

MINUTES  
THE ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MAY 29, 2013

The Asheville City Board of Education ("Board") held a special meeting at 8:00 a.m., on Wednesday, May 29, 2013 in Training Room 203 at the Asheville City Schools Administrative Offices, 85 Mountain Street, Asheville, North Carolina.

Members present were:

Jacquelyn Hallum, Chairperson, presiding  
Matt Buys  
Peggy Dalman  
Leah Ferguson  
Precious Folston

Comprising a quorum of the Board.

Allen H. Johnson, Secretary/Superintendent.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson, Jacquelyn Hallum called the special Board meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

Superintendent Johnson in his opening remarks, stated that the meeting with the architects and construction managers for the new Asheville Middle School was an important one and that his charge to them was to present to the Board for their consideration and approval, an outline on reducing the cost of the budget for the new Asheville Middle School.

A GENERAL ACCOUNT OF THE SPECIAL MEETING

The Asheville City Board of Education received from Architect Chad Roberson of Clark Nexsum and Construction Managers Beverly Grant /BarnHill the proposed modifications to the new Asheville Middle School project.

At the start of the presentation, Board members were asked to maintain consistency and use the same terminology (Total Construction Cost and Grand Total Project Cost) when referring to the budget for the new school project.

A review of the different components that could be bid as alternates with potential savings included:

1. Auditorium
2. Elimination of 12 classrooms
3. Green Roof
4. One open stairway
5. Multi-purpose Area

Mr. Roberson informed the Board that he and the construction managers are proposing that the track and baseball field remain and not flipping the baseball field and moving the track to provide added spacing between the building and the track. A Board member requested to know if any upgrades will be made to the track, to which Mr. Roberson replied no.

A Board member expressed concern over classroom space and requested to have an estimated count of the rising sixth graders for the 2016 school year enrollment. If 12 classrooms were eliminated from the plans, the number of classrooms would be less than the current school. Principal for Asheville Middle School, Cynthia Sellinger shared that the current school size is 785 with an average of 24 students to a classroom.

The Board was made aware of the plan changes that were made in order to accommodate the other changes:

- Rotate the building with gym in front and possible future auditorium addition to the back
- Add a stage within the gym area (gymatorium)
- Reduce size of studio spaces to configure the building for potential growth

Ms. Sellinger informed the Board and Superintendent Johnson that the elimination of 12 classrooms (3 classrooms per grade level) will have an impact on teachers. Superintendent

Johnson and the Board assured Ms. Sellinger that cutting teachers' position was not in the plan. Ms. Sellinger responded to say that it will be the reality of the modifications to the project. Other changes to the plan included straightening and tightening other areas to reduce the overall square footage of the building.

Mr. Roberson and the Construction Managers informed the Board that they are confident that they can still make other adjustments to further reduce the cost.

The architects and construction managers responded to questions pertaining to:

- Contingency costs
- Unused estimated dollar amounts that are included in the Grand Total Project Cost that may end up not being spent.

Board Chair, Jacquelyn Hallum requested that Superintendent Johnson confirm with County Manager, Wanda Greene concerning the budget year for the new school project.

A Board member requested to know what direction should the Board take if any, concerning Item III- Recommendation to Consider Approval of Amendments to Asheville Middle School Project on the agenda for the special meeting.

While there was general agreement among the Board members that the architects and the construction managers had identified some great savings, the Board was reluctant to approve the amendments to the Asheville Middle School project.

Superintendent Johnson and the Board explored ways and means with the architects and construction managers that would lessen the impact to the budget if they were to add back the instructional spaces for the new school.

Superintendent Johnson requested clarity from the Board during their conversation exchange on how to proceed. The Board requested the 12 classrooms be added back and to continue to look for ways to reduce the overall project cost. In a conversation with County

Manager Wanda Greene during the meeting, it was made known that the Board should do what they deemed to be necessary for the new middle school.

- The Board briefly discussed the escalation cost and how it could have an impact on the budget for the project.
- Board chair Hallum recommended that a meeting be setup with the construction managers and further suggested that the construction manager regroup with the Board after their meeting with the County Manager. Wednesday, June 19, 2013 at 1:30 pm was recommended.

The Board took no action to approve the amendments to the Asheville Middle School Project as presented by Clark, Nexsum and Beverly Grant and BarnHill.

Principal Sellinger shared with the Board and Superintendent Johnson how much she appreciated their dedication towards the middle school and the students.

Based on the concerns raised during the special meeting, the following major points emerged from the Board as a directive to the architects.

- Add back into the budget the instructional spaces by not eliminating the 12 classrooms
- Lower costs.

#### ADOURNMENT

At 9:38 a.m., the special meeting was adjourned.

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Jacquelyn Hallum, Chairperson

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Allen H. Johnson, Secretary/Superintendent