

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
October 7, 2003

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: Jeannine M. Cawthon, chairman; Barbara J. Sharpe, vice-chairman; Virginia S. Childs, F. Wesley 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 Mrs. Sharpe                      Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to approve the minutes of September 16, 2003, as presented.

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Turner                      Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of October 7, 2003, as presented.

The Board unanimously approved moving the following Consent Agenda items to Action Items: Consent Agenda Item I. 6., Electronic Trading Partnership Agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, as H. 10; Consent Agenda Item I. 7, Agreement with the City of Gainesville to Incorporate a Solar Awareness Program as H. 11; and Consent Agenda Item I. 1, Employment of Personnel, Attachment A – Page 5, the first item, as H. 12.

Motion by Mr. Eubank                      Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to remove Action Item H. 9., Extension of Superintendent’s Contract, until a later time.

The roll call vote was called.

Upon Vote: Motion failed 3-2  
Mrs. Childs            Yes  
Mr. Eubank            Yes  
Mrs. Cawthon        No  
Mrs. Sharpe            No  
Mrs. Turner            No

The question was called on the original motion as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/  
SUPERINTENDENT  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Board announcements.

CITIZEN INPUT

Several citizens addressed the Board with the following concerns/requests:

- Urged the Board to suggest to the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) that the accelerated high school graduation option of 18 credits is detrimental to students.
- Urged the Board to not extend the Superintendent's Contract.
- Urged the Board to expand black history education in the curriculum.
- Requested a policy/procedure related to interviewing female rape victims.

Mrs. Sharpe requested the staff attorney and deputy superintendent for curriculum develop necessary changes to the district's policy on interviewing students, and provide the Board with a copy of the changes.

SCHEDULED AGENCIES

United Way: The School Board staff kicked off the district's 2003 United Way campaign.

ACEA: Dr. Gunnar Paulson, president, ACEA, reviewed answers presented by the district to budgetary concerns presented by ACEA at the previous Board meeting.

PRESENTATION(S)/  
REPORT(S)

Budgeting/Financial Update: Staff announced that October 13-17, 2003, is FTE Week and encouraged parents to support their school by sending their children that particular week. Information was also presented on the class size averages, charter school audits and E-rate, along with an overview of the charter school audits.

Mr. Eubank expressed concern with the class size averages and suggested staff take a closer look at the numbers and report back to the Board.

Mrs. Sharpe urged staff to continue to stay on top of the charter schools and report back to the Board on the outcome of these schools. She also requested the district keep a record with the hours of technical assistance provided to the charter schools.

Staff presented an update on E-rate dollars received and the distribution of the funds over the past five years.

Since the E-rate dollars are really cost recovery for money already spent out of the general budget, Mr. Eubank suggested that recommendations come to the Board so that the Board is included in the decision-making on ways to spend the E-rate dollars, e.g., non-QZAB schools.

Zoning Update: Staff informed the public that a final public input session is scheduled October 9, 2003, 6 p.m. at Kanapaha Middle School. A public hearing will be scheduled November 13, 2003, 6 p.m. at Gainesville High School.

Mrs. Sharpe requested a running report of the reflections of each school's socio-economic make-up that is being proposed.

PROCLAMATION—RED RIBBON WEEK  
OCTOBER 27-31, 2003

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve the proclamation proclaiming October 27-31, 2003, as Red Ribbon Week.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADDITIONS TO PROPOSED 2003-04 COPs PROJECT LIST

Mr. Ed Gable, executive director, Facilities, reported that the 2003-04 COPs Project List, as originally approved on 9/16/03, has been revised to include additional projects at Newberry Elementary and Loftan High Schools. The total of all of the project budgets on the revised list is \$21,125,000.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve the additional projects for construction through COPs funding.

Board members Eubank and Childs both understand the necessity for the new classroom buildings at Newberry Elementary, but felt the district needs to be sure the dollars are being used in the right place and pointed out that these items are only place-holders for the future and will require additional discussion.

Mrs. Childs stated that if Loftan High School is going to be looked at as a high school, it needs to have curriculum designed that increases population in order to alleviate overcrowding at other schools.

Both Mrs. Sharpe and Mrs. Cawthon were happy to see Loftan and Horizon Center getting their multi-use gymnasium.

A citizen expressed support for the new multi-use gymnasium at Loftan

and the Horizon Center, and the Board was urged to alleviate the overcrowding at Newberry Elementary School by shifting students to Archer Community School.

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

DISTRICT FACILITIES LIST

The Facilities List for district schools has been prepared by district staff in accordance with DOE recommendations. The list will be utilized in the School Plant Survey required by DOE. It is requested that the Board approve the District Facilities List as presented.

Motion by Mrs. Childs Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to approve the District Facilities List as presented.

Mrs. Sharpe requested staff schedule a fact-finding trip for the Board to see the new modular buildings in Kissimmee, Florida.

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

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Motion by Mrs. Childs Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to approve the budget amendments as presented.

Board members expressed concern that such small amounts were being requested from the contingency because it was established for significant requests and felt that department budgets could cover these small requests.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that the staff needs to be careful with requests from the contingency fund due to the recent cuts that have been made and departments should plan and not spend all the dollars at once.

Mr. Eubank suggested that requests from the contingency fund be made towards the end of the year.

Dr. Paulson suggested that department budget expenditures be reviewed on a monthly basis.

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

PROPOSED NEW POLICY 9.13, FAMILY INVOLVEMENT—FIRST READING

Mr. Jim Robinson, staff attorney, reported that the proposed policy provides parents with specific information about their child’s progress, comprehensive information about their choices, and opportunities for involvement in compliance with Chapter 1002 of the Florida Statutes.

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mrs. Eubank

Moved to schedule a public hearing 6:30 p.m., October 21, 2003, to consider proposed new Policy 9.13, Family Involvement.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

PROPOSED JOB  
DESCRIPTIONS—  
SECOND READING

Mr. Robinson reported that a public hearing was held September 2, 2003, to consider proposed new and revised job descriptions.

He noted that following the Public Hearing on September 2, 2003, the district’s Risk Manager expressed concern with the required certification for the Safety Coordinator, which will make it difficult to fill. He suggested the Board amend the Safety Coordinator job description to reflect “Certification as a Safety Professional (CSP) is preferred.”

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to adopt the new job description for Safety Coordinator and revised job descriptions for the positions of Payroll Manager, Construction Inspector for Safety (to new title of SREF Inspector), and the System Support Specialist, Information Resources as presented.

Both Mr. Eubank and Mrs. Childs expressed concern with the suggestion to amend the Safety Coordinator position due to the fact that the position is now at a higher pay grade due to the required certification.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

SCHEDULE WORKSHOP  
ON NO CHILD LEFT  
BEHIND ACT

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to schedule a workshop on the No Child Left Behind Act, 1:30 p.m., October 20, 2003.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

SCHEDULE PUBLIC  
HEARING ON SCHOOL  
ATTENDANCE ZONE  
LINE CHANGES

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to schedule a Public Hearing on School Attendance Zone Line Changes, 6 p.m., November 13, 2003, Gainesville High School.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

EXTENSION OF  
SUPERINTENDENT'S  
CONTRACT

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to amend the Superintendent's contract to extend through September 30, 2005.

Mrs. Sharpe believes it is only fair to extend the superintendent's contract through 2005. She is aware that Dr. Chambers has applied for the vacancy in Sarasota, but she is also aware of the climate in selecting superintendents. Mrs. Chambers' fiscal background and her doctorate would qualify her to continue to do the job that she has done. As a veteran board member, Dr. Chambers became superintendent following a difficult time for the district, which was in a state of crisis. She pointed out that she is also the only board member who was present during that time, and the Board at that time voted for Dr. Chambers to become superintendent. The Board's directives to her were to reorganize, budgetary concerns, facility utilization and employee morale.

Mrs. Sharpe noted that Dr. Chambers has led this district to where it is today and accomplished all the directives, and she does not believe that the Board should be looking for another superintendent at this time. The Board needs to give her their support. She has done everything that is asked and continues to do so in the best interest of students.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that she asked for this item to be placed on the agenda. She had previously asked Dr. Wayne Blanton to present a workshop on the climate for elected superintendents in the state of Florida, but the Board had already conducted a similar workshop in April and the issue has deepened. That is the reason she asked for this item to be placed on the agenda. Dr. Chambers was in a conference in Orlando when she asked this item be placed on the agenda and had no idea that she had requested it. She does not believe that this is the time to be looking for a new superintendent. Due to the major issues such as the No Child Left Behind Act, class size reduction, choice, rezoning, etc., the district does not need to be searching for another superintendent, and that is why she wanted Dr. Chambers' contract to be amended to 2005, and each Board member still has an opportunity to evaluate the Superintendent.

Mr. Eubank stated that in January the Board met in an informal session and discussed that the superintendent's contract was expiring and the Board gave Dr. Chambers an 18-month extension. The contract calls for a process, which states that in November the Superintendent is to notify the Board that they are to evaluate her. In May, the Board had a workshop facilitated by Sharon Hartsell, out of sequence with the Master Board Training Program, on criteria to evaluate the

Superintendent. Evaluation criteria were agreed upon and the Board asked the Superintendent to finalize the evaluation instrument and bring back to the Board. He feels it is very difficult in a short period of time to adequately evaluate a superintendent's performance. He expressed concern with the change from eight months to six months. The Board is throwing the evaluation out. He does not see what good it would do to come back in December when an extension has been approved through 2005.

He feels it would be best for the Board to be unanimous and was hopeful that by December the entire Board would support an extension after following the agreed to process.

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved to lay the motion on the table.

The roll call vote was called.

Upon Vote: Motion failed 3-2

Mrs. Childs Yes

Mrs. Cawthon No

Mr. Eubank Yes

Mrs. Sharpe No

Mrs. Turner No

Mr. Eubank expressed concern that the Superintendent's evaluation was being done publicly and pointed out some areas of concern where improvement was needed, such as reorganization, and rezoning.

Mrs. Childs expressed her disappointment that this item was placed on the agenda and she was not aware. She felt that there would never be an ideal time for the Board to conduct a Superintendent search and she briefly reviewed some concerns with the Superintendent's performance.

Mrs. Turner stated that she fully supports the Superintendent, but in order to be fair to everyone, she will agree to postpone the extension of the Superintendent's contract until an evaluation can be completed.

Motion by Mrs. Turner

Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to postpone extension of the Superintendent's contract to no later than January 20, 2004.

Mrs. Sharpe stated that she did not believe that this meeting was to evaluate the Superintendent, but it was to support her and give her a

vote of confidence.

Chairman Cawthon also believe that this would be a vote of confidence and she would like for her to stay.

Superintendent Chambers stated that she is disappointed in the process because it should not be played out in the media. She was also surprised that the item had been placed on the agenda at the request of three board members, and she had discussed it with the Chairman and asked that it be removed from the agenda.

Dr. Chambers noted that she has never asked that her contract be extended because she knew it would split the Board and regardless of the vote, she does not believe that it is in the best interest of the school district. She felt it was best to notify the Board that her contract was expiring and she would pursue her direction and the Board members theirs. The reason she did not want it on the agenda was because it was a difficult issue. She replied to several evaluation concerns expressed by Mrs. Childs and Mr. Eubank.

The roll call vote was called on the motion to postpone.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 3-2

Mrs. Childs	Yes
Mr. Eubank	Yes
Mrs. Cawthon	No
Mrs. Sharpe	No
Mrs. Turner	Yes

ELECTRONIC TRADING  
PARTNERSHIP  
AGREEMENT WITH  
BLUE CROSS/BLUE  
SHIELD

Mr. Jim Robinson, staff attorney, explained that the purpose of the agreement is to comply with state law regarding electronic transmission of healthcare information.

Motion by Mr. Eubank

Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve the agreement with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida relating to health care electronic transmissions.

Mrs. Sharpe expressed concern with the confidential employee data being transmitted.

Mr. Robinson assured her that the confidential employee information will not be sold to other agencies.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

AGREEMENT WITH  
THE CITY OF  
GAINESVILLE TO  
INCORPORATE A  
SOLAR AWARENESS  
PROGRAM

Gainesville Regional Utilities will place two solar electric generation systems at two school sites. Florida Solar Energy Center will provide a curriculum on solar energy for middle school teachers. Electricity generated by the solar facilities will be provided at no additional cost to the district.

Motion by Mr. Eubank                      Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve the agreement between the City of Gainesville and the School Board of Alachua County to incorporate a Solar Awareness Program.

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

EMPLOYMENT OF  
PERSONNEL

Mr. Robinson explained that the employee, received a letter from Personnel advising her the Superintendent would recommend October 7, 2003, that her annual employment contract be dismissed, effective October 8, 2003, pursuant to law (based on the 97-day probationary period an employee can be dismissed without cause). It is further recommended that the employee be removed from the Consent Agenda that reflects administrative leave 9/25/03-10/7/03 as a result of an incident, and recommend the Board approve the administrative leave and dismissal of the employee effective 10/8/03.

The Board took a five-minute recess and reconvened.

Motion by Mrs. Childs                      Seconded by Mrs. Turner

Moved to approve administrative leave September 25, 2003 - October 7, 2003, and termination of the employee effective October 8, 2003.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe                      Seconded by Mr. Eubank

Moved to approve the consent agenda as described in items 1-16, with the removal of Items I. 6 and 7 and the first item of Page 5, Attachment A, to Action Items H. 10, 11 and 12, respectively. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

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

CITIZEN INPUT(cont'd)

There was no additional input.

BOARD MEMBER/  
SUPERINTENDENT  
REQUESTS

Mr. Eubank made the following requests:  
- Report on savings realized due to change in school times  
- Reward employee for extra efforts during rezoning process

Mrs. Childs inquired as to the status of elementary magnet surveys, and staff informed her that they are still coming in and the results will be presented to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.