work with the principals to identify those children with true hardship cases and to pursue collections on those accounts that are not.

Mrs. Luken asked for comments from the public. Kelly Jowett expressed concern about any potential budget cuts and the impact those cuts would have on the instructional program. Mrs. Luken stated that while budget reductions are being contemplated, the instructional program, and the supports provided the teaching staff, will be the last to be considered.

There being no further business to be brought before the committee, Mrs. Luken adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph P. Bickleman
Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer