

District Advisory Committee Minutes

May 3, 2017

The District Advisory Committee (DAC) met on Wednesday, May 3, 2017, at 5:15 pm at Deltona High School, media center.

Ms. Leslie LaRue, chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm. April minutes were posted on the web for review prior to the meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved. Mrs. Melody Johnson, school board chairman; Mr. Tom Russell, superintendent; Mr. Gary Marks, area superintendent; Mr. Greg Akin, chief operating officer; Ms. Saralee Morrissey, director of planning; Ms. Teresa Marck, chief academic officer; and Ms. Nancy Wait, director of community information, were all in attendance.

Ms. Angela Kopnicky, Sweetwater Elementary, and Ms. Sydra Desaussure, Volusia Pines Elementary were the only two nominees submitted for 2017-2018 District Advisory chairman and vice chairman. A vote was taken and unanimously approved for Ms. Kopnicky and Ms. Desaussure to be appointed chairman and vice chairman for the 2017-2018 school year.

Mr. Russell spoke about the following budget topics:

- The senate had encouraging words regarding K-12 education; however, they went with the house recommendations because they got their university and college programs put into place.
- The district was funded .34% increase for growth but they put the money in the best and brightest for teachers and into charters.
- The BSA (based student allocation) is lower than in 07-08 and lower than during our fourth calculation this year when the district lost 7.5 million.
- Education is funded primarily by local property taxes called the RLE (required local effort). Last year the rate was not raised but more money came in because property values were up. The senate recommended keeping the same RLE but they are going with the house plan which will reduce that percentage and schools will not get as much.

The district is projecting and \$11 million deficit this year.

Next Mr. Russell expressed much gratitude to Friendship Elementary and Pride Elementary. Last week these two schools were visited by AASA (the school superintendents association) members from several states. They came to learn how VCS teaches early childhood development class (Pre K-2). The visitors were impressed how focused the teachers were on student learning and surprised with the level of technology used in the classroom.

Next, Ms. Saralee Morrissey presented a [half-cent sales tax](#) progress report. June 1, 2017 is the scheduled date of the ground breaking for the Pierson Elementary replacement school with an opening date of August, 2018. Chisholm Elementary replacement school is currently in the planning stages to include biweekly meetings with the school. Community meetings are scheduled for January 19 and April 5. Anticipated construction for Chisholm will begin the first half of 2018.

Mr. Greg Akin spoke about safety speed bumps, live feed cameras on campus for security and wi-fi on school buses.

Other major projects include:

- Westside Elementary (not a half-cent sales tax project)
 - New classroom building; cafeteria; parent pickup loop; remodeling of existing space
- Heating and air conditioning system replacements at several schools
- Technology upgrades
- Security enhancements

The Project Oversight Committee has met nine times, visited Chisholm and Citrus Grove elementaries and attended the community meeting at Chisholm Elementary in January.

Mr. Robert Edgcomb, community information specialist, and Ms. Lisa Divina, planning and business services, shared a sneak peak of a half-cent sales tax website that will soon be live on VCS website. The website will list every project underway and its status. The website will also include any media reports that are available. You can also follow the updates through twitter at #vcshalfcent.

School board chairman Melody Johnson reminded everyone that teacher appreciation week and substitute appreciation week will be recognized May 7-13. She encouraged members to recognize our professionals in the classroom.

She spoke next regarding the DCD (district cost differential) and encouraged members to reach out to their legislators asking for a new study. Volusia currently only gets .96 cent back from every dollar spent while neighboring counties receive more. She explained how four cents may not seem like a lot, but it is a \$10 million loss every year.

School Successes

Sweetwater Elementary students performed the Little Mermaid. Shows were sold out every night and over \$4,000 was raised.

District Advisory Members expressed their gratitude to Ms. LaRue for her role as chairman the last two years by a round of applause.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.