

REGULAR MEETING - MARCH 13, 2000

The Invocation was offered by Mrs. Frakes; the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Gaetz.

The School Board of Okaloosa County met in Regular Session on March 13, 2000, in the Okaloosa County Courthouse, Crestview, Florida.

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 6:00 p.m. and welcomed visitors and presenters.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mr. McInnis requested the Letter of Engagement with Carr, Riggs, and Ingram be added to the Discussion Agenda for approval. The Chairman so approved. All other changes to the Agenda were approved at Workshop.

Motion to approve the Agenda as amended was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Hill and carried unanimously:

Committee and Staff Reports: Item #2 was deleted

Consent Agenda (C.A.): Item #3 was moved to D.A. #4; item #4 was moved to D.A. #5

Discussion Agenda (D.A.): Added as item #4, C.A. #3; added as item #5, C.A. #4; added as item #6, Proposed Ability-based Grouping Program at Shalimar Elementary; added as item #7, Letter of Engagement with Carr, Riggs, and Ingram, LLP

Construction Program: Added as item #2, Program Status Report for February 2000

VISITORS:

1. The Okaloosa County Teacher of the Year Finalists and Winner were introduced to the Board by Mr. Gordon:

Teacher of the Year
Runner-up
Runner-up

Jeff Welsh, Antioch Elementary
Shawnea Tallman, Niceville High
Dale Willett, Choctawhatchee High

PUBLIC DISCUSSION: None

PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS:

1. Motion to approve the Superintendent's recommendation for the appointment of Dennis Hundley as Chief Financial Officer was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Hill and carried 3-2, Mr. Gaetz and Mrs. Frakes opposed (Exhibit 00-160).

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS (Workshop Only):

1. Facilities Construction Update, presented by Bill Smith

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2. Deleted - Okaloosa Academy Charter School Mid-Year Report 2000, presented by Susan Lowrey
3. Presentation of The University Schools Charter Proposal, presented by Susan Lowrey (Exhibit 00-161)
4. Presentation of the Liza Jackson Preparatory School Charter Proposal, presented by Susan Lowrey (Exhibit 00-162)
5. Recommendation of the Citizen's Review Committee on The University Schools and the Liza Jackson Preparatory School Charter School Applications, presented by Committee Chairman Ray Sansom

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended was made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mrs. Frakes and carried unanimously:

1. Minutes of Workshop Meeting of February 28, 2000, and Minutes of Regular Meeting of February 28, 2000, recommended by the Superintendent for approval.
2. Budget Amendment #5, presented by and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-163).
3. Moved to Discussion Agenda #4 - Budget Amendment requests for the Technology Program, presented by and recommended by the Superintendent for approval.
4. Moved to Discussion Agenda #5 - Monthly Financial Reports for February 2000, presented by and recommended by the Superintendent for approval.
5. Payment of Invoices dated March 13, 2000, presented by and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-164).
6. Warrants in the amount of \$69,947,926.73, presented by and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-165).
7. Surplus Property Lists, recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-166):
 - A. #00-18, Camcorder to be cannibalized for parts, Plew Elem.
 - B. #00-19, Lawnmower to be cannibalized for parts, Kenwood Elem.
8. Self-help Project to build a storage building at Walker Elementary School, presented by Bill Smith and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-167).
9. Self-help Project to build a softball concession building at Fort Walton Beach High School, presented by Bill Smith and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-168).
10. Volunteer List, compiled by Gayle Grimes and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-169).
11. Application for the SMARTer Kids Foundation Connections Program Grant submitted by Meigs Middle School, presented by Mary Gunter and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-170).
12. Application for the Data Collection for Academies for Career Development and Applied Technology Grant submitted by Fort Walton Beach High School, presented

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- by Mary Gunter and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-171).
13. Agreement between the School Board of Okaloosa County and Piccadilly Cafeteria (Mary Esther) to provide training to ESE students participating in the School-to-Work Program, presented by Liz Cavanah and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-172).
 14. Emerald Coast Marine Institute Phase II, presented by Mary Gunter and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-173).
 15. Agreement between the School Board of Okaloosa County and The University of West Florida to provide ESE Professional Development services at Valparaiso Elementary School, presented by Sue Larrimore and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-174).
 16. Application for 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, Schools and Towns Enhancing Performance Skills (STEPS) submitted by Combs-New Heights, Northwood and Southside Elementary Schools, presented by Mary Gunter and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-175).
 17. Personnel Recommendations, presented by Becky Spence and recommended by the Superintendent for approval:
 - A. New Hire Report (Exhibit 00-176)
 - B. Leave Requests (Exhibit 00-177)
 - C. Transfer Report (Exhibit 00-178)
 18. Employment Separations, presented by Becky Spence and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-179).
 19. Reinstatement of Sick Leave due to line-of-duty illness/injury/medical examination, presented by Becky Spence and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-180):
 - A. Sondra Durrett, Pryor, 1 day
 - B. Mary Purkey, Pryor, 3 day
 20. Zoning Waivers, presented by Emmett Windham and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-181).
 21. Bids and Purchasing, presented by Rick Norris and recommended by the Superintendent for approval (Exhibit 00-182; see bid file for additional information):
 - A. Approval of Bids and Purchasing Requests:
 - (1) Renewal of Bid #98-B41 Roofing Repairs, Fixed Price Bid, awarded to Bel-Mac Roofing, Edwards Roofing and Escambia Roof Masters
 - (2) Renewal of Bid #98-B42 Office & Classroom Consumables awarded to Gulf Coast Office Products for Office Consumables and to School Specialty for Classroom Consumables
 - (3) Renewal of RFP #99-5 Uniform Service Contract awarded to Cintas Corporation, same terms and conditions
 - (4) CTB/McGraw-Hill, Sole Source for Scoring Services for Spring 2000 TerraNova Testing in the amount of \$39,800.00, Student Services
 - (5) Institute for School Innovation, Sole Source for purchase of Project CHILD materials in the amount of \$12,675.00, Curriculum/Instruction

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- (6) Advanced Placement Program, Sole Source for purchase of AP Exams in the amount of \$27,750.00, Niceville High
- (7) Advanced Placement Program, Sole Source for purchase of AP Exams in the amount of \$15,042.00, Choctawhatchee
- (8) Emergency Telephone Quote #00-Q370 Water Air Cooled Chiller awarded to Williams-Trane of Florida in the amount of \$25,250.00 for Shalimar Elementary

B. Rejection of Bids and Purchasing Requests: None

DISCUSSION AGENDA:

1. Mr. Gordon stated that he has not received a legal opinion from the Attorney General regarding the waiver to pay a stipend to the SAC Chairperson at Shalimar Elementary; therefore, he recommended this request remain on the table. The Board concurred with the recommendation.
2. Superintendent's recommendation on The University Schools Charter School Application (Exhibit 00-183)- Approved during Public Hearing session
3. Superintendent's recommendation on the Liza Jackson Preparatory School Charter School Application (Exhibit 00-184)- Approved during Public Hearing session
4. Mr. Walker explained that the Budget Amendment requests for the Technology Program were to provide funds from operating accounts sufficient to fund the program. This is necessary because the amounts budgets, while correct in total, anticipated a higher percentage of needs being capital funds (Exhibit 00-185).

Motion to approve the Budget Amendment requests for the Technology Program was made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Gaetz and carried unanimously.

5. Motion to table the Monthly Financial Reports for February 2000 pending the mid-year audit report was made by Mr. Gaetz, seconded by Mr. Hill and carried unanimously.

The Chairman recessed the Regular Meeting at 6:15 p.m. and called to order the scheduled Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mr. McInnis stated that the purpose of the hearing was to receive public comment on the charter school applications for The University Schools and the Liza Jackson Preparatory School.

The Chairman called for public comment on The University Schools.

Mr. Bob Schmidt, representing the Board of Directors of The University Schools, requested the Board approve the charter school application for a period of three years instead of the two years recommended by the Superintendent.

Motion to approve The University Schools charter school application for a term of three years and that the annual evaluation of progress be contracted to an outside agency, to include a thorough review of data as agreed upon by district staff and charter officials was made by Mr. Gaetz, seconded by Mr. Hill and carried unanimously.

The Chairman called for public comment on the Liza Jackson Preparatory School.

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Mrs. Jo Henderson, representing the Board of Directors of the Liza Jackson Preparatory School, requested the Board grant the charter school a five year contract instead of the three years recommended by the Superintendent to assist the school in obtaining financing for an appropriate facility.

Motion was made by Mr. Hill and seconded by Mr. Taylor to approve the Liza Jackson Preparatory School charter school application for a term of three years and that the annual evaluation of progress be contracted to an outside agency, to include a thorough review of data as agreed upon by district staff and charter officials.

Terri Roberts stated that in looking at available facilities for the school and in talking with developers regarding remodeling and/or renovation of facilities, a five year contract will allow them to obtain more favorable financing terms on the facility which will in turn free up more dollars for the education of students.

Based on Mrs. Roberts' rationale for the request, Mr. Gaetz offered a friendly amendment to grant a five year contract. Mr. Hill and Mr. Taylor accepted the amendment and the motion as amended carried unanimously.

The Chairman concluded the Public Hearing and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 6:25 p.m.

DISCUSSION AGENDA (cont.):

6. Motion was made by Mr. Gaetz to establish an ability-based grouping program at Shalimar Elementary School as a learning experiment for high achieving students in grades K-2 for the 2000-01 school year, to designate \$50,000 as start-up funds for the program with \$25,000 being taken from the carry-forward funds of the school and \$25,000 from school district reserves, to establish a parent oversight committee to review the progress of the program and make recommendations to the Board related to continuance or changes in the program, and to request the Superintendent provide to the Board, within 30 days, his recommendation regarding the continuance of the current gifted center programs or whether to decentralize gifted education. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hill for discussion. (Exhibit 00-186)

Mr. Gaetz noted that the Finance Department records indicate that Shalimar Elementary has \$49,000 in undesignated funds. He also noted that he has been advised that 30 days for the recommendation on gifted education programs may not be possible. With that in mind, he stated that he would be willing to change that request to a reasonable period of time and upon the call of the Chairman.

Mr. Hill stated that he would prefer, rather than voting on this matter, that it be presented to the stakeholders for discussion and for them to determine if it meets the intent of their original proposal. Approval of the motion as stated would be imposing the program on the school.

Mr. Gaetz stated that it was not his intent to impose the proposal upon the school so he would insert the word "offers" where the motion states establish or designates. If the school principal or advisory council do not want to accept the proposal, then the Board has made a good faith effort to offer funding and cooperation. Mr. Hill stated that he would accept the change.

Mrs. Frakes asked if the school could accept all or part of the offer. Mr. Gaetz responded that it was his intent that this be an offer, as a whole, that the Board is making and it would be up to the school to accept it or reject it.

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Mr. Gordon distributed a letter from the principal of Shalimar Elementary rejecting the proposal by Mr. Gaetz (Exhibit 00-187). He stated that it would be appropriate for the school principal, school advisory council and school community to have the opportunity to look at the proposal and to come back to the Board to discuss the options.

Mr. Walker stated that he would prefer the motion be withdrawn since the principal has rejected the proposal. Mr. Gaetz responded that he would still like to make the offer to the school and give them the opportunity to accept or reject the proposal.

Referencing a letter from Attorney Lou Ray to Mr. Gaetz that was forwarded to the board members, Mrs. Frakes asked if there was a conflict in what Mr. Ray was requesting and what is offered in this proposal. Mr. McInnis responded that he sent a copy of the proposal to Mr. Ray on Friday, as requested, and the only response he received was an acknowledgment of receipt of the proposal.

Mr. Taylor stated that he would support the motion with the understanding that the Board is making an offer to the school and not a mandate.

Mrs. Frakes reminded the board members that it was agreed upon at Workshop that the proposal would be tabled if additional information or time to discuss the proposal was needed. She stated that she would prefer to see the amended motion in writing before voting; therefore, she moved to table the proposal. Mr. Walker passed the gavel to Mr. Taylor and seconded the motion. The motion failed 2-3, Mr. Gaetz, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Hill dissenting. The gavel was returned to the Chairman.

Mr. Gaetz reiterated the motion with the changes to make the proposal an offer to the school and not a mandate:

The Board adopts the following actions with respect to a proposed ability-based grouping program at Shalimar Elementary School.

- A. The Board offers to establish an ability-based grouping program at Shalimar Elementary School as a learning experiment for high achieving students in grades K-2 for the 2000-01 school year. This undertaking is expressly not a "school-within-a-school" but is an academic program. The methods of selection and instruction are left to the school with the understanding that the Board will expedite any Florida School Code policy waivers essential to operating the program.
- B. The Board acknowledges receipt of information from Shalimar Elementary subsequent to the school's original presentation which represents that no additional recurring funds will be required following start-up. Therefore, this action specifically limits district funding to a share of start-up funds.
- C. The Board offers to designate \$50,000 as start-up funds for this program. The funds shall be drawn as follows: \$25,000 from carry-forward funds of the school and \$25,000 from school district reserves.
- D. If this program is funded with Okaloosa School District funds, the Board establishes a parent oversight committee to be comprised of six to eight parents, half of whom shall be parents of students participating in the high ability groups and half shall be parents of other students in the school. The oversight committee shall review the progress of the program and make recommendations to the Board related to continuance or changes in the program.

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- E. The Superintendent is requested to provide to the Board, within a reasonable period of time and upon the call of the Chairman, his recommendations regarding the current gifted center programs, whether they should be continued and if so, how they shall be staffed, funded and organized, or whether gifted education should be decentralized to individual schools and if so, how decentralized gifted education should be staffed, funded and organized.

The Chairman called for a vote on the motion as amended by Mr. Gaetz. The motion carried 4-1, Mr. Walker dissenting.

7. Mr. McInnis stated that the prior action of the Board was to communicate with the firm of Carr, Riggs, and Ingram for an expansion of the Scope of Work to do some interim accounting and a proposed Letter of Engagement with the firm for the services to be rendered is being presented. To be consistent with his votes in the past, Mr. Gaetz advised that he wishes to abstain from voting on this matter. Mr. McInnis then requested the Board rescind its previous action regarding this matter to allow Mr. Gaetz to abstain.

Mr. Gaetz stated that Steve Riggs is a partner in the CPA firm of Carr, Riggs, and Ingram, and is also a limited partner in a business in which he is a general partner. Although his business relationship with Mr. Riggs has nothing to do with the accounting practice's relationship with the School Board, in an abundance of caution, he would abstain from voting in this matter. (Form 8B on file)

Motion to rescind the previous action of the Board for an expansion of the Scope of Work with the CPA firm of Carr, Riggs, and Ingram, LLP, was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mr. Hill and carried 4-0, Mr. Gaetz abstaining.

Mr. McInnis presented the proposed Letter of Engagement with the firm of Carr, Riggs, and Ingram for the Scope of Work and setting forth the fee schedule. He stated that Mr. Riggs has indicated that they are prepared to deliver the work to the Board by March 31, 2000. (Exhibit 00-188)

Motion to approve the Letter of Engagement was made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried 4-0, Mr. Gaetz abstaining for the reasons stated previously.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM/OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE'S BUSINESS:

1. Motion to approve Sverdrup/Delta Capital Outlay Change Order No. 16, Program 2, was made by Mr. Taylor, seconded by Mrs. Frakes and carried unanimously (Exhibit 00-189).
2. The Board acknowledged receipt of the Program Status Report for February 2000 covering the activities of Sverdrup/Delta on the Okaloosa County School District Construction Management Program, submitted by Ray Gabriel, Program Manager (Exhibit 00-190).

BIDS AND PURCHASING: None

ATTORNEY'S BUSINESS:

1. Mr. McInnis advised the Board that Employee #262-31-9586 has requested an Administrative Hearing regarding his termination. As a procedural matter, he requested the Board's approval to forward the request to the Division of Administrative Hearings and to authorize the Superintendent to retain the services of Attorney Joe Hammons for representation in this personnel matter since he will be representing the Board.

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Motion to authorize the Attorney to forward to the Division of Administrative Hearings the request of Employee #262-31-9586 for a hearing regarding his termination was made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Gaetz and carried unanimously.

The Agreement between the School Board of Okaloosa County and Hammons & Whittaker, P.A., for representation by this firm of the Okaloosa County School Board relative to matters involving personnel issues to be assigned on a case-by-case basis at the rate of \$135.00 per hour plus actual costs incurred was approved on a motion by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mrs. Frakes and carried unanimously (Exhibit 00-191).

BOARD MEMBERS' BUSINESS:

1. Request for information regarding the rates charged Bluewater Elementary for district services was made by Howard Hill at Workshop (Exhibit 00-192)

Mr. Gaetz asked the status of summer school for this year. Mr. Gordon responded that staff and principals are looking for ways to fund summer school this year, that it will be offered if at all possible and hopefully at the same level as before to include academics, band and athletics.

Mrs. Frakes invited the board members to participate in a bus trip to Tallahassee on March 29 along with members of The Alliance and community members to do some lobbying with the legislative delegation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BUSINESS:

1. Mr. Gordon stated that, as he has mentioned before, there has been a request from the City of Fort Walton Beach to purchase a portion of the Lowery Place property for the construction of a library (Exhibit 00-193). Mr. Silverboard, City Manager, has indicated that they are interested in that portion of property at the rear of the parking lot next to the Methodist Church. He stated that it is his recommendation that the District not sell any portion of the property at this time since we still occupy the property and parking is already a problem.
2. Ruckel Middle School students to participate in the Tri-State Math Olympiad in Dothan, Alabama, on March 20, 2000 (Exhibit 00-194).

There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon motion being duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Teresa Epperson, Recorder

WALTER C. GORDON
SUPERINTENDENT AND
EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

RODNEY L. WALKER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD