

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2001

The School Board of Alachua County, Florida, met in regular session duly called at 7 p.m. in the Boardroom, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida. Present were: Chester Leathers, chairman; Bill Cake, vice-chairman; Bev Carroll, Jeannine Cawthon, and Barbara Sharpe, members; Mary Chambers, Superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leathers, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved to approve the minutes of August 21, 2001, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mr. Cake

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of September 4, 2001, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Sharpe thanked the Board and Superintendent Chambers for their support during the recent Florida School Boards Association Retreat in Gainesville. She also extended her appreciation to several staff members for their assistance and also commended the students for their well-mannered behavior and video presentation. She noted that she received many positive evaluations about the conference.

Mrs. Carroll informed the Board and Superintendent Chambers that a meeting of the School Readiness Coalition will be held September 12, 2001. Ms. Ann Crowell, director, Fearnside Family Services Center, will be presenting the district's program needs and services for the upcoming year to the School Readiness Coalition.

She also requested an update on Citizens Field and noted that the Gainesville Police Department (GPD) is encouraging parents to attend football games with their children.

Chairman Leathers applauded the efforts of law enforcement during the recent football games at Citizens Field.

Superintendent Chambers pointed out that this month's character trait is *Respect*. She also thanked and expressed her appreciation and respect for school bus driver Jimmy Young for the opportunity of

riding his school bus last week.

She reported that following concerns from the first football game at Citizens Field, local law enforcement personnel have been meeting with staff members and high school principals to develop a plan to ensure an orderly and safe environment. She requested Security Chief Bear Bryan provide a report to the Board.

Chief Bryan reported that a meeting was held last week with high school principals, staff members and representatives from the Gainesville Police Department, and the Alachua County Sheriff's Office. A decision was made to increase the amount of law enforcement personnel present at major games. The recent game indicated that no major events occurred due to increased presence of law enforcement.

He noted that law enforcement has been notified that if they have contact with a student, which results in an arrest, they are to notify the School Board and appropriate action will be taken at the school level.

SUPERFUND/ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP (SUPERFUND/EHP) PROGRAM

Mr. Jeff Charbonnet, principal, Howard Bishop Middle School, congratulated Howard Bishop teacher Tom Fritz and presented him with a certificate for successful completion of the one-week Superfund/Environmental Health Partnership (Superfund/EHP) program. The program was held July 8-4, 2001, at the University of Florida (UF) and was sponsored by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). It is a rigorous science research program that gives teachers the opportunity to become actively involved in the current research conducted at UF.

Board Members commended Mr. Fritz was on his outstanding accomplishment.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Joan Longstreth, principal, Buchholz High School, introduced student Jimmy Skiles, president of the Senior Class, to make a video presentation showcasing the many programs offered at Buchholz.

Ms. Cindy Biggs, SAC Chair, Mebane Middle School, and Social Studies teacher, shared innovative programs available at Mebane Middle School and intensive strategies that are being used to focus on reading deficits.

The Regular Board meeting was recessed and a Public Hearing convened.

PUBLIC HEARING—
ADOPTION OF
MILLAGE
RESOLUTIONS
AND BUDGET FOR
THE 2001-02 FISCAL
YEAR

Mr. Keith Birkett, deputy superintendent, Planning/Budget/Systems Accountability, stated that this is the final Public Hearing and adoption of the final millage levy and budget for the 2001-2002 school year. He introduced Ms. Cheri Trainor, senior accountant, to provide the Board with information on local taxes and millages.

Ms. Trainor presented an overview of a sample property tax notice in order to explain how School Board taxes are impacting tax bills. She also pointed out the following:

- The roll-back rate this year for the required local effort is 5.806, which is the portion of the millage levy that the School Board is required to levy in order to participate in the Florida Education Finance Program, the funding mechanism for public schools in Florida.
- Capital Improvement Levy of 2.000 mills for school construction and discretionary millage of .510 mills for operations and supplemental discretionary of .225 mills for operations.
- Debt Service Millage of 1.895 mills for repayment of voter approved bonds for school construction combined with Alachua County voted millage on Notice of Propose Property Taxes.
- Changes in a property's assessed value will impact property taxes.
- The roll-back rate is 5.6455, which is the total of the taxable value and apply the rate needed to come up with the amount of funding received last year. The district is assessing the full amount for the discretionary supplemental, the required local effort, and the capital improvement level that the district is allowed to assess. The only difference is that the debt service millage is lower because the Board can only assess enough to actually cover debt payments.

Mr. Birkett stated that the Board is levying the maximum by law and the rates have actually gone down and the total millage is at the maximum.

He stated that there is a rumor of a potential 3% holdback. He noted, should that occur, the budget does not include any contingency that could handle a 3% holdback, and it would definitely mean that there would need to be a reduction in the work force.

He stated that the budget presented many challenges and he provided a number of the issues that were taken into consideration:

- The district did not receive enough money, and most of the money that was received came in the form of categoricals.
- Some of the dollars went directly to teachers or directly to schools.
- During the past five years, recurring revenues have been displaced: \$9,081,903.

- Due to an under projection of student growth statewide, the state faced a \$58 million revenue shortfall and the estimated budget impact of (\$961,903) was carried into this year's budget
- Legislative Funding Increase--\$4,757,459. The retirement growth represents dollars the district has already been receiving and utilizing to pay state retirement for employees. The retirement rate is being reduced for 2001-02, thereby requiring less dollars be forwarded to the state. Those dollars can now be utilized in other areas of the budget.
- Of the \$4,757,459 new revenue, 2001-02 budget increases were primarily in categoricals--\$2,815,285, leaving a total available less categorical increases of \$1,942,174.
- Funds directly to teachers and schools: \$3,221,297
- 2001-02 Budgetary Increases: (\$2,949,432). The negative \$2,949,432 means expenditures budgeted are exceeding new revenue by \$2,949,432. State law requires School Boards' budgets to be balanced.
- The \$2,949,432 negative budget fund balance required staff to take drastic measures to balance the budget. Total Adjustments: \$5,556,436.

Mr. Birkett noted that technical assistance has been requested from the Department of Education and that he is meeting with DOE officials the following day.

He stated that the district has developed a draft cost containment and fund balance stabilization plan. Considering the fact that available fund balances are the lowest in many years, threats of possible budget reductions or holdbacks have forced the district to be increasingly prudent in the utilization of resources.

Dr. Gunnar Paulson, ACEA, requested a detailed printout of the Board's priorities. He also questioned the excessive amount for transportation costs and the many unnecessary bus stops. He noted that he was on the 4th-5th grade class size committee, which made a recommendation to the school board for a two-and-a-half year program and now it has jumped up to two years.

Mrs. Sharpe read the following statement for the record:

As we continue to evaluate the budget for ways to balance the budget and provide the best educational services possible to students, we have requested technical assistance from the Department of Education. We have asked department officials to review budgetary and financial documents, evaluate fund balance trends, identify higher than normal program costs, and evaluate cost containment and fund balance stabilization. Input will be solicited from principals, administrators

and community to review all programs. The department official will be here tomorrow going through this budget. This is an indication that this school board is doing everything we can to find out ways that we can change whatever we need to change, or whatever it is that is going to keep us above water.

Chairman Leathers stated that he is very concerned that the district is facing a significant shortfall and the Board and staff needs to take responsibility and address this shortfall. His biggest disappointment is with the lack of commitment in state support for public education.

Superintendent Chambers reiterated that the Department of Education officials will be analyzing the cost containment and fund balance stabilization plan. She pointed out that the Board has tried to keep budget cuts away from the classroom as much as possible over the years, but cuts have been made to several areas. Consultants have stated that the district staffs schools very generously and staff will look at all areas. She also noted that some of the Board's priorities this year, such as class size reduction, competitive salary and benefits, and adequate facilities, were carried over from last year. In addition to those priorities, staff will be looking at reading K-12 and safety, among others. Obviously, some of those are competing. To reduce class size takes away from money that is available for raises for teachers and staff. The district needs to create a balancing act to make sure that the best educational services and educational system are provided for students.

Mr. Birkett read the Millage Resolution for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

RESOLUTION DETERMINING
REVENUES AND MILLAGES LEVIED

RESOLUTION OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF
ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, DETERMINING THE AMOUNT
OF REVENUES TO BE PRODUCED AND THE MILLAGE TO BE
LEVIED FOR THE GENERAL FUND, FOR THE DISTRICT
LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND, AND FOR EACH
DISTRICT BOND INTEREST AND SINKING FUND FOR THE
FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2001, AND ENDING JUNE
30, 2002.

WHEREAS, Section 237.091, Florida Statutes, requires that upon receipt of the certificate of the property appraiser giving the assessed valuation of the county and of each of the special tax school districts, the school board shall determine by resolution the amounts necessary to be raised for the District School Fund, for the District Local Capital

Improvement Fund, and for each District Bond Interest and Sinking Fund, and the millage to be levied for each such fund including the voted millage; and

WHEREAS, the certificate of the property appraiser has been received;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the District School Board that the amounts necessary to be raised as shown by the officially adopted budget and the millages necessary to be levied for each school fund of the district for the fiscal year are as follows:

1. DISTRICT SCHOOL FUND (nonvoted levy)

a) Nonexempt assessed valuation	b) Amount to be raised	c) Millage Levy
\$6,667,577,867	LRE \$36,776,359	5.806 Mills
	BASIC DIS \$ 3,230,441	.510 Mills
	SUPP DIS \$ 1,425,195	.225 Mills

2. DISTRICT LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (nonvoted Levy)

a) Nonexempt assessed valuation	b) Amount to be raised	c) Millage Levy
\$6,667,577,867	\$12,668,398	2.000 Mills

4. DISTRICT INTEREST AND SINKING FUND(S) (voted)

a) Nonexempt assessed valuation	b) Amount to be raised	c) Millage Levy
\$6,667,577,867	\$3,800,519	.600 Mills
	\$3,325,454	.525 Mills
	\$4,877,333	.770Mills

5. THE TOTAL MILLAGE RATE TO BE LEVIED EXCEEDS THE ROLL-BACK RATE COMPUTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 200.065(1), F.S., BY 3.68 PERCENT.

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to adopt the Millage Resolution for the 2001-2002 fiscal year as read.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF
2001-2002 BUDGET

Mr. Birkett read the Budget Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, HEREBY ADOPTS AS ITS FINAL BUDGET THE TENTATIVE BUDGET PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ON AUGUST 2, 2001, WITH THE AMENDMENTS SHOWN ON SCHEDULES I THROUGH VI APPROVED THIS MEETING, CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING FUNDS AND APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE 2001-2002 FISCAL YEAR:

FUND	APPROPRIATION
GENERAL	\$ 167,103,996.62
SPECIAL REVENUE	21,341,489.77
DEBT SERVICE	14,142,313.09
CAPITAL PROJECTS	73,796,355.81
TRUST AND AGENCY	<u>4,078,220.06</u>
TOTAL	\$ 280,462,375.35

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the administration's recommendation to adopt the 2001-2002 Budget Resolution as read.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

The public hearing was adjourned and the regular Board meeting reconvened.

CITIZEN INPUT

The following concerns/issues/suggestions/requests were presented to the Board for consideration:

- Inconsistent and unfair handling of the citizen input process
- Place the following issues on the School Board agenda:
 - Challenge the Board to set an example of educational innovation by investing in partnership with the cultural groups that the Board serves.
 - Development and implementation of a program of education designed to actualize the potential of black students, parents and teachers.
 - Board conduct a critical review of African-American History as it relates to the US Constitution.

APPROVAL OF 2000-
2001 GENERAL
PURPOSE FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS AND RE-
LATED COST REPORT

Mr. Richard Trainor, director, Finance, presented a summary overview of the Financial Statements for the 2000-01 fiscal year.

Mr. John Kirkpatrick presented extensive information to the Board on the Cost Report.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the 2000-2001 General Purpose Financial Statements and related Cost Report for submission to the Department of Education.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT GUIDE

Mr. Don Lewis, stated that the School Improvement Guide is designed to give School Advisory Councils the assistance needed to complete a School Improvement Plan and to align with the district's Strategic Plan.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved the administration's recommendation to approve the proposed School Improvement Guide as presented for advertising.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

WORKSHOP(S)

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to schedule a workshop on Tuesday, October 23, 2001, 9 a.m. to discuss the budget and program assessments.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-10.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

There was consensus of four Board members, with Chairman Leathers dissenting, to begin using the timer lights during Citizen Input at the next Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.