

INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.
SUSSEX CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA

MINUTES

Call to Order

President Rodney Layfield called the Board Meeting of the Indian River School District Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Mr. Scott Collins, Mr. Derek Cathell, Mr. James Fritz, Dr. Donald Hattier, Mr. Rodney Layfield, Mr. Gerald Peden, Mrs. Connie Pryor, Ms. Madeline Moses, Dr. Heather Statler, Mrs. Leolga Wright.

Approval of Agenda – October 19, 2022

Mr. Collins, seconded by Mrs. Pryor, moved to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

Public Comments

- Molli Carter spoke to the Board about her concerns with Mr. Layfield as President. She sees friction within the Board. How does your current employer allow you to work seamlessly with the position on the Board.
- Kristina McDonald, neighbor of Mr. Layfield and has shown disrespect to her children.
- Lisa Hunt, retired IRSD counselor who has worked with children K-12. We can no longer tolerate racism. She questions Mr. Layfield's capacity as both a state trooper and board president.
- Rocky Justice, retired trooper, has known Mr. Layfield for years. He served his country, state police, and the district. I do not socialize with him but I feel he is a good person.
- Tambara Stewart-Mizzell, a Sussex Central High School Graduate, very proud of the school. She has known Mr. Layfield for many years. She was not in attendance of the football game. There were two people involved in this incident and needs to hear both sides. She is very proud of our district and we need to be fair to everyone.
- Bill Chandler spoke to the Board and is concerned about students. There is a lot of "trash talking" during sporting events. People escalate things through social media. "Own up and apologize", there are more important things to worry about.
- Mr. Leo Darmstadter, former IRSD Board member, spoke to the board regarding Mr. Layfield's behavior and feels he did escalate the incident. He feels there should be a more observable police presence at sporting events. He feels very embarrassed by the behavior at the football game

New Business

Incident at Sussex Central v. Hodgson football game

Dr. Owens shared with the Board details of the incident at the Sussex Central High School vs. Hodgson Vo-Tech football game on September 17, 2022. The incident involved Mr. Rodney Layfield and members of the football coaching staff from Hodgson Vo-Tech High School.

Confidence in Board of Education officer and possible change in leadership

President Layfield asked if there were any motions or discussion on this subject. No motions were made.

Potential action under 14 Del.C. §1045

Confidence in Board of Education officer and possible change in leadership

Mrs. Pryor, seconded by Mrs. Wright, motioned for a vote of no confidence in the board of education president. The motion failed (4-5-1)

For the motion: Mr. Peden, Mrs. Pryor, Dr. Statler, Mrs. Wright

Against the motion: Mr. Cathell, Mr. Collins, Mr. Fritz, Dr. Hattier, Ms. Moses

Abstained: Mr. Layfield

Public Comments

- Gloria Duffy, retired nurse from Indian River School District, spoke to the board regarding the incident at the football game. She feels that in “today’s world” using the words “Hey Boy” is offensive. These old phrases even though that may not mean to be negative in the past are negative today. She does not feel Mr. Layfield is racist. People need more diversity training and be more aware of the many different cultures residing in Sussex County.
- Catina Bright, a 1991 Sussex Central High School graduate with Mr. Layfield. She sees the cultural differences can be a challenge for the district. The district needs more diversity and sensitivity training.
- Current Board Member Mr. Fritz, spoke to the board and is very welcoming for the board to have additional diversity and sensitivity training.

Adjournment

President Layfield adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rodney Layfield
President
Board of Education
Indian River School District

Jay F. Owens, Jr. Ed.D.
Secretary and Superintendent
Board of Education
Indian River School District

RML/JFO:jmt