

WORKSHOP/SPECIAL MEETING - AUGUST 10, 2000

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop and Special Meeting Session on August 10, 2000, in the Fort Walton Beach Administration Building, 120 Lowery Place, S.E.

PRESENT: Rodney Walker, Chairman
Cindy Frakes, Vice-Chairman
Don Gaetz
Howard Hill
Lloyd Taylor

Walter Gordon, Superintendent
C. Jeffrey McInnis, Esq., Attorney to the Board

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., the purpose of the meeting being to review Agenda items, thereby expediting the Regular Meeting. Items may be considered in random order to accommodate visitors and presenters. Routine items not discussed during the Workshop were reviewed prior to the meeting with no further questions or comments from the Board.

The Chairman stated that items #1, #2, and #3 under Personnel Appointments would be deleted based on the previous Board action that placed a freeze on all hiring and upgrades of administrative personnel pending final approval of the 2000-2001 budget.

Consent item #19, The Boys and Girls Club Alternative Discipline Program, was amended by the Chairman to include Bruner Middle School in the program. The Chairman noted that there were errors in the proposal submitted to the Board and requested the school principals submitted a corrected version of the proposal to the Board prior to the meeting on Monday.

Bruner and Pryor Middle School principals, Rodney Nobles and Marissa Benton, responded to board members questions regarding the intent of the program and the expected results of the program.

The Chairman asked Mrs. Benton to respond to a parent's concern regarding the dress code at Pryor Middle School. Mrs. Benton stated that the dress code is consistent with Board policy. The only addition she has made to the Board's policy is to clarify that shorts or skirts should be no more than 4" above the knee. This addition was made in response to parents asking for clarification of the wording in the Board's policy which states that the minimum length of clothing should approach the top of the knee.

Bill Smith reported to the Board that he and the Superintendent have visited throughout the week those schools undergoing construction. All of the classrooms at these schools will be ready for the students to return on Monday. Additional manpower has been provided to the schools to assist in clean up and to move furniture and supplies back into the classrooms.

Mr. Gordon added that the only exception is one classroom at Silver Sands School in which the contractor encountered problems in locating the sewer lines to install the bathroom. The principal is aware of the delay in the completion of this classroom and has made arrangements to place the students in the media center. The contractor anticipates the completion of this classroom in about a week.

Mr. Walker and Mr. Gaetz offered their thanks to Dr. Smith and his staff and the Program Manager for their assistance in getting these classrooms ready for the teachers and students.

Mrs. Frakes and Mr. Hill indicated that they had questions regarding the Semi-Annual Technology Report. Since Diane Holman has transferred to another position, the

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Chairman requested they direct their questions to Mrs. Gunter or her designee prior to the meeting on Monday.

Consent item #2, Budget Amendment, was deleted from the Agenda.

Referencing the approval of insurance requirements for contractors, Mr. Hill questioned the District's obligation to pay a contractor \$10.00 as specified consideration for indemnification. Mr. McInnis responded that it is a statutory requirement that when the district receives indemnities such as these, there has to be consideration in exchange. The amount is a legal standard and is included in the price quote from the contractor.

Mr. Hill noted that the deadline for submission of the preliminary grant proposal to the National Science Foundation was prior to the Board meeting. Mary Eplett explained that this is a preliminary proposal and not a contract. The preliminary proposals will be reviewed by the Foundation and, if they like the preliminary, the district will then be invited to submit a formal proposal in October.

Mrs. Frakes asked if all the schools had expressed interest in the proposal and would they be able to commit to the matching funds. Ms. Eplett responded that all the secondary schools will be invited to participate in the grant if the district is extended the invitation to submit a full proposal in October. She added that it is her intent to use some funds from the professional development budget to assist the small schools, in particular, with the matching funds required. Also, several local businesses and the local military labs have offered the use of their equipment for this program.

Board members stated agreement to proceed with the proposal; therefore, the Chairman authorized the Superintendent to forward the preliminary proposal for the grant in order to meet the deadline for submission.

In response to questions from board members, Liz Cavanah reported that the district received approximately \$56,000 in the first quarter of the year and approximately \$102,000 in the second quarter as Medicaid Reimbursement. As directed by the Board, the funds have been placed in an escrow account. Discussion followed regarding the appropriate account in which to place the funds in order to best serve the district. The Chairman asked Mr. McInnis to assist the Finance Department in making this determination.

Mr. Hill and Mrs. Frakes expressed concern with filling the position in Student Services since it has been vacant for two years and asked if the position could be deleted at this time. Mr. McInnis responded that it would be appropriate for a motion to be made to delete the allocated position prior to approval of filling the position during the Special Meeting which has been advertised for today for the purpose of approving personnel recommendations for the 2000-2001 school year.

The Superintendent outlined the responsibilities of the position and offered explanation of the need to fill the position. Mr. Walker stated that the student intervention positions provide a valuable service and that he will support filling the position.

Emmett Windham advised the Board that approval of the zoning waivers would mean that two schools, Bluewater Elementary and Ruckel Middle, will be over the cap of 95% capacity.

Mr. Walker stated that since this was a problem with one school in particular last year, and now again this year, he was prepared to offer a motion stating that if a school accepts zoning waivers that will exceed the 95% capacity cap, the students would be allowed to attend the school as requested but the FTE funding would go to the school they are coming from with the exception of those special circumstances approved by the Superintendent.

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Mr. Gaetz stated that the 95% cap is not a Board policy but an administrative directive from the Superintendent. Principals violating this directive are being insubordinate and should be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Gaetz left the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Mr. McInnis requested an addition to the Consent Agenda to receive approval of a contract for a conservation project at Laurel Hill School. The Chairman approved the request.

The Chairman recessed the Workshop at 10:15 a.m. and called a short recess prior to convening the Special Meeting. The Special Meeting was convened at 10:20 a.m. with all members present except Mr. Gaetz.

SPECIAL MEETING

Mrs. Spence requested the Board's approval of the personnel recommendation for the 2000-2001 school year. She stated that the recommendations are to fill firm positions based on enrollment. Due to the significant decline in enrollment in the elementary schools, those positions are being filled with substitutes until the enrollment is confirmed.

The Chairman requested Mr. Hundley disseminate to the board members and all schools information showing the base allocation to schools and the amount of extra funding given to any school. He stated that with the loss of 886 FTEs, there is no way to cut the budget enough to cover the shortage except by cutting positions. However, enrollment usually increases after the Labor Day holiday and hopefully that will be the case this year.

Motion was made by Mr. Hill to approve all the personnel recommendations (new hires and transfers) as presented with the exception of the student intervention position in Student Services. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Frakes and carried 4-0, Mr. Gaetz absent. (Exhibit 00-482)

Motion was made by Mrs. Frakes and seconded by Mr. Hill to delete the student intervention position in Student Services. The motion failed 2-2, Mr. Walker and Mr. Taylor dissenting.

Motion to table, until the Regular Meeting on Monday, approving the personnel recommendation for the student intervention position in Student Services was made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mrs. Frakes and carried 4-0.

The Chairman concluded the Special Meeting and reconvened the Workshop at 10:35 a.m.

WORKSHOP:

Mr. Gordon informed the Board that the Shalimar Police Department will no longer be providing an officer to activate the traffic light at 12th Avenue and Meigs Drive in Shalimar. Therefore, on Monday night he will be bringing back to the Board the School Resource Officer Agreement to request the Board's approval of the floater position that was deleted previously. The floater position will be available to monitor this intersection as well as be available to substitute for a SRO who is absent from his regular assignment.

The Chairman stated that the budget workshop schedule will be announced on Monday. He requested the Superintendent present his request for the additional SRO at that time.

The meeting concluded with Board discussion concerning the projected loss in FTE and the impact this will have on the schools.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

WALTER C. GORDON
SUPERINTENDENT AND
EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD