

Board O'Gram

Vol. 40

No. 12

Jun. 9, 2015

Report of Rome Board of Education — Action Compiled by Mr. Trevor Metzger, Special Education Specialist

Ms. Huffman called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. Mr. Swann gave the opening prayer, and Ms. Huffman led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

At Ms. Huffman's request, Mr. Metzger called the roll and determined that the Board had a quorum.

On a Sims/Dixon motion, the Board unanimously approved the minutes for the May 12, 2015 regular board meeting, financial, and other reports.

Public Recognition

Modern Woodmen's School Speech Contest

Mr. Swann shared that the Modern Woodmen's School Speech Contest is a competition open to students in 5th - 8th grades. There are four levels: local, district, state, and national. This contest gives students a broad topic, such as landmarks. The student is then expected to research, write, organize, and present a speech on the chosen topic.

Gracie Douglas, a 5th grader at West End Elementary School, placed second at the district level. She then advanced to the state level where she placed first! She will now go on to compete by video at the national level this summer. Gracie's topic, Pearl Harbor, included facts about the military base, stories from past survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and a persuasive appeal to maintain the landmark. Gracie is the daughter of Chris and Shanda Douglas.

Superintendent's Report

Attendance

Dr. Buck reported the attendance for the ninth month of school. He stated that West Central Elementary School had the highest elementary school percentage of student attendance at 97.89 percent. At the secondary level, Rome Middle School had the highest percentage of student attendance at 96.48 percent. The highest percentage of staff attendance was North Heights Elementary School at 97.24 percent.

Personnel

On a Dixon/Beeman motion, the Board unanimously approved Dr. Buck's personnel recommendations:

Certified Employment 2015-2016:	Tara E. Andersson-Alred/ES	Rebecca N. Kerlin/NH (B)/MN
	Megan N. Clark/AKD	Clayton N. Kitchings/RHS
	Stephanie Clarke/NH (B)/MN	Mark H. Layne/RHS

LaShonda L. Denmon/MN	Fredia C. O'Neil/RMS
Allison E. Derck/RMS	Margaret A. Patton/WE
Rena P. Drummond/MN	Julie A. Reid/AKD
Natalie L. Dyer/RMS	James K. Speece/RMS
Krista L. Hall/RHS	Amanda G. Stover/EC
Scott F. Hansen/RHS	Jeanna E. Talley/RMS
Sarah V. Holsomback/RMS	Cynthia J. Tobin/RHS
Jessica A. Kennedy/RMS	Lori S. Wilson/RMS

Support Employment 2015-2016:	Lonergon P. Honoré, Jr./ES	Shirley Wiggins/RHS
	Emma Lewis/NH	Ishmael A. Woods/AKD

SPLOST IV

Mr. Atha gave an update on the SPLOST IV revenues. He stated that the May 31, 2015 collections for the tax period of April 2015 were \$453,674 which was \$19,674 above the projections for the month (\$434,000). The total collections to date equal \$5,684,294.

Under Other Items, Dr. Buck announced:

1. The budget presentation to the City of Rome Finance Committee will be Wednesday, June 17, 2015, at 10:30 a.m. in the Sam King Room at City Hall.
2. The budget presentation to the City of Rome Commissioners will be Monday, June 22, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Commission Chambers at City Hall.
3. There will be a second reading of the Rome City Schools budget on Thursday, June 25, 2015, at 7:30 a.m. in the Boardroom.

New Business

First Reading of the FY 16 Proposed Budget

On a Jones/Dixon motion, the Board unanimously approved, on first reading, the FY 16 proposed budget for Rome City Schools. Dr. Buck indicated that the \$48,885,923 budget represented an increase of 5.6% over FY 15. With the increase in state subsidy, we have been able to address several needs in our system. 71.8% of the FY16 proposed budget is earmarked for instruction. This is significantly greater than the 65% required by state law.

The FY 16 proposed budget includes funding for an entire school year for our students (180 days) and for our teachers (190 days). No furlough days were proposed for the FY 16 budget. The proposed budget allows us to increase our instructional staff, where necessary, to handle our increase in enrollment. System-wide enrollment has increased from 5,940 students (2013-2014) to 6,157 students (2014-2015), an increase of 217 students, or 3.7%.

The FY 16 proposed budget allows us to reinstate some positions that had been eliminated during the economic downturn. These positions include one new elementary guidance counselor and three new elementary assistant principals.

In order to improve student performance and increase the graduation rate of Rome High School, the FY 16 proposed budget includes the creation of a Ninth Grade Academy. The proposed

budget includes the addition of one new assistant principal, one new counselor, and one new clerical position to serve the Ninth Grade Academy.

The FY 16 proposed budget includes an 8% increase in teacher retirement costs. It also reflects an increase of over 25% in state health benefits costs for our non-certified employees. Additionally, this proposed budget also reflects an increase of over \$200,000 in transportation costs due to a cost increase and the need to implement additional routes to handle the increase in our student population and ensure student safety.

The FY 16 proposed budget reflects a \$2,655,997 increase in revenue and a \$2,605,524 increase in spending over FY 15. The revenue increase from the State is greatly appreciated; however, Rome City Schools will still see an austerity reduction of \$1,700,599. This is money we have earned through the Quality Basic Education formula that we will not be receiving.

The FY 16 proposed budget will maintain the current millage rate of 17.45 mills. The amount of funding from the city will increase by \$516,997 due to additional properties being added to the digest and properties that had temporary abatements ending. This will be the sixth consecutive year that the millage rate remained unchanged.

Adopt Resolution for Class Size Waiver 2015-2016

On a Swann/Beeman motion, the Board unanimously adopted the Class Size Waiver 2015-2016 to be sent to the Georgia Department of Education. The waiver authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to increase current class size maximums by:

- 1 to 5 students in grades K-12 in Regular Education,
- 1 to 9 students in Gifted,
- 1 to 4 students in English Language Learners (ELL/ESOL),
- 1 to 4 students in Early Intervention Program (EIP),
- 1 to 4 students in Remedial Education Program (REP),
- 1 to 5 students in Vocational (CTAE),
- 1 to 5 students in Alternative Education Program (AEP), and
- 1 to 4 students in Special Education classes.

Rome Board of Education Proposed Goals for 2015-2016

Dr. Buck presented the following proposed Board Goals for 2015-2016:

1. Increase the high school graduation rate of all subgroups
2. Improve student achievement in Grades K-12
3. Continue implementation of the 2020 Vision Strategic Plan
4. Successfully meet the AdvanceED Accreditation Standards for Quality School Systems
5. Successfully develop IE² contract
6. Successfully open Anna K. Davie Elementary School
7. Successfully implement the Ninth Grade Academy at Rome High School
8. Successfully implement management of Barron Stadium and Legion Field
9. Successfully implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in all schools
10. Expand the use of technology to increase student engagement and achievement

On a Sims/Swann motion, the Board unanimously approved, on first reading, the proposed goals for 2015-2016.

Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) Summer Conference

Mrs. Faith Collins, Mrs. Judy Sims, Mrs. Elaina Beeman, Dr. Bruce Jones, and Dr. Mike Buck have agreed to represent Rome City Schools at the GSBA Summer Conference in Savannah, Georgia on June 12-13, 2015.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.