BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
School Board Work Session Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2025
District Educational Services Center
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present

Richard Geier, Chair	David Carr	Leah Frazier
Carlton Dallas, Vice Chair	Chloe Gordon	Isaac Gordon
Ingrid Boatright Secretary	Elizabeth Hey	Victor Ney
	Alphonso Small	William Smith

Colonel Richard Geier called the meeting to order at 8:00a.m.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of Employment Matter re: Personnel Ratification Report pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1); Adult Education Report pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-40 (a)(4); discussion of proposed selection of architect for Professional Design Services contract RFQ #25-0080Bluffton High School CTE Building and RFQ #25-009 Riverview Charter School Gym Addition pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Lobbyist Contract Renewal with Burr Forman Law Firm pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2). The motion was seconded by Mr. Victor Ney. The motion passed 7/0. Carlton Dallas, Chloe Gordon, Elizabeth Hey, and Alphonso Small were absent from the vote.

Action from Executive Session

Colonel Geier called the meeting back to open session at 9:00a.m.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommendations for employment listed on the December 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024 Personnel Ratification Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 9/0/2. Chloe Gordon, and William Smith abstained from the vote.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommendation for the monthly Adult Education Report for January 21, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Victor Ney. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board authorizes the Superintendent to issue an award to Jumper Carter Sease Architects, P.A. for the new Bluffton High School CTE Building. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to negotiate the architectural contracts and, upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with the firm. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Elizabeth Hey. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board authorizes the Superintendent to issue an award to Caplea Co Architects for the new Riverview Charter School Gym. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to negotiate the architectural contract and, upon successful negotiations, execute a contract with the firm. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chloe Gordon. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board of Education does not renew the contract with Burr Forman & McNair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 11/0.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed.

Colonel Geier stated that the media was properly notified.

Public Comments

- No Public Comments.

Riverview Charter School Annual Report

- Mr. Davontae Singleton, Director of Riverview Charter School presented the Annual 2024 Report.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board of Education approve the Riverview Charter School 2024 Annual Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Victor Ney. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to reconsider the previously adopted motion regarding the non-renewal of a contract, which was passed at the last board meeting. The original motion stated that the Board will not renew the contract but to ensure clarity and specificity. The motion was seconded by Mr. Victor Ney. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to amend the motion to state: the Board will not renew the Lobbyist Contract. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board of Education does not renew the Lobbyist contract with Burr Forman. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 11/0.

Facilities Master Plan

- Mr. Robert Oetting introduced Mrs. Carol Crutchfield who presented the new Facilities Master Plan. The Master Plan provided a portion of the answer required in OE-8.
- Mrs. Crutchfield went through the book section by section giving an explanation on each part, especially for the new board members.

Construction Update

- Mr. Oetting introduced Mr. Agus Vargas who presented the monthly Construction Update. The Executive Summary covered projects through December 31, 2024.
- All 2019 Bond Referendum projects are being reported with “Green “ traffic lights for budget and schedule.
- All 2023 Bond Referendum projects are being reported with “Green” traffic lights for budget and schedule except for May River Elementary School which is reporting a “Yellow” traffic light for schedule due to the Encroachment from Palmetto Bluff POA being in negotiations.
- The report Bond Referendum Financial Updates for both 2019 and 2023.

Colonel Geier recess the Board for a lunch break at 11:54am.

<u>Open Session</u>

Colonel Geier called the meeting back to open session at 12:30pm.

Book Review Board Procedural Options

- Dr. Mary Stratos and Mr. Ryan Copeland presented information on Procedural Options for Book Reviews.
- Dr. Stratos reviewed Regulation 43-170 with the Board and the process that was used reviewing the 97 books that were challenged last year.
- Mr. Copeland's presentation gives the School Board 3 Options based on R43-170 which include a 90-day window to vote on a complaint and allow the complaint to come before the BCSD Board.
- Dr. Stratos asked the Board for determine which Education Procedural Options for Book Reviews will be used.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Beaufort County School District Board of Education approve Option 1 (which allows harmonization with the existing community review process as well as public comments before Board votes at meeting.) for proceeding with the procedure for selection or reconsideration of instructional materials pursuant to S.C. Regulation 43-170. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 8/2/1. Ingrid Boatright and Elizabeth Hey voted against the motion. William Smith abstained from the vote.

Stipends

- Mrs. Tonya Crosby presented a presentation on the Stipend Study that was conducted. The study provided the following key points:
    - Project Team
    - Focus Groups
    - Stipend Study Process
    - Research
    - Outcomes
- The Outcomes are:
    - Simplified Stipends Schedules
    - Updated Academic Schedules
    - New Fine and Performing Arts Schedules
    - Updated Funding Formula
    - Increased funding allocation to support new stipend scheduled $500,00 (includes benefits)
    - Not less than 3% increase across the board on all stipend schedules
    - $500,00 budget to include benefits

Budget Update

- Mrs. Crosby updated the Board on the development of the General Operating fund budget for the 2025-2026 year. The Budget Office, with collaboration with the Superintendent facilities the process, gathers feedback, and ultimately presents a budget recommendation to the Board. The following are the key points of the first budget presentation:
    - Financial strategy and Policies
    - Revenues
    - State Legislative Budget Process
    - Highlights of the state Budget Proposal
    - Categories of Expenditures
    - Challenges
    - Alignment with Priorities
    - Balancing the Budget
    - Presentations and Approvals

Budget Priorities

- Dr. Rodgriguez led the Board through an interactive exercise to establish the Board's priorities, using the Priority List that Board members had submitted earlier.

- The Board worked through the program and developed the top twelve - to the top five - to the Board's Top 3 High Level Budget Priorities.
  - Academic and Programs
  - Teacher Raises, Staff Raises, Bus Drivers Raises
  - School Security (personnel, training, and protocols)
- Dr. Rodriguez assured the Board that he will utilized their top twelve, but the 3 high Level priorities provides direction for the staff.

Chair's Report

- Colonel Geier's Chair's Report included committee assignments, parliamentarian appointment, a new board leadership initiative and a board retreat.
  The new board committee assignments are listed below:
  Academic: Chair – Chloe Gordon, Leah Frazier, and David Carr

  Finance: Chair – Carlton Dallas, Elizabeth Hey, Chloe Gordon

  Legislative: Chair – Carlton Dallas, Ingrid Boatright, Chloe Gordon, Isaac Gordon, Elizabeth Hey

  Operations: Chair – Victor Ney, David Carr, Isaac Gordon, Alphonso Small, William Smith

  Results: Chair – Elizabeth Hey, David Carr, Richard Geier

  Technology: Chair – Ingrid Boatright, Leah Frazier, Victor Ney

  BJACE: Carlton Dallas, Leah Frazier, Alphonso Small

  Policy: will be staffed after further discussion at a future work session.

- Colonel Geier named Ingrid Boatright as the Parliamentary.
- Colonel Geier proposed a Board leadership Initiative to improve the Board's communication and interaction with County Council, City Governments in the County, local churches, service organizations, and social organizations. Board members are encouraged to attend and observe County Council meetings, City Council meetings, and Township meetings conducted in their district. If Board members attend from star to finish, they can annotate on the monthly travel and receive board stipend pay for attendance.
- Colonel Geier would like to conduct a retreat for Board members to get to know each other and a session on coherent governance. He asked that Board members let Ms. Cushingberry know the Saturdays that they would not be available.

Future Topics

- Ways for Effective Communication – Ingrid Boatright

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 2:55 p.m.

(Signature on Official File Copy) Date: March 4, 2025
Ingrid Boatright, Secretary, Board of Education
Minutes prepared by Robyn Cushingberry, Executive Assistant

Motion Summary

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