

School Board Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Leah Paladino, Chairperson; Harry Daniel, Vice-Chairperson; Sharon Mack, Member; Rodney Kibler, Member; Jason Collier, Member; Andrea Whitmarsh, Superintendent; Jennifer Shepherd, Clerk

MEMBER PRESENT BY TELEPHONE: N/A

MEMBERS ABSENT: N/A

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: N/A

The closed session meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm in the Central Office conference room.

Dr. Kibler made a motion to move into closed session; Mr. Daniel seconded, motion carried.

Mrs. Paladino announced that we would reconvene into open session in the County Meeting Room at the County Administration Building at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Paladino requested that a moment of silence be observed for those affected by the school shooting in Florida.

At the conclusion of the moment of silence, Mrs. Mack made a motion to amend the agenda. Item # 11-454, Small & Rural School Coalition be moved from informational to making it an action item. Mr. Daniel seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Board certified by roll call vote that only such matters identified in the motion were heard or discussed. All certified.

For closed meeting actions, Mr. Daniel made a motion to approve religious exemption # 2801 & 2802. Dr. Kibler seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Collier made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Mrs. Mack seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Mrs. Paladino and Dr. Whitmarsh presented a recognition certificate to Rachel Peters, Instrumental Specialist at Ruckersville Elementary. She was approved for a grant worth \$2,300 from the Wednesday Music Club of Albermarle County which will be used to purchase new Orff instruments for RES. At the request of Mrs. Paladino, Ms. Peters elaborated on Orff instruments and advised that this would grant will double their current supply at RES.

Mrs. Paladino and Dr. Whitmarsh presented recognition certificates to Javon Mallory and Andrew Chesebro (not present at meeting) for their accomplishments at the District 6 SkillsUSA Automotive Competition. Javon finished 2nd and Andrew finished 4th.

Mrs. Paladino and Dr. Whitmarsh presented a recognition certificates to Michelle Shuflet (not present at meeting) & Kayla Morris for their accomplishments at the District 6 SkillsUSA Fantasy Manikin Competition. Michelle finished 3rd and Kayla finished 11th. Michelle will move on to compete in the State Competition in April in Virginia Beach.

Mrs. Paladino thanked Mr. Martin for being present at the meeting at the School Board's 2018 liaison to the Board of Supervisors. She also thanked all those in attendance of the school board meeting on Valentines' Day.

Mrs. Paladino stated public comments could be made on matters not below on the agenda. There were no sign-ups and no public comments given.

Mr. Shaun Sparks presented information item # 11-452 Preliminary Perkins Plan. Mr. Sparks advised that the 2018-19 Perkins plan has not changed much. He highlighted how the monies would be spent. Some will be allocated for professional development but the bulk of the funds will be spent on equipment upgrades and/or technology. Mr. Daniel inquired as to what kind of things Mr. Sparks has in mind. Mr. Sparks advised there will be some updates and the bulk of the money will be spent on software and labs. Mrs. Paladino commented that they are doing some amazing things at the tech center.

Dr. Brenda Walton, substituting for Mr. Bryan Huber, presented information item # 11-453 Summer Programming. Dr. Walton described the Summer Enrichment program available to students K-12. She presented info on the summer school program which focuses on remediation for students with credit recovery or earning a credit over the summer. Dr. Walton described the Credit Recovery Process at WMHS. It can be face to face or virtual. She then described the Original Credit Option. This is also available in face to face or virtual formats. Mr. Daniel asked if this was only for the early college scholars. Dr. Walton replied that it is for anyone. Mr. Daniel asked if Econ & Personal Finance still met the virtual requirement and Dr. Walton confirmed that fact. Dr. Walton concluded by advising the board members that a complete list of course offerings for the summer enrichment program is available in their meeting packet.

Dr. Andrea Whitmarsh presented action item # 11-454 Small & Rural School Coalition. She advised that small & rural school divisions face many challenges such as teacher salaries & equipment, increasing local funding to make-up for depleting state funding and high rates of students who qualify for free & reduced meals. This coalition includes approximately 70 school divisions which have come together to address these needs. We would like to formalize our commitment to this Coalition through a Resolution from the Board. Their current areas of focus are on teacher shortages and enrollment loss. The meeting packet includes a brochure regarding the Small & Rural School Coalition. Dr. Whitmarsh requests that the Board formally commit to this group by showing their support through the Resolution. Mrs. Paladino advised that there is a typo which will need to be changed prior to signatures. Dr. Kibler made a motion to approve, Mr. Collier seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Dr. Whitmarsh presented item #11-455, Superintendent's Update. Dr. Whitmarsh expressed thoughts & prayers to the Douglas High School community. Congratulations to all that were recognized tonight. This month is School Board Appreciation Month. Dr. Whitmarsh expressed her deep appreciation to the Board. Dr. Whitmarsh provided a brief update on the facilities project. Dr. Whitmarsh mentioned the struggles with illnesses such as the flu in staffing for Substitutes including in Transportation which has been difficult. She invited the Board to the Arts Festival on March 24th.

Dr. Whitmarsh presented item #11-456, FY2019 Budget Proposal. Dr. Whitmarsh shared a presentation including our vision, mission, core values and school board priorities. She shared the demographics of our school division. Dr. Whitmarsh shared info on the teacher shortage crisis in Virginia. Dr. Whitmarsh presented the financial numbers for this year's budget. These numbers included the revenue numbers as well as requests for salary increases. Dr. Whitmarsh is proposing a 3% salary increase for all staff as well as an increase in degree supplements, standardization of non-degree supplements and an increase in Substitute Teacher pay. We are looking to repurpose existing resources to accomplish some of our budget requests and goals.

Mrs. Mack commented that the Cost of Living increase was about 2% last year so a 3% increase sounds reasonable. She inquired if area salary increase requests are within the 2% - 4% range and Dr. Whitmarsh confirmed. Mrs. Paladino advised that we don't want to lose ground.

Mrs. Paladino opened the floor for the public hearing for the FY2019 budget proposal. Mrs. Gail Daniel, teacher at Ruckersville Elementary, signed up to speak and was recognized.

Mrs. Daniel presented the Board with an information sheet regarding comparison of area salaries (Blue Ridge UniServ 2017-2018 Benchmarks by School Division). She thanked the School Board for all that they do. She advised that she was disheartened about an article she read that reminded her of how Greene can't compete with their neighbors to the south because of our resources. She advised that we all use the same community resources in our lives but we can't compete with our salaries. She shared that in the past when cuts had to be made it would be a percent or ½ percent off of salary. She asks that they give careful consideration to not do this as it just further compounds the already existing salary deficit. She believes that in listening to the presentation that

the Board will not be doing that this year and appreciates all of their comments. She advised that some long time teachers are talking about how they are “nuts to still be there”. As shown on the documentation that she passed out, Greene Co is ranked 27th in the State when teacher starts but 76th after a teacher has been employed for 30 years with a Bachelor’s Degree. Mrs. Daniel requests that they consider that when making decisions about the budget in the future.

Mrs. Paladino commented that they have looked into that scale and it’s a large amount of money and it may be something that they have to start looking at over time.

There were no other comments. Mrs. Paladino closed the public hearing on the FY2019 budget proposal.

Dr. Whitmarsh added that there will be a second meeting in February where the Board will adopt the budget and then it will move onto the Board of Supervisors. We are scheduled to present to the BOS on 3/6 at 5:30pm.

Mrs. Paladino agrees with Mrs. Mack about the 3% increase and that she believes that that is where the money needs to go at this time. Mr. Daniel concurred and said they would look into further increases next year.

Mrs. Mack agrees with the other increases proposed and that it is investing in the people. She looks forward to the Capital Facilities project. The budget was focused on the people this year.

Mr. Daniel commented that it’s great that we’ve been able to absorb the healthcare increases and he believes that this fact means a lot to our staff.

Dr. Kibler thanked everyone.

Mr. Daniel extended congratulations on the Grant. It was great to see the SkillsUSA students. It was very exciting to hear about the summer program and that it is a great opportunity. He thanked everyone for attending on Valentines’ Day and thanked the staff for the work that they do. He thanked Katie for the umbrellas for School Board Appreciation.

Mrs. Mack thanked everyone for the gifts for school board appreciation. She appreciates all that everyone does all year round.

Mr. Collier thanked everyone and said Happy Valentines’ Day.

Mrs. Paladino expressed appreciation for the innovation website. She appreciates all the work that has been done. Well done. Summer enrichment has evolved in a tremendous way. She thanked everyone for the hard work that they do for the budget process. She asked that in light of the Florida school shooting that we be sure that we are asking over the intercom what someone’s business is at the school before opening the door. She thanked everyone and said she appreciated everyone and wished everyone a good night.

Mrs. Paladino adjourned the meeting at 8:06pm.

Chairman

Clerk