

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 18, 2003

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: Jeannine Cawthon, chairman; Barbara Sharpe, vice-chairman; Ginger Childs, Wes Eubank and Tina Turner, members; Mary L. Chambers, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

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

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve the minutes of February 4, 2003, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of February 18, 2003, as presented.

Delete the following Action Items: H.2., Proposal for Refinancing of Capital Leases, and H.6., Student Cases. Delete Discussion Item J.1., Rising Stars Middle School Athletic Program.

The question was called on the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board members announced activities and events they attended.

RECOGNITION(S)/
PRESENTATION(S)/
REPORTS

Character Education Student Artwork—Students Ella Lamont, and Twon Kinsler, Chiles and Metcalfe Elementary Schools, respectively, were recognized for their outstanding artwork depicting the February Character Trait “Courage.”

2003 Teacher of the Year Honorees—Forty-two teachers were recognized and presented with tokens of appreciation for their outstanding accomplishments. Each teacher was selected by their fellow teachers to represent them in the 2003 Alachua County Teacher Recognition Program.

District School Assistance Plan Update—The Board was provided an update on the District School Assistance Plan for Duval Elementary School, outlining activities to date, district assistance, and indicators of success. Also included were monitoring reports for Duval, Prairie View, Waldo and Metcalfe.

Budgeting/Financial Update

The Board was provided with a financial update and a summary of the General Fund from December 31, 2002, compared to December 31, 2001, along with a budget analysis of all governmental funds and operating summaries of revenues and expenditures for the same period.

SCHEDULED AGENCIES
MARCH OF DIMES

Student representatives from the March of Dimes Chain Reaction youth group made a presentation to the Board of the upcoming Health Conference and Annual Walk America fundraising event.

CITIZEN INPUT

The following were presented to the Board for consideration:

- A citizen suggested the curriculum department be eliminated and replaced with periodic research committees.
- A substitute teacher urged the Board to investigate the hiring and interviewing policies of the district.

Mrs. Sharpe requested research information on the district's interviewing process, and that the substitute teacher be provided an opportunity for an interview.

BID AWARD FOR
PROJECT SBAC CB636—
GLEN SPRINGS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MULTI-PURPOSE
BUILDING

Bids for the construction of this project were received on February 11, 2003.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to approve the low base bid of \$1,871,000 and Additive Alternates #2 and #4 in the amount of \$186,500 and award a contract for construction totaling \$2,057,500 to J. A. Standridge Construction, Inc., Gainesville, Florida, with completion of the project to be within three hundred thirty-five (335) consecutive calendar days from the date indicated in the "Notice to Proceed."

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

PURCHASE OF SCHOOL
BUSES

Staff informed the Board that at the present time the district has 53 school buses older than the School Board's replacement cycle of 12 years.

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the purchase of 20 school buses to keep current with the School Board's replacement cycle of no buses older than 12 years.

It was noted that the state cycle is ten years and the new buses will include seatbelts and toddler seats.

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

WITHDRAWAL OF
CHARTER SCHOOL
PROPOSAL

Mr. Don Lewis, director, Charter Schools, presented the Board with a letter from Mr. Robert Crosby, president of the Richard Milburn Academy (RMA), requesting that the Board consider rescinding their vote of February 4, 2003, denying approval of their application. Mr. Crosby has agreed to withdraw RMA's application and would not appeal the Board's decision on the application, regardless of how the Board rules.

Motion by Mrs. Childs Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to rescind the action that was previously taken to deny approval of the Richard Milburn Academy Charter School application.

Board members voiced their support of their decision to deny the Richard Milburn Academy (RMA) application because they felt it was in the best interest of the district based on deficiencies in curriculum, local management/control, and financial situations. Board members also did not want to set a precedent.

Board Attorney Lang stated that the Board would not be setting any precedent, but would simply void the vote, and Mr. Crosby could then refile the application and there would be no blight on his record.

Mrs. Childs suggested that if the Board wishes to consider raising the cap on the number of charter schools in the future, a time deadline should be included. She also recommended that the Board take action to erase the vacant charter school slot at this time because she did not want anyone to assume that there is a vacant spot for another charter school to apply.

Mr. Lewis informed the Board that there is still a slot for the RMA and Mr. Crosby can reapply for the 2004-05 school year. He did not withdraw his application because, at the February 4, 2003, School Board meeting, two board members told him he could reapply.

Board members suggested including in policy the length of time a

charter school has to reapply.

Mrs. Turner noted that the Board was very specific when the vote was taken to raise the cap for the three specific schools, and she assumes that since the Board approved two applications and denied one, the slot is closed.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that she was one of the Board members that told Mr. Crosby he could reapply, but it does not mean that they will be accepted if they reapply. She requested a legal opinion from Mr. Lang as to whether or not the Board can hold the spot open for RMA.

Dr. William Cliett, deputy superintendent, Curriculum, clarified that the Board was very specific when it raised the cap for the three schools. The State Board of Education raised the district's cap by three, but would not specify they were for those schools; therefore, the district would have one opening for anyone.

Mr. Lewis stated that he read the three specific schools into the record and the request to raise the district's cap by three was quickly approved by the State Board of Education. He cannot speak on the interpretation of the State Board.

Following discussion, Mr. Lang stated that he would meet with Mr. Lewis to research it further and report back to the Board.

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

SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING TIME
CHANGE

Motion by Mr. Eubank Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to change the starting time of School Board meetings from 7 p.m. to 6 p.m., on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

During Board discussion of the new agenda format, it was agreed to change Scheduled Agencies from three (3) minutes to approximately ten (10) minutes.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve the consent agenda as described in items 1-7. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

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

DISCUSSION ITEMS—
REZONING TASK
FORCE

Mr. Terry Tougaw, executive director, Maintenance/Facilities, stated that the Board discussed this issue last year and recommended that a study be conducted, and a series of workshops were held discussing the strategic planning framework and the rezoning issue.

The Board was presented with a proposed rezoning timeline, as well as a suggested list of organizations/agencies for possible representation on a rezoning task force, which includes the 1983 representatives. Several citizens have requested to serve on the task force and a list is being compiled. A 21-member task force is suggested.

Once the task force is established, the Board will then provide the purpose and mission. The task force will not determine specific zone line changes, but rather take a look at school enrollments, discuss priorities for zoning decisions, review current zoning policy and make recommendations to the Board. The Board will then review those recommendations, along with recommendations from the Superintendent's Advisory Council subcommittee. Staff will act as a resource to the Board.

The proposed rezoning timeline includes the task force issuing a report to the Board by June 3, 2003, so that any policy changes could be made in the fall with public input. The Board would then schedule a first reading of the new attendance areas on October 21, a public hearing on November 4, and final approval on December 2, 2003.

It is suggested that the Chambers of Commerce from outlying communities get as much representation as possible.

The Board discussed consolidating the suggested list to 21 members by using staff members, board member, principal, and school advisory council as resources, and combining city and county representatives. A workshop was scheduled for March 4, 9-10 a.m., to discuss the mission of the task force and to review the list of suggested representatives to serve on the task force in order to take action at the March 4 School Board meeting.

The Board requested Superintendent Chambers send a letter to the agencies requesting they submit the name of a representative for consideration as an appointee to the Rezoning Task Force prior to March 4, 2003.

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

Chairman Cawthon informed the Board that the Alachua County Commission has elected to reconstitute the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) and requests the School Board appoint a Board member and an alternate. Mr. Eubank agreed to be appointed to

the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), and Mrs. Childs will serve as alternate.

BOARD MEMBERS/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mrs. Sharpe requested that the official record include a copy of a letter from Professor G. Pritchey Smith, University of North Florida, regarding the Commissioner's Task Force on African American History. The letter provides an assessment of Alachua County's compliance with the legislative mandate regarding the teaching of African American heritage in the K-12 curriculum. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.