

## **SCHOOL CAPITAL OUTLAY SURTAX OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES**

The half-cent School Capital Outlay Surtax referendum approved by Alachua County voters in November of 2018 includes language requiring oversight by an independent citizens' committee. Alachua County Public Schools is committed to ensuring that all revenues raised through the surtax are spent as indicated in the ballot language (*see below*). Therefore, the School Board of Alachua County formally establishes the School Capital Outlay Surtax Oversight Committee to review and report on the expenditure of the surtax revenues for as long as the surtax remains in effect. The committee will operate under the following conditions:

1. The Oversight Committee shall be made up of no less than twelve members, each of whom will be appointed as outlined below. No member of the Oversight Committee may be an employee of Alachua County Public Schools, nor may any member be in a position of personally profiting from the actions of the Committee. Finally, it is preferred that each member have experience in financial management, construction, or another relevant field.
2. The members will be appointed as follows:
  - a. Five members will be appointed by the individual School Board members;
  - b. One member will be selected by the Superintendent;
  - c. One member will be selected by the Greater Gainesville Chamber of Commerce (Chamber);
  - d. One member will be selected by the Alachua County Education Association (ACEA);
  - e. One member will be appointed by the Alachua County Council Parent Teacher Association (ACCPTA);
  - f. One member will be appointed by Citizens for Strong Schools; and
  - g. Two members will be selected at-large by the School Board through an application process established by the District's Facilities Department.
3. Should membership in the Oversight Committee drop below twelve, a new member or members will be appointed by the appropriate person or organization to complete the current term of the appointment.
4. The School Board, by majority vote, may remove any member who does not meet minimum qualifications, violates the Oversight Committee's bylaws, is unwilling or unable to continue serving, or for other good cause that may raise questions about the integrity of the Oversight Committee. In addition, the chairman of the Oversight Committee shall report to the Superintendent, the School Board, the Chamber, the ACEA, the ACCPTA, and Citizens for Strong Schools, if an Oversight Committee member resigns his or her position, misses more than one meeting within a 12-month span, or otherwise needs to be replaced so that another member may be appointed to complete the current term of the appointment.
5. The term of the Oversight Committee shall be from January 1, 2019 until June 30, 2031, which is six months following the 'sunset' of the surtax. This will allow for the development of a final report on the expenditure of the surtax funds. Individual members shall serve two-year appointments with the first appointment ending on December 31, 2020, but they may be re-appointed more than once. The final appointment shall last an additional six months to allow for completion of the final report of the Oversight Committee.

6. The responsibilities of the Oversight Committee shall be to:

- a. Elect a chair and vice-chair;
- b. Establish a meeting schedule;
- c. Review the expenditure of revenues from the surtax and ask for more information pertaining to the expenditure, if needed;
- d. Review proposed expenditures in excess of \$500,000 that were not part of the original project list prior to approval by the School Board, including expenditures for site acquisition, improvements at non-school facilities, and any expansion of the proposed projects for a particular school (in the case of an emergency, information regarding the emergency project will be provided as soon as possible to the Committee if a special meeting cannot be called in time to address the emergency);
- e. Provide a written report to the Superintendent and the School Board regarding the expenditure of surtax revenues on an annual basis; and
- f. Report to the Superintendent and the School Board chairman in a timely fashion any inconsistencies between the ballot language and the actual expenditure of surtax revenues.

7. The Oversight Committee and its members shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- a. The chair will conduct all meetings. The vice chair will conduct a meeting in the absence of the chair;
- b. The chair will create meeting agendas, which shall be provided to each member of the Oversight Committee at least seven days prior to the next meeting;
- c. Meetings will be held at least quarterly but may be scheduled more frequently by vote of the Committee, and the chair may request that an additional meeting be scheduled when necessary.
- d. Meetings will be open to the public; and
- e. The secretary will maintain audio and written minutes for all meetings. Written minutes will be distributed to all members in a timely fashion.

8. The responsibilities of Alachua County Public Schools with regards to the Oversight Committee shall be as follows:

- a. Provide meeting space, recording equipment, clerical assistance and other assistance as required by the Oversight Committee;
- b. Provide appropriate public notice of all Oversight Committee meetings;
- c. Provide information regarding the expenditure of surtax revenues and respond to inquiries from the Oversight Committee in a clear and timely fashion;
- d. Provide a staff member to serve as the Oversight Committee's liaison to Alachua County Public Schools;
- e. Make time available during School Board meetings for the presentation of the Oversight Committee's annual report;
- f. Make the Oversight Committee's annual reports readily available to the public; and
- g. Respond in an appropriate and timely fashion to reports of any inconsistencies between the ballot language and the actual expenditure of surtax revenues.

**Ballot Title: Half-Cent Sales Surtax to Improve School Facilities**

Shall the School Board of Alachua County levy a half-cent sales surtax to finance safety and security improvements; repair, renovation and remodeling of Board-owned schools, including modernization of classrooms, science labs and other spaces; technology; elimination of portable classrooms; new construction; land acquisition and improvement; and other school facilities projects; with oversight by an independent citizens' committee? The tax would begin January 1, 2019, and last twelve years.