

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
September 16, 2014

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in regular session duly called at 6 p.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Gunnar Paulson, Chairman; Leanetta McNealy, Vice-Chairman; April Griffin, Carol Oyenarte and Eileen Roy, members; Owen Roberts, Superintendent; and Jaime White, Board Attorney.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Paulson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

- ADOPTION OF AGENDA                      Motion by Dr. McNealy    Seconded by Mrs. Roy
- Chairman Paulson announced the deletion of Consent Agenda Item 7, Toshiba America 6-12 Education Grant.
- Moved to adopt the agenda for the September 16, 2014, School Board meeting, as amended.
- The question was called.    Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES                      Motion by Mrs. Griffin    Seconded by Mrs. Roy
- Moved to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2014, Superintendent's Evaluation Instrument Workshop, as presented.
- The question was called.    Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0
- Motion by Mrs. Griffin    Seconded by Mrs. Roy
- Moved to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2014, School Board Meeting, as presented.
- The question was called.    Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0
- PRESENTATION
- FIVE STAR SCHOOL AWARD – A. Q. JONES                      Volunteer Coordinator Liz Stark reviewed the extensive criteria for the Florida Department of Education's Five-Star School Award. Because of its exemplary community involvement, the A. Quinn Jones Center won it for the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. The Board and Superintendent extended congratulations.
- SCHEDULED AGENCY AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION                      Ms. Brooke Smith, Youth Marketing Director, addressed the Board regarding a program the Heart Association conducts for students, to help them impact their families with heart-healthy information.
- BOARD MEMBER/ SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS
- Mrs. Oyenarte:
- Thanked the Facilities Department staff for keeping everything going, even with diminished funding. She expressed great appreciation to the Benefits Department, specifically Sharon White, for going beyond the call of duty in assisting her during a difficult time.
- Mrs. Griffin:
- Commended Attorney Delaney on a recent recognition.
  - Is having a plant sale at Kirby, to benefit several district projects.
  - Extended invitations to Gainesville Garden Club's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
  - Announced the Crime Prevention Awards Banquet on November 8 at

the Senior Citizen Recreation Center and suggested the Board reserve a table.

Chairman Paulson:

- Requested that Citizen Input begin at this point, with the remainder of Board/Superintendent announcements following.

CITIZEN INPUT

Ms. Susan Bowles [teacher who brought attention to elementary FAIR testing] apologized for extra work she’s put on anyone and thanked many for their support, including Dr. Roberts, Board members, her principal, other teachers, parents and the community. She especially thanked her students for the joy they bring her.

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PUBLIC HEARING --

ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTIONS FOR THE MILLAGE AND BUDGET FOR THE 2014-2015 FISCAL YEAR

The regular Board meeting was recessed and a Public Hearing convened.

Mr. Alex Rella, Budget Director, provided information on Resolution No. 15-03--Adoption of the Millage for the 2013-14 Fiscal Year. It included an explanation of the Rolled-Back Millage Rate, Required Local Effort (RLE), Discretionary Operating Millage, Capital Outlay, Voter-Approved Operating, Millage Rates, Summary of Changes, and the Resolution 15-03 and 15-04. He also encouraged the public to view the online Finance/Budget page for more detailed information. Mr. Rella read the Millage Resolution.

There was no Public input.

**a. Resolution No. 15-03--Adoption of the Millage for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year**

Motion by Mrs. Griffin                      Seconded by Dr. McNealy

Moved to approve the Superintendent’s recommendation to adopt Resolution No. 15-03, as presented.

Dr. Paulson pointed out that the local millage is the only millage the School Board has control over.

The question was called                      Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

**b. Resolution No. 15-04--Adoption of the Budget for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year**

There was no Public input.

Motion by Mrs. Griffin                      Seconded by Dr. McNealy

Moved the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve Resolution No. 15-04, as presented.

Dr. Roberts commented on his intent that the reserve is replenished and maintained. Dr. Paulson stated that it has been the priority of this Board to keep a balanced budget without using reserves. He asked some questions on the budget and made comments.

Dr. Paulson read a number of questions for the record, and stated that he needs the answers, prior to voting on the budget. [See attached document: *September 16, 2014, Board Meeting, Dr. Gunnar Paulson*]. Mrs. Roy requested that all budget documents be dated.

Mr. Ward, Mrs. Clarke and Mr. Lyons responded to some of the questions.

Dr. Paulson requested:

1. Updated scatttergram of instructional personnel.
2. An Executive Session as soon as possible.
3. Board Workshop as soon as possible.
4. Hiring freeze on Instructional units, at present level. Wants reasons for hiring and additional hires to go through Dr. Roberts.

The Board officially authorized Dr. Roberts to have the authority to make decisions regarding hiring of personnel or maintain the freeze.

The question was called on adoption of the Budget.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

The Public Hearing was adjourned and the regular Board meeting was reconvened.

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BOARD MEMBER/  
SUPERINTENDENT  
ANNOUNCEMENTS  
(continued)

Dr. Roberts:

- Congratulated Lincoln Middle School student Cindy Jie, who is one of 71 young people who will represent the United States in the World Youth Chess Championship in South Africa.
- Thirty-three students have been named National Merit Scholarship semifinalists, based on outstanding performance on the Pre-SAT exam. They will now have to meet rigorous standards to make it to finalist status.
- Four students were recognized by the College Board as National Achievement semifinalists, and four were honored by the National Hispanic Achievement Program for their performance.
- Judith Weaver, High Springs Community School media specialist, was awarded the Northeast Florida Library Information Network's Member of the Year Award.
- Thanked the Board for a very successful Retreat.

Dr. McNealy:

- Informed the Board of the passing of Sam Butz, an avid member of the Kiwanis University Group, which sponsors the ACPS Citizen of the Year award. He was a very hard worker and will be missed by all who knew him.
- Was present recently during dismissal time at Metcalfe, where she reported a very well behaved and orderly transition. She commended Principal Pat Phillips and staff.

- The recent School Board Retreat was excellent. She is reenergized after two productive days of work. She stated that Facilitator Mike Lannon was outstanding and thanked Dr. Roberts for bringing him.

Mrs. Roy:

- Concurred with Dr. McNealy's Retreat comments regarding the Retreat.
- Regarding Dr. Roberts' announcement about the High Springs media specialist, Mrs. Roy pointed out that Judith Weaver is also a champion for the environment. She raised the awareness of water needs by having the whole student body read a book set in Africa: *A Long Walk to Water*.

Dr. Roberts:

- Commented that he appreciated Ms. Bowles' statement in the earlier part of Citizen Input. He stated that there is an appropriate way for him to respond to testing issues, but he appreciates the stance that others might take.
- Congratulated Chiles Elementary for raising \$2,000 for ALS research, with their recent Ice Bucket Challenge.

CITIZEN INPUT  
(continued)

Citizens addressed the Board on the following topics:

Mr. Ian Fletcher, Chamber of Commerce Business Development Committee, announced an event where the Chamber's new economic development plan will be announced. He also invited Board members to attend a Meet and Greet event where Dr. Roberts will be introduced to the business community.

Several parents provided information on the *Step Up for Students* program, and spoke as advocates

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Roy

Seconded by Dr. McNealy

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-10, with the deletion of item. 7.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

SCHEDULE WORKSHOPS

Motion by Mrs. Roy

Seconded by Dr. McNealy

Moved to schedule the Rising Star Academy Charter School Workshop for Tuesday, October 7, 2014 at 3:30 p.m., and the Superintendent's 100 Day Report for Tuesday, December 9, 2014 at 3:30 p.m.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no citizen input.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

DRAFT 2015  
LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Ms. Jackie Johnson explained that it's time to develop the 2015 Legislative Program, which is slated for completion in time for the Alachua County Legislative Hearing in late November. As a starting point, Ms. Johnson provided last year's Legislative program, as well as the FSBA's legislative program from last year and their proposal for this year.

Extensive discussion was held, and requests/suggestions made. Ms. Johnson will consolidate the input and bring a Draft program to the October 21, 2014, meeting.

POSSIBLE RENAMING  
OF HIGH SPRINGS  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Discussion was held on the possible renaming of High Springs Community School after the late Tom Diedeman, as was suggested through some emails. There was general agreement that the idea would need to be brought to the Board, based on very widespread support from the High Springs Community.

BOARD MEMBER/  
SUPERINTENDENT  
REQUESTS

Mrs. Roy favored the suggestion of Retreat Facilitator Mike Lannon that the Board consider impact fees. Superintendent Roberts stated that, with several projects already going on in the community, this should be decided as soon as possible, or the opportunity will be missed.

Mrs. Roy inquired about the status of a previous request for a raise for GED teachers. Dr. McNealy stated that the information sent to Board members was only past practice and not what could be done. Dr. Roberts suggested that the October 21 Finance Update could include information on the impact of a raise for all employees in the same class of employees as GED.

In response to a question from Mrs. Roy, Dr. Roberts stated that he will do a complete review of testing matters and report to the Board.

Dr. Paulson requested that an Executive Session be held as soon as it can be legally advertised.

Brian Moore, staff attorney, recommended that an upcoming FSBA Legislative Committee meeting be legally advertised, since Mrs. Griffin and Dr. Paulson will both be in attendance.

Mr. Scott Ward, Assistant Superintendent, Planning and Budget, asked for a moment to address the chairman regarding October 21 Finance presentation. He then requested that discussion of an audit committee be held at that meeting. Mr. Ward stated that establishing an audit committee would be important as a means to increase transparency and build confidence in the financial staff.

A document from the American Association of Government Accountants was distributed, reviewing what makes an effective audit committee. Mr. Ward suggestion would be that each Board member and the Superintendent would select a member for the committee.

The committee would report directly to the Board without any influence or direction from finance or budget administration. Mr. Ward stated that the term of service for a typical audit cycle runs a year, or at least a half a year.

At Mrs. Roy's comment that it might be difficult to find someone for the task, Mr. Ward explained that there are agencies he could provide information on. In addition, the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) has people who volunteer to sit on audit committees.

Dr. Paulson felt it to be unusual to have a committee of auditors. He will talk to people to see what's done in other districts. He felt if it is that involved, it would be hard to get people.

Dr. Roberts stated that Mr. Ward shared the idea of an audit committee some time ago, because of questions about accountability, transparency and accuracy. Dr. Roberts stated that the Superintendent can rise and fall based on the way finances are handled, and supports Mr. Ward's recommendation to establish an audit committee, and he urged the Board to consider. He wants to make sure that we have accountability, that nothing would ever be questioned from this day forward.

Dr. Paulson stated that he is going to check with other people that have these review committees, and he'll find out what other districts have.

Dr. Roberts requested Mr. Ward update the Board at the upcoming October 21 Finance Department Update and provide a plan to go forward.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.