

WORKSHOP MEETING - JULY 6, 2000

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Workshop Session on July 6, 2000, in the Fort Walton Beach Administration Building, 120 Lowery Place, SE.

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 9:10 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 approved the request of the Superintendent to add to the Consent Agenda (#24) a Professional Services Contract for an individual to assist the District staff with the budget preparation. He stated that Mr. McInnis is working with the individual to make the final arrangements for the contract and it will be presented to the Board for approval at the meeting on Monday. This matter was added as an emergency item due to the need for assistance in preparing the budget and to meet the time limitations.

The Chairman also added to the Consent Agenda (#25) as an emergency item the Articulation Agreement between the Board and OWCC due to the need to have this Agreement in place for the coming school year. Mr. McInnis stated that there was an issue of the renewal process but both parties have now agreed to the renewal terms. The new Agreement grants the Superintendent and the President of OWCC the authority to renew the Agreement annually upon mutual agreement of the terms.

Mr. McInnis informed the Board that the Charter School Contract for the OWCC Charter High School has been finalized and the contract being presented is consistent with the terms negotiated between the Superintendent and his staff and OWCC. The ESE issues have been clarified and agreed upon. The contract also contains a clause stating that OWCC will cooperate in any District mandated student assessments in order to compare the performance of students in the District with that of students in the charter school. Currently there are no mandated student assessments but if the District should mandate such, the District will also incur the cost. Copies of the contract will be provided at the conclusion of the workshop for board members to review prior to the meeting on Monday.

Dr. Richburg, President of OWCC, stated that the District staff and the College staff spent approximately five months negotiating the contract and that he was pleased with the final document.

Bill Smith informed the Board that the Lease Agreement for the property behind Valparaiso Elementary School and used as the playground has expired. The owner is willing to renew the lease but would like to sell the property to the School District.

Mr. McInnis recommended the Board have the property appraised before beginning negotiations to purchase the property. The Board agreed to have the property appraised.

Dr. Smith also stated that the records indicate that the Board owns a small parcel of property in the old Valparaiso area but there is not a deed for the property on file. An area church has expressed interest in purchasing this parcel along with adjacent property.

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He recommended, and the Board agreed, that a title search be conducted to verify ownership of the property.

Dr. Smith and Mr. McInnis further recommended a title search be conducted to verify ownership of other properties in and around the Niceville High School area—a portion of which is used as a practice field by the school. There has been an offer for an exchange of property in this area but clarification of ownership is required because the area has been replatted. A Pensacola firm issued a legal opinion a couple of years ago but a title search is recommended. The Board concurred with the recommendation.

Mr. McInnis stated that the title search on all these properties will be conducted by a title company and his law firm will not be providing a legal opinion.

Mr. Hill requested the Minutes of the June 26, 2000, Workshop be corrected to state that Mrs. Frakes, and not he, inquired of the District's use of the 10% discount offered by vendors if payment is made in accordance with their guidelines.

Mrs. Frakes noted that the Minutes of the Budget Workshop on June 29, 2000, should reflect that Mr. Gaetz was present for the meeting.

Referencing the missing property report, Mr. Hill questioned the report stating that a computer was sent to Accurate Computer Systems for repair and not returned. Mr. McInnis responded that there were several instances of this happening but this matter was disposed of by the Board about a year ago when the company went out of business.

The Board requested that a written explanation for all missing equipment be submitted by all schools. Mr. Walker explained to the other board members that the amount of dollars for equipment shown as missing is often much more than the actual value of the equipment because the State does not allow for depreciation.

Mr. Hill directed questions to Jeff Roser regarding capital outlay dollars in the IDEA Grant. Mr. Roser stated that he would recalculate the dollars and then meet with Mr. Hill to address his concerns prior to the meeting on Monday.

Mr. Gaetz stated that he believed that approval of the IDEA Grant would be giving defacto approval of the ESE Department budget. He asked if the grant could be tabled stating that he was not prepared to approve over \$1 million without the opportunity to review and ask questions.

Mr. Walker stated that the grant funds will still be subject to the Board's approval of the budget and the Board has the authority to make amendments at any time.

Mr. Roser stated that he had to meet the deadline for submission of the grant and without the grant the district cannot support the current services.

Mr. Gaetz asked that this item be moved to the Discussion Agenda (#2) and stated that he would be offering a motion stating that approval of the grant is subject to final budget approval and is without spending authority. The Chairman approved the request. The Superintendent asked Mr. Gaetz to provide a copy of his motion prior to the meeting on Monday.

Becky Spence requested Consent item #18B, Leave Requests, be deleted because there are none to submit at this time. She also requested Consent item #21, Teacher Evaluation Handbook, be deleted due to the need to make additional changes. The handbook will be resubmitted for the Board approval at a later meeting. The Chairman deleted these items as requested.

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Because of the Board's policy that a school cannot accept zoning waivers if they are at 95% capacity, Mr. Hill questioned the number of waivers to attend Ruckel Middle School. Mr. Gordon stated that he would verify the enrollment at the school.

Mr. Gaetz stated that he had received phone calls from parents stating they could not get a zoning waiver approved for their student to attend Lewis Middle School. Mr. Gordon responded that he was not aware that there was a problem and these calls should be referred to his office or to Mr. Windham.

Mr. Hill expressed concern with the waiver requested by Meigs Middle School for selected students to be allowed to serve as an office aide in lieu of a P.E. class. He stated that he felt the physical education class was more beneficial to the student. Mary Gunter stated that the waiver has been approved in the past and this is a request for continuation. Mr. Hill stated that he would discuss this issue with the school principal prior to the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

WALTER C. GORDON
SUPERINTENDENT AND
EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD