

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
September 18, 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 L. Chambers, superintendent; and James F. Lang, attorney for the Board.

Chairman Leathers called the meeting to order. He requested a moment of silence in honor of all those who lost their lives during the attacks by terrorists September 11, 2001, in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania, and also their families and all the rescue workers. He requested prayers for the President and his staff and all leaders around the world as they address this crisis.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, Ms. Katie Smith sang the National Anthem.

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Motion by Mrs. Sharpe

Seconded by Mrs. Carroll

Moved to approve the minutes of September 4, 2001, as presented.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting of September 18, 2001.

Add as Item E.6., Overview of BIG Accommodation Model; add under Item F, Scheduled Agencies, ACEA; add as Action Item H.2., Student Case No. 01-52-X. Also pull for separate vote and discussion Consent Agenda Item I.6., Construction Management Services for Project SBAC CB734—Eastside High School New Classroom Building.

The question was called on the agenda as amended.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBER/
SUPERINTENDENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Sharpe read a letter from the Florida School Boards Association noting that September has been designated by the Florida Legislature as “Take Your Dad to School Month” in Florida. This gives educators the unique opportunity to further encourage fathers to participate in the education of their children. School Boards throughout Florida are requested to endorse September as “Take you Dad to School Month” and to designate a week in September for schools to conduct father-

friendly events and activities. A “Take your Dad to School Month” tool kit of resources is available for teachers and other educators by way of the web at www.floridafathers.org. The tool kit offers simple activities designed to invite fathers into the classroom, facts on fathers and their children, and how children benefit from stronger father participation. A United States Department of Education study, “Fathers’ Involvement in their Children’s Schools,” reveals that children whose fathers participate in school activities are more likely to have higher test scores, better academic and attendance records and fewer behavior problems than their peers whose fathers do not. This is good evidence why families, students, and educators should encourage fathers to take a more active role in their children’s education. To further highlight “Take Your Dad to School Month,” Florida’s Commission on Responsible Fatherhood will host press conferences at elementary schools in Tallahassee, Tampa and Daytona Beach. Children whose fathers cannot participate in school-related “Take Your Dad to School Month” events are encouraged to call on a grandfather, uncle, big brother, mentor or other father figure. Your participation in “Take Your Dad to School Month” is greatly appreciated.

Mrs. Carroll noted that she served on a panel along with staff members and members of the legislative delegation for the first meeting of the Alachua County Council PTA (ACCPTA). The panel discussion focused on how to be involved with the school system at the local and state level and how to make changes. There were a number of concerns about the budget that was addressed by panel members. She encouraged that all become members of the PTAs and volunteer in the schools. ACCPTA will be addressing the Board in November.

Superintendent Chambers noted that in light of the tragic events last week she is very proud of the Board, staff, principals, teachers, all employees, parents and students for pulling together for our community. She informed the Board of many of the activities in the schools in response to this tragedy.

Chairman Leathers shared his observance during this crisis of the good things in public education. He specifically noticed all the different cultures represented in an orderly mass exodus of New York following the two crashes into the World Trade Center. He feels we are a new emerging America. Maybe once and for all this country will be free of all prejudice. He knew the financial arm of our country would rally and come together. We have much to be proud of in our education system, but there is a lot of work to be done, and Florida may be hurt worse than any other state in terms of additional financial support, not only this year, but also years to come.

RECOGNITION/PRESENTATION/REPORT

Leadership Gainesville Alumni

Ms. Ann Crowell, director, Family Services Center, recognized the Leadership Gainesville Alumni Association in appreciation for its commitment and support through Kidstart Fun Fair, an annual celebration for children who have completed their final year in Head Start/Pre-kindergarten. The Association was nominated for the National Head Start Association Corporate award, and Mr. Bill Evans, president, accepted the plaque in recognition of commitment and support of young children's successful transition into school. Mr. Evans presented a short video on the Kidstart Fun Fair.

School Bus Driver of the Year

Mr. Terry Tougaw, executive director, Facilities/Transportation, read a proclamation recognizing Mr. Johnnie Jones as the school bus driver of the Year.

BHS Finance Academy

Dr. Dave Edwards, director, Career and Technical Education, noted that there is talk in the education community about how education should be relevant, rigorous, work-base learning, with relationships built between business and industry so the student will have an understanding of the relationship between what they are doing in academics and what they will have to do in the real world. The BHS Finance Academy was asked by the National Academy Foundation to do a presentation in San Antonio because it has a program which has all those components and probably the only high school in the nation that has an operational bank that is student-operated every day on its campus. A brief video of the presentation "The Right Mix" was presented to the Board. Ms. Annette Jenkins, teacher, gave an overview of the program. The bank is a branch of school partner Florida Credit Union. Students also addressed the Board on the operation of the branch, explaining their involvement and responsibilities, the development of procedures and the marketing team.

School Improvement Highlights

Ms. Kathy Dixon, principal, Williams Elementary School, introduced Mr. Stevie Gibbs, SAC chairman, who focused on highlights of the learning environment at Williams. He shared their innovative programs, e.g., social curriculum and social skills, school-wide discipline program, Caught Ya! program, school-wide change program, reading excellent, morning meeting, and CARES, (cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, self-control).

Mr. Dewitt Lewis, principal, Waldo Community School, introduced Mr. Lee Vincent, SAC chairman, to present a slide presentation on Harnessing the Challenges of the 21 Century Classroom with the focus on raising academic standards and student achievement; teaching students how to apply knowledge; developing guiding principles in students (character education); and integrating technology.

District Internet Access
Safeguard

Mr. Jim Utley, Chief Technology & Information Services Officer, noted that the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) mandates that school and libraries receiving e-rate discounts for internet access, internet services, or internal connections, or certain federal technology funding put into place internet safety policies that include filtering or blocking access to visual depictions of material that is obscene, child pornography, and, when minors are using the computer, material that is harmful to minors. The district applies for and receives e-rate rebates on its telephone and data line charges. The district is required to adopt and implement an internet safety policy this year that addresses the following: access by minors to inappropriate material on the internet and the world wide web; the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication, i.e., instant message services; unauthorized access, including so called hacking and other unlawful activities by minors online; unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.

He noted that the district currently employs technology protection measures to block or filter internet access and has done this for years. The district uses the filtering service provided by FIRN to block access to inappropriate material on the internet and the world wide web. The blocked categories on the filter are adults only; hate and discrimination; illegal pornographic sites, sexual sites; violence and nudity. The exception categories are education, education materials, for kids sites, history, medical material, a moderated site and text spoken only material. The filtering software is supplied to FIRN by Education Networks of America (ENA). ENA updates this list of sites to be blocked daily. There are two FIRN filters operating at all times.

Responding to Mrs. Carroll, Mr. Utley feels that the FIRN filters are adequate, and he expects to bring a policy back to the Board within a couple of months.

OVERVIEW OF BIG
ACCOMMODATION
MODEL

Dr. Dean Niederkohr, principal, Lincoln Middle School, gave an overview of the BIG Accommodation Model for middle schools that has been designed to teach content and higher order thinking skills in a manner that benefits all students and allows all students to learn challenging content and skills in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science and history. Students will then be able to draw on that content in applying higher order skills such as reasoning, problem solving, critical thinking and composition. The instruction is grounded in technology, media and materials that focus on Big ideas, Intensive instruction and Great expectations (BIG).

Mrs. Carroll felt it important that the Board and community know about this program, and she shared testimonies of teachers about the program. She was informed that the coach should be in the school around October 1, 2001.

SCHEDULED AGENCIES Gunnar Paulson, president, ACEA, pointed out/questioned the following budget items.

- Insurance -- Out of 67 counties only seven counties contribute less money for individuals for health insurance than Alachua County.
- Fuel -- Clay County, comparable to Alachua County, pays \$3.8 million compared to Alachua with \$7.2 million.
- Workforce reduction -- If we are overstaffed, why are we spending so much money on extra teachers?
- Student growth -- declining enrollment; less students, more teachers.

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

- Unfair and unjust system for equal business opportunity in construction for subconsultant and subcontractors.
- Concern over the percentage of high school students enrolled at Santa Fe Community College needing remediation. Suggested a massive research effort to address the problem.
- Infusion of African-American studies and request to meet with staff.

**AWARD OF
CONTRACTS FOR
GROUP HEALTH
INSURANCE AND LIFE
INSURANCE
PROGRAMS**

Mr. Dave Hotary, executive director, Safety/Risk Management, noted that the Requests for Proposals for the district's health and life insurance programs were forwarded to the Insurance Committee for review and recommendation to the Board. He presented an overview of the programs.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the administration's recommendation to accept the Insurance Committee's recommendation as outlined in the executive summary and award the Health Insurance contract to Blue Cross Blue Shield in the amount of \$12,234,352 and the Life Insurance contract to AIG Company in the amount of \$481,806.60.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

STUDENT CASE
NO. 01-52-X

Dr. Jim Scaggs, staff attorney, reported that the student is charged with fighting and with attempting to stab another student with a pencil.

Motion by Mr. Cake

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the superintendent's recommendation that the student's suspension be extended through October 2, 2001, pending completion of investigation.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

CONSTRUCTION
MANAGEMENT
SERVICES FOR
PROJECT SBAC CB734—
EASTSIDE HIGH
SCHOOL NEW
CLASSROOM
BUILDING

Mr. Bill Cake noted that when we award a contract to an out of county firm the corporate taxes will go to that county and the tax dollars will be spent in that county. This project was not bid. If there is a policy that we must go along with the committee's recommendation, he will abide by that policy, but he would like to see a change in the policy. This is not a competition with dollars but a competition of a slick presentation that may be made. If most things are equal and the companies are fairly equal, we need to award the contract to a firm in this county.

Mrs. Sharpe expressed the same belief in using local firms and asked if the selection was done by ranking.

Mr. Gable, director, Facilities, responded that this is the same qualification-based process as for selecting architectural services. This is the way of selecting the construction professional, the construction manager. .

Mr. Cake stated that he believes there are other counties that have a weighted type system where local contractors may be given a higher weight that figures into the grading scale.

Mr. Tougaw agreed this is right in certain instances where you do your short listings. He noted the district has openly and objectively looked at firms that submit the work in this county. There are certain laws that relate to this subject, and he feels there is a need to look at this and perhaps look at how other entities do the qualification-based selection and have input from the Board into that process. Competition from out of the county has always been encouraged. This would affect architectural engineering, construction management at risk, and anything that is based on qualification. Staff does understand the concern of the Board and tries to take a very fair and objective look at the process as they go through it to make a recommendation to the Board.

Mrs. Cawthon sat on the committee, as a Board member, and felt the

process was followed and that the group was comfortable with the choice. Those that did not have good construction management experience were eliminated immediately. The list was narrowed down to four and the committee looked at their construction management experience with regard to school construction. The number of school projects the different companies had done was a large factor. She thinks it was fair and the people on the committee had had enough experience with construction and maybe construction management and had a very impartial view of who was awarded the contract. One of the on-site men is from Newberry and it was felt he would be more likely to use local subcontractors. It was a hard choice.

Mr. Cake asked if the district had had any problems with the two local firms. Mr. Gable noted that they would not have interviewed any of the four firms if they felt like there were any problems with performance either on our projects or on the references they listed or projects that we knew about. The two local firms have each done one construction management project in this county.

Mr. Cake asked if the item is here for the Board to rubber stamp because the law requires that or is it here for the Board to vote its conscience.

Mr. Lang stated that he did not know the answer to that question but does know that with competitive bids the law is clear you have to go with the low bidder.

Mr. Lang asked if construction management cost the Board less than competitive bids. Mr. Gable stated that the actual construction cost, what is put in brick and mortar, is probably a wash. What we get is better control over both that cost and the time schedule, the quality of work and who is working on the project, which are the advantages of construction management.

Mr. Tougaw noted that the recommendation on the ranking by the committee is being presented.

Mrs. Sharpe feels the process is fair, but she would like to have a workshop to see if the district can improve this process. Prior to the workshop, she requested research from other districts that have gone to construction management and to check about the weighted scale. She feels the Board should go with the committee's recommendation at this time.

Mrs. Carroll asked if there is any reason why, with past work experience, with past work ethics, or integrity of the company that the

Board should not hire this company under its current process.

Mr. Gable noted that there were a certain number of references required as a part of the initial submittal and as a part of our due diligence in the selection. We researched those in the short-listing process. There were also some allegations or information that came up after the process, we also researched that and have no problem standing by this recommendation.

Ms. Cawthon stated that the committee discussed things before the forms were filled out, which were done completely independently and until Mr. Gable started tallying up, we were not aware who was going to come out first. All the companies provided a list of suits filed against them for a variety of things and how they were resolved. She does not think it could have been done any fairer.

Chairman Leathers noted his desire to have a workshop on this issue and look at the whole process.

Mr. Cake noted that he didn't have any problem with the company selected if the committee says that is the best company. He is still going to vote against it for the reasons he gave initially.

He requested staff look at a different process for a way of getting a weighted factor for local companies in the future.

Mr. Gable stated that staff was asked a couple of years ago to bring all major contracts to the Board as an action item. Staff will bring the guarantee maximum price and the other fees related to this as an action item. He stated this was viewed as being more akin to the architectural selection and the rankings, which have always been put on the consent agenda.

Mr. Gable noted that interviews were conducted on August 31, 2001, for the Construction Manager for Project SBAC CB734—Eastside High School New Classroom Building.

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved the administration's recommendation to accept the following rankings for the Construction Manager on Project SBAC CB734—Eastside High School New Classroom Building: (1) W. G. Mills, Inc., Jacksonville, Florida; (2) PPI Construction Management, Gainesville, Florida; (3) Parrish Construction Company, Gainesville, Florida. Preconstruction service fees and a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) will be presented at a later date.

Mrs. Cawthon questioned if it is against the law to exclude firms outside Alachua County that might apply.

Attorney Lang will check but feels it might be because clearly with a competitive bid you get the best for the tax payer's money. On something like this, normally, with the GMP, there can be a savings to the Board.

Mrs. Sharpe reiterated her request for research from other school districts that are using construction management services for their projects before the workshop. She does not want to give out any signals or anything else that she is not for outside competition. It is healthy.

Superintendent Chambers that she has talked with several representatives from the other companies, spent many hours retracing the steps of the committee and also checking references. At this point, based on current board policy, she stands by the recommendation.

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 4-1
Yes: Carroll, Cawthon
Leathers, Sharpe
No: Cake

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Cake Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as described in items 1-20 with item 6 voted on separately. (See Supplementary Minutes Book.)

The question was called. Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0

BOARD MEMBERS/
SUPERINTENDENT
REQUESTS

Mrs. Carroll made the following requests:

- Requested the issue of remediation at Santa Fe Community College be addressed again. Also, address in the Curriculum Plan.
- Requested the Chairman send a letter to the Insurance Committee from the Board thanking them for their assistance.
- Make community aware of the Board workshop on the budget October 23 and hope to address many of the questions being asked at that time.
- Schedule the Board for the WATCH Program with Ward Handcock in October. (Advertise if more than one

member attends at same time.)

- Announced she had requested that Board Attorney Lang pen a letter to the FSBA and request for counties that have appointed superintendents they put together a checklist in a notebook with procedures and documents they should have on file and include the new state laws. She will provide a copy of the letter to Board members.
- Superintendent address the letter received tonight about the small businesses.

The Chairman requested along with other Board members a workshop on construction management policy.

Superintendent Chambers informed the Board that staff is calculating the cost of a School Board business meeting, actual time and cost avoidance staff time and plan to present this information at the October 23, 2001, workshop.

She noted that the second Board meeting in November is the annual reorganization meeting for the Board and at that time the Board can set the Board meetings for the year.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mrs. Carroll

Seconded by Mrs. Sharpe

Moved to adjourn the School Board meeting of September 18, 2001.

The question was called.

Upon Vote: Motion passed 5-0