

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
November 21, 2000

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in regular session duly called at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Bill Cake, Bev Carroll, Jeannine Cawthon, Chester Leathers, and Barbara Sharpe, members; Mary Chambers, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Chambers, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

OATH OF OFFICE

Judge Jim Nilon administered the Oath of Office to newly-elected Board member Jeannine Cawthon. Judge Larry Turner administered the Oath of Office to Board member Barbara Sharpe, who is entering her third term.

ELECTION OF
CHAIRMAN

Superintendent Chambers opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of the School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

Mr. Cake nominated Dr. Leathers to serve as Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, and Mrs. Carroll seconded the nomination.

There being no other nominations, Dr. Leathers was declared Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, by acclamation.

ELECTION OF VICE-
CHAIRMAN

Superintendent Chambers opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida.

Mrs. Sharpe nominated Mr. Cake to serve as Vice-Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, and Dr. Leathers seconded the nomination.

There being no other nominations, Mr. Cake was declared Vice-Chairman of The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, by acclamation.

ESTABLISHMENT OF
BOARD MEETING
DATES AND TIMES

Superintendent Chambers recommended the Board continue to hold its business meetings the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the superintendent's recommendation to continue Board meeting dates the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7 p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF
BOARD ATTORNEY
AND ESTABLISHMENT
OF FEES

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

Motion by Dr. Leathers

Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved to reappoint Mr. James F. Lang as School Board attorney at the rate of \$150 per hour.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

The Board recessed and reconvened with Chairman Leathers presiding.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the minutes of October 17, 2000, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of November 21, 2000, as presented.

The question was called

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBERS/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Carroll made the following announcements:

- The Buchholz High School band departed for New York City to perform in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and will also appear on the Today Show the morning of November 22, 2000.
- Congratulated the many teachers and students for their efforts in earning Advanced Placement monies.
- Thanked everyone for their support and kindness during her recent illness and noted she may need to leave the meeting early.

Mrs. Sharpe made the following announcements:

- Commended Duval Elementary on their first edition of their newsletter *Dragon Talk*.
- Commended the Human Resources Division for including information on substitute teaching in the teacher handbook.
- Commended the Transportation Department for sending post cards home with students who exhibit good behavior.

Mrs. Sharpe addressed the Board as follows:

For the past two years, the last year in particular, our School Board

and school district faced some of the toughest challenges and issues ever. Together, we weathered the storm. Without the help of our incredible teachers, principals, parents, all staff, volunteers, and the community, I sincerely believe that our school district would have been placed in indefinite turmoil. Thanks to all of you for staying focused on our children.

We will always be faced with challenges, whether ethical or otherwise, but there is a bottom-line premise for my interest in ethics. Unethical behavior sparks a failure mode that could run pervasively throughout the entire school district, all the way to the bottom line, given enough time.

There are two overriding reasons for my concern with ethics: First, a basic moral code that we value and subscribe to and, second, a common-sense law of credibility with our students, staff, parents, and our community. Regaining our strong credibility will take substantive reorganization and not just a quick paint job of the façade.

I ask that we make individual decisions based on our policies, general guidelines, common sense, and that we always try do what is right, and what is best for all of our students.

Being your Chairman this past year was a tough row to hoe, but I always did my best to meet the challenge “head on”—and sometimes it took every ounce of courage that I could summon. Sheer determination to do the right thing kept me going—but, always, it was with a deep abiding faith, and the steadfast support and love of my husband Cleve; my daughters, Leslie, Debra and Tami; and all of my dear friends. But most of all, it was because of my deep commitment to all the children of Alachua County.

I am proud to say that we are moving forward under new leadership, and I am confident that we are finally on the right track. We are about the business of answering the needs of our children, parents, staff, and community.

As your Chair, I hope that I have served you well, and that the transition will be smooth.

Chairman Leathers thanked Mrs. Sharpe for her leadership during the past year.

Superintendent Chambers invited the public to attend the annual meeting of the Alachua County School Board Leasing Corporation immediately following the School Board meeting.

The Superintendent also introduced former School Board member Mrs. Barbara Gallant to make a special presentation.

Mrs. Gallant congratulated Mrs. Cawthon on her election to the School Board and presented her with a collage and read a poem dealing with leadership entitled "The Torch."

Chairman Leathers attended a legislative meeting with the newly elected legislative delegation, sponsored by the Alachua County Council of PTAs.

The Board extended condolences to the families and friends of former and current employees.

PRESENTATION/
RECOGNITION—
JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

Mr. Dan Davis, supervisor, Vocational Education, reported on the recent fundraising events held to raise money for Junior Achievement. He introduced Ms. Pat Bolinski, Executive Director, to present an overview of Junior Achievement.

Ms. Bolinski informed the Board that Junior Achievement is a non-profit organization which sponsors programs and teaches students the principles of economics and success skills to inspire them to value free enterprise and improve their lives.

Mr. Davis presented Ms. Bolinski with a plaque in recognition of her outstanding efforts on behalf of the students of the Alachua County school system.

RECOGNITION—
FLORIDA COUNCIL
FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHERS OF THE
YEAR

Mr. John Simms, curriculum supervisor, recognized the following Florida Council for Social Studies Teachers of the Year: Theda Buckley, Terwilliger Elementary; Cynthia Gardner-Biggs, Mebane Middle; and Dr. Joseph Waldorf, Bucholz High schools.

CITIZEN INPUT

The following suggestions/recommendations were presented to the Board for consideration:

- Mr. Ralph Hess, citizen, provided the Board with statistical information on the lack of preparation and improvement of graduates enrolled in Santa Fe Community College who took college-level exams and were required to take remedial courses to correct their deficiencies. He stated that changes were made to curriculum, including an increase in curriculum staff, but of no benefit to the students. He requested the Board order a coordinated study to determine exactly what is needed to bring graduates up to academic standards.

Chairman Leathers offered his assistance to discuss this issue further with Mr. Hess.

- Mr. Jack Martin, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, read a City of Gainesville proclamation proclaiming the week of November 19-25, 2000, as Christian Heritage Week in the City of Gainesville. The Board was urged to share this valuable and historical information with students.
- Dr. Gunnar Paulson, president, ACEA, congratulated Mrs. Cawthon and Mrs. Sharpe on their elections.
- Career service employees expressed their disappointment with the recent impasse in negotiations and failed negotiation attempts. Urged the Board to bring career service salaries up to the minimum.
- Mr. Neil Drake, principal, One Room School House, invited the Board to visit their new location at NE 15 Street, and also thanked district staff members for their support.
- Several teachers expressed support of career service employees and urged the Board to increase their salaries.
- A Gainesville High School teacher addressed the Board on behalf of his students and their newly founded group Students United to Reform Education (SURE). Students are learning the skills necessary for speech writing, public speaking, etc., and effecting positive change. He voiced his support of them in their crusade to Tallahassee to obtain better funding for all schools in the state of Florida and urged the Board to listen to these students.
- A citizen urged the Board to go beyond impasse and pay career service employees what they deserve and gave the Board permission to raise taxes if it would go directly to schools.

Responding to a request from Mrs. Carroll, Dr. Chambers explained how the School Board must levy the millage set by the Legislature.

Responding to Mrs. Carroll's request, Mr. Wittmer briefly explained the Board's current position during impasse. He stated that negotiations have ceased and impasse has been declared and the School Board is no longer a party to negotiations. The Board's status has changed and a decision will be made at a legislative hearing by the School Board. PERC has been notified and the contract provides for a mediator.

Board attorney Lang stated that before impasse was declared, the Board was the governmental entity. Now that negotiations are at impasse, the Board is the legislative body. If the matter is not resolved, the School Board, sitting as the legislative body, is above the negotiations and should not engage with any members of the union. The superintendent may speak with members of the union, but Board members should not and should come to the table as the legislative body.

Mrs. Carroll informed the community that the bargaining information can be found on the district's web site.

A citizen questioned why the instructional contract cannot be approved by the Board since a tentative agreement has been reached.

Mr. Wittmer explained that there is no legal reason why the teacher contract cannot be approved by the Board, but ACEA has made the decision not to go to ratification until completion of the Career Service contract.

RESOLUTION NO. 01-02,
QUALIFIED ZONE
ACADEMY BONDS

Mr. Keith Birkett, director, Business Services/Budgeting, reported that Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) is a financing initiative that was created by the federal government to allow school districts to apply for interest free loans, encourage business partnership relationships and to enhance business partner relationships.

The state of Florida has been allocated \$24 million in QZAB bonds—Dade county is applying for \$15 million, Hillsborough is applying for \$9 million, and Alachua County is applying for \$5 million. The plan is to use these dollars to replace computers in qualified schools in line with the technology audit. In order for schools to qualify for these bonds, their student population must consist of 35% or more on free and reduced lunch. The district currently has 33 schools that qualify for these QZAB bonds. The district must provide to the Department of Education assurances that private business partners are contributing at least 10% of the amount of money being requested. They must also prepare a budget and a written presentation on how the money is to be spent. Approximately \$500,000 is needed to be supported with private contributions of either cash or in-kind volunteer type contributions. The district has received letters of more than \$1.3 million in commitments for the district's schools. He commended the principals and staff for their efforts and hard work during this period.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the resolution and required assurances for the issuance of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) to the Florida Department of Education.

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

AUTHORIZATION TO
PROCEED WITH THE
PROCESS FOR
ISSUANCE OF
CERTIFICATES OF
PARTICIPATION (COPs)

Mr. Birkett stated that the administration is requesting the Board approve the first phase of the process to issue Certificates of Participation (COPs) and provided the Board with an estimated timeline. Following Board approval of a complete project list to establish the cost of all projects, certificates will be sold in installments based on the workload of the Planning and Construction Department and project priority. Once that is completed, the district will begin working with a financial advisor.

He noted that there may be a potential Debt Service savings if the Board refunds part of the 1993 General Obligation Bonds.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved the administration's recommendation to proceed with the Process for issuance of Certificates of Participation and the possible refunding of Series 1993 General Obligation Bonds.

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

ADVERTISE FOR
FINANCIAL ADVISOR
FOR THE ISSUANCE OF
COPs

Mr. Birkett reported that the firm of A.G. Edwards and Son has been the district's financial advisor for many years. A. G. Edwards is phasing-out that portion of their business and concentrating on investment banking, which now requires the district to seek the services of another financial advisor.

Staff is requesting permission to send out a Request for Proposals to interview potential financial advisors. An interview team has been established and Dr. Leathers has agreed to serve on that team.

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the administration's recommendation to proceed with requests for proposals.

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

PUPIL PROGRESSION
PLAN—FIRST READING

Mrs. Sue Griffith, curriculum director, stated that the Pupil Progression is a K-12 plan and revision of the plan requires participation of a team effort across the curriculum department and through the schools. She presented a brief overview of the revisions being made to the Pupil

Progression Plan, which deal primarily with compliance with new legislation.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the proposed revision of the Pupil Progression Plan for advertising.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR
DROPOUT
PREVENTION SPECIAL
(OMISSION
CORRECTION)—
SECOND READING

Dr. Bill Cliett, Human Resources, reported that this job description was inadvertently omitted when the entire job description manual was revised and presented to the Board for adoption on February 7, 1995. The employee who previously occupied this position recently retired. In order to advertise the vacant position, a job description must exist. The School Board approved the job description for the position of Dropout Prevention Specialist on September 19, 2000, for advertising.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the job description as advertised.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 00-57-HC

Mr. Tom Wittmer, staff attorney, reported that the student was reassigned to the alternative program as a result of a history of disruptive behavior. A hearing was held on October 3, 2000.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the hearing agent's recommendation to confirm the assignment of the student to the alternative center.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONTRACT FOR
PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES WITH JOY
FRANK & ASSOCIATES,
P.A.

Dr. Chambers pointed out that the Board was provided with a copy of the contract with Joy Frank & Associates, P.A., and also a copy of her resume listing her extensive experience. She noted that Dr. Frank has served as the Board's lobbyist for the last two legislative sessions and has over 20 years of experience. The contract is the same as last year with no rate increase, but does include additional responsibilities such as attending Board meetings and workshops.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the Contract for Professional Services with Joy Frank & Associates, P.A., for the period January 19, 2001, through January 18, 2002.

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

SCHEDULE/CANCEL
WORKSHOPS/BOARD
MEETINGS

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to schedule a workshop 9 a.m., Wednesday, December 6, 2000, to discuss the legislative platform and general legislative issues.

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

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to schedule a workshop for Capital Outlay follow-up January 22, 2001, 9 a.m.

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

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved to schedule a workshop for an update on the Strategic Plan January 30, 2001, 4 p.m.

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

Motion by Mrs. Carroll Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to cancel Board meetings for December 19, 2000, and January 2, 2001, due to the Winter Holidays.

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

It was noted that a Legislative Breakfast meeting has been scheduled December 7, 2000, 8:30 a.m. with the Alachua County legislative delegation at Eastside High School.

2001-2002 SCHOOL
CALENDAR—FIRST
READING

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the administration's recommendation to schedule a public hearing 7:30 p.m., December 5, 2000, to consider the 2001-2002 School Calendar.

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

APPOINTMENT OF

Superintendent Chambers informed the Board that the new principal

ADMINISTRATORS

appointments for Prairie View Elementary and Eastside High schools will be made at the December 5, 2000, Board meeting.

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to appoint William C. Cliett, Jr., as Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum & Instructional Services.

Superintendent Chambers noted that his appointment is effective November 22, 2000.

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

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to appoint William P. Herschleb as Director, Compensatory Programs.

Superintendent Chambers noted that his appointment is effective December 4, 2000.

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

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to appoint Mr. David C. Hotary as Director, Risk Management.

Superintendent Chambers noted that his appointment is effective December 4, 2000.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mr. Carroll

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-20. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

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

TEAM BUILDING WORKSHOP

Mr. Cake expressed the need for the Board to hold a workshop with the superintendent on Team Building without a facilitator to have an informal discussion, and suggested the Matheson Center and open it to the public.

Mrs. Sharpe agreed with Mr. Cake that the Board and superintendent have an informal discussion in order to identify and develop topics for a workshop.

Mr. Cake suggested the Board schedule the workshop as soon as possible and suggested Tuesday, December 5, 2000, 2 p.m.

Discussion followed on the time.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to schedule a Team Building workshop, December 5, 2000, 4 p.m.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

Mrs. Carroll suggested Dr. Leathers set the agenda and format of the meeting.

BOARD MEMBER
CONCERNS/REQUESTS

Dr. Leathers stated that based on the past year, he felt the Board should begin discussing the need of establishing a vehicle or process that would assist in avoiding adversarial situations in order to have an effective and productive year.

Mrs. Sharpe clarified for the record that she and Mrs. Brashear did not walk out of the October 3, 2000, Board meeting. She was chairman at the time and the speaker was addressing the Board, but after repeatedly (three times) asking the speaker to conclude his comments as his time was up, she recessed the meeting. She did not walk out on people speaking, but what made the public perceive that she walked out was because there were Board members who continued to sit.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.