

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
May 20, 2008

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: Janie Williams, Chairman; Tina Pinkoson, Vice-Chairman; Ginger Childs, F. Wesley Eubank, and Eileen F. Roy, members; W. Daniel Boyd, Jr., Superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

Duets were performed by members of the Gainesville High School Chorus. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Williams, and the students led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mrs. Williams offered condolences to the family of Gloria Merriex, beloved Duval Elementary fifth-grade teacher, who passed away suddenly last week. Mrs. Roy offered condolences to the families of two Newberry High School students who lost their lives in a car accident last weekend: Alexander Coppock and Richard Jagers.

- APPROVAL OF MINUTES Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson Seconded by Mrs. Childs

 Moved to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting of May 6, 2008, as presented.

 The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0
- ADOPTION OF AGENDA Chairman Williams announced the deletion of Consent Agenda Item G.8., Carl Perkins Grant.

 Motion by Mrs. Childs Seconded by Mrs. Roy

 Moved to adopt the May 20, 2008, meeting agenda as amended.

 The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0
- BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS Mrs. Roy reported that EHS Institute of Culinary Arts took first place in a recent competition of local chefs. She also reported that Gainesville Health and Fitness Center is offering free summer memberships to 13 to 17 year old students.

 A parent of a student who recently performed at Festival Disney with the Sidney Lanier musical group asked Mrs. Roy to convey what a wonderful experience this was for all involved.
- RECOGNITION The Board recognized recipients of the Class of 2008 Alachua County Public Schools Foundation Scholarships.
- CITIZEN INPUT A citizen invited the Board, Superintendent and staff to several upcoming events at the downtown library and the Florida Museum.

The President of the Hawthorne Area Community Foundation reported on plans they have for activities in support of Hawthorne students and teachers. She commented on the evident improvements in the school and commended the principal and teachers. She suggested the future possibility of a Wildlife Ranger or a School of the Arts magnet program at Hawthorne.

The Chairman of the conservation committee of a unit of the Sierra Club addressed the Board concerning the District's energy conservation as described in Mrs. Roy's letter to *The Gainesville Sun*.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Eubank Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1- 11, with the deletion of G.8.

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson Seconded by Mrs. Childs

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

AMENDMENTS TO
BYLAW 0149.3,
BOARD-STAFF
COMMUNICATIONS,
AND POLICIES 1112, 3112
AND 4112,
BOARD-STAFF
COMMUNICATIONS.

Bylaw 0149.3 and Policies 1112 (Administration), 3112 (Instructional Staff) and 4112 (Support Staff) were adopted by the Board on July 17, 2007. The First Reading for the proposed amendment to the Bylaw and Policies was held on April 1, 2008, and a Public Hearing was held on May 6, 2008.

The amendments would require that any staff member who responds in writing or via email to a question from a Board member send a copy of the response to all the other Board members and to the Superintendent, including a copy of the original question. This process will promote open communications between staff members, the Superintendent and Board members.

As a reminder, Board Policy 7540.05, *Electronic Mail*, states that "when available, the District's e-mail system must be used by employees for any official District e-mail communication."

Motion by Mrs. Pinkoson Seconded by Mrs. Childs

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to amend Bylaw 0149.3, *Board-Staff Communication*, and Policies 1112, 3112 and 4112, *Board-Staff Communications*, as presented.

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

CONSIDERATION OF
VOTER-APPROVED
OPERATING MILLAGE

Dr. Boyd reviewed the budget situation and the fact that there is a \$14 million--and rising--shortfall. He asked the Board to consider providing an opportunity this November for the public to support by levying a four-year operating millage. It was pointed out that, if passed, funds would not become available until the 2009-2010 school year.

Dr. Gunnar Paulson, ACEA president, spoke in favor of the effort.

Brent Christiansen, Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce, addressed the Board regarding plans for a citizen-initiated 'Quality of Life' sales tax that would benefit various community efforts, possibly including school infrastructure. A final decision has not been made on whether it will be placed on this November's ballot. He stated that those who are experienced in such matters agree that having two proposals on a ballot makes it more difficult for either to pass.

Mrs. Pinkoson stated that the Board is in a 'survival' mode. Although she would like to work with the citizen effort, she feels it's incumbent upon the Board to move forward with a ballot initiative that could provide an alternative source of funding for the students of Alachua County.

Mr. John Carlson, co-chair of the sales tax effort, reported that polling data shows a strong support for education concerns. He personally favors delaying the sales tax initiative until 2010, rather than both proposals being on the same ballot.

Dr. Boyd expressed appreciation to Mr. Christiansen, Mr. Carlson and their colleagues for their support of the school system.

Mrs. Williams commented that it will be extremely important that the public is educated about the fact that a ballot initiative will be for school operations only.

Motion by Mrs. Childs

Seconded by Mrs. Pinkoson

Moved the Superintendent's recommendation to authorize staff to proceed to prepare the necessary resolutions to place this item on the November general election ballot.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CITIZEN INPUT

There was no citizen input.

BOARD MEMBER/ SUPERINTENDENT REQUESTS

Mr. Eubank commented on employee concern over the budget situation and suggested an information letter be sent out. He also requested that efforts be made to determine the source of differences in student statistics last year, stating that a major variance could be of great consequence in the upcoming year.

Mrs. Childs pointed out that the recent letter in *The Gainesville Sun* concerning energy conservation was an opinion and not an investigative report. She stated that there was a lot of data missing. She also pointed out differences in savings calculations.

Mrs. Roy requested that the matter of overtime for Professional/ Technical employees be revisited. Dr. Longstreth provided some explanation of the issue.

Mrs. Roy differed with Mrs. Childs on Marion County's method of paying their energy consultant and cited information from their Website. She requested a further response from the Superintendent to her questions on the consultant for our District.

Dr. Boyd stated that he would prepare a detailed response to present to the Board at the next Board meeting.

Upon viewing the Marion County Website, Mr. Eubank questioned some of the figures.

Mrs. Roy referred to reports that lights and air conditioning were left on at schools, day, night, weekends. She cited various measures that she feels should be implemented for energy savings at the schools.

Mrs. Williams commented that, at the school where she last worked, the air conditioning was turned off as soon as students were dismissed. She also requested adding the subject of DES to a workshop next week.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.