

# **CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1**

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **BOARD MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 20, 2010**

The Cherokee County School District No. 1 Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday, September 20, 2010 at 7:00 PM in the Board Room at the District Administrative Office. Board members present were Chair Mr. Donnie Smith, Vice Chair Mr. Ron Garner, Secretary Mr. Willie J. Crosby, Mr. Barry E. Bailey, Mr. Billy Blackwell, Mr. Mike A. Ellis, Mrs. Robin D. Harper, Mr. C. Alan McEntire, and Ms. Cheryll D. Smith. Administrators present were Interim Superintendent Dr. Edgar C. Taylor, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services & Instruction Dr. Carlotta Redish, Director of Personnel Dr. Page McCraw, and Interim Director of Finance Mr. Charlie Tillotson. News media present were Mr. Scott Powell - Gaffney Ledger, Mr. Tommy Martin – Cherokee Chronicle, Mrs. Janet Spencer – The Blacksburg Times, and Ms. Lee Healy – Spartanburg Herald-Journal.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 30-40-80(d), as amended, the following have been notified of the time, date, and agenda of this meeting: The Blacksburg Times, The Cherokee Chronicle, The Gaffney Ledger, the Shelby Star, the Spartanburg Herald-Journal, Radio Stations WEAC-AM and WFGN, WSPA-TV, WYFF-TV, and WSOC-TV.

Chair Mr. Donnie Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and recognized the news media present. Mr. Garner led in the opening prayer. The Gaffney High School AFJROTC made the presentation of colors.

Approval of the Board Agenda was the next item on the agenda. **Mr. Crosby made the motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Mr. Garner. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Regular Board Minutes dated August 16, 2010 were presented for approval. **Mrs. Harper made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Crosby. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Called Board Minutes dated August 23, 2010 were presented for approval. **Mr. Blackwell made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Garner. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Called Board Minutes dated August 30, 2010 were presented for approval. **Mr. Garner made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Crosby. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Smith, Mr. Garner, and Mr. McEntire. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mrs. Harper and Ms. Smith. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

School Board Policy BCBI - Public Participation was the next item on the agenda. Rev. L.D. Dawkins, Jr. addressed trustees regarding hiring another interim superintendent when an individual was already serving as interim. Mr. Smith said the Board of Trustees did vote to seek an experienced superintendent to lead the district until the position can be filled permanently. Although Dr. Taylor and Mrs. Bagwell are both employed by the school district, only Dr. Taylor is being paid as Interim Superintendent. Mrs. Bagwell has been placed into a position that was budgeted in advance of her transfer. She is receiving a supplement that will be paid for the remainder of this fiscal year. The Board acted in good faith for the betterment of the Cherokee County School District and particularly the students served by the district and the staff employed by the district. Mr. Smith said the Board has to stand back and look at the entire picture and do what is best for students and employees. The Board often has to make difficult decisions and this was one of those hard decisions. He thanked Rev. Dawkins for his comments.

The next item on the agenda was Honors/Accomplishments/Commendations. Alma Elementary School was recognized for the NetSCOPE Partnership with Winthrop University. The goals of NetSCOPE are to improve P-12 student learning, improve professional learning, improve quality of teacher preparation, and increase the application of research-based practices in classrooms and schools. Dr. Lisa Johnson and Dr. Paul Horne from Winthrop University presented a plaque to Mrs. Kim Camp and the faculty/staff at Alma Elementary.

The next item on the agenda was Ratification of Interim Superintendent Contract. Mr. Smith called for a motion to ratify the contract for Dr. Edgar C. Taylor, Interim Superintendent. **Mr. Garner made the motion, seconded by Mr. McEntire. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Smith, Mr. Garner, and Mr. McEntire. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mr. Blackwell, Mrs. Harper and Ms. Smith. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

The next item on the agenda was Approval of Bid for DVD Cameras. The administration received a total of 6 bids to replace the cameras on school buses with new DVD cameras and recommended awarding the contract to the low bidder, IVS, Inc. in the amount of \$53,520.19. Mr. Smith called for a motion on the recommendation of administration. **Mr. Crosby made the motion, seconded by Mr. Blackwell. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Discussion of Requests for Proposals for Snow Guards, Canopy, and Roofing Engineers was the next item on the agenda. Dr. Taylor advised trustees that the administration has received the requests for proposals for roofing engineers and is prepared to make a recommendation for consideration. The superintendent asked trustees to consider allowing the administration to make the decision on R.F.P.'s with appropriate input from administrative staff and other resources. Once the decision is made and announced, there will be an opportunity for an appeal to the superintendent and the Board of Trustees as proper business procedure. After lengthy discussion on the necessity of hiring roofing engineers to determine the scope of work, contracting with local roofing companies to repair the leaks, what action would void the roof warranty, the negotiation process by administration, budgeted items, awarding of work, notification of the board, and the appeal process, **Mr. Crosby made the motion to table this item pending further discussion, seconded by Mr. Blackwell. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Smith, Mr. Garner, Mr.**

**McEntire, and Ms. Smith. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mr. Bailey and Mrs. Harper. The motion passed by majority vote.**

The next item on the agenda was Superintendent's Report. Dr. Taylor thanked trustees for the opportunity to serve the district and stated his goal was to be transparent regarding issues and make recommendations that would benefit the district. He updated trustees on the preliminary forensic audit of 6 items submitted to Cline Brandt & Kochenower. Two of the items were personnel issues items that are part of the law suits against the district. The auditor had not found any instances of wrongdoing in the two items audited, two items have partially been audited, and the remaining two items have not been investigated at this point. The independent auditor for the district is not interested in conducting a forensic audit and indicated it could cost over a million dollars to conduct this type of audit. The administration has not received anything official but estimates have ranged from a ball-park figure of \$37,000 to over \$100,000 to audit credit card purchases only. Dr. Taylor stated he did not think it was practical use of tax dollars to proceed with a forensic audit and stated the funds could be better used in the classroom. Dr. Taylor informed trustees that 11 schools were tested for mold by Crossroads Environmental. The testing company confirmed the administration's suspicion that the higher levels of mold were a result of shutting down the building HVAC units during one of the hottest and most humid summers this year. The cost to eradicate the mold identified in one school was approximately \$43,000. The administration will research other air quality control and energy education measures to save money next year. He updated trustees on two other reported health concerns at the high school where a student reportedly had MRSA and another student had a staph infection. The locker room area at the school has been clean and sanitized thoroughly. Dr. Taylor also advised trustees that the 2010 Legislative Advocacy Conference is scheduled for December 3-5. The district has 3 voting privileges. Ms. Cheryll Smith offered to attend and Mr. McEntire offered to be the alternate. This will be an agenda item on October 11<sup>th</sup>. **This item was received for information only; the Board required no action.**

Trustees were given the monthly financial report and an update on the 2010-2011 General Fund Budget by Mr. Charlie Tillotson, Interim Finance Director. The Finance Department is working diligently to complete all end of the year transfers and making adjustments so that the annual audit of the district's finances can begin in October and hopefully be completed by the deadline of December 1. As discussed at the last regularly scheduled meeting, finance has not found adjustments that would suggest the District should see a surplus below \$2.2 million for FY 2010. Mr. Tillotson reiterated that the projected surplus was not "found" money; it simply reflects the net results of all financial activities related to revenues, expenses, and transfers for the year. The projections include the use of one-cent sales tax funds, state funding flexibility, and efforts to reduce spending during the year. The district's fund balance on June 30, 2008 was \$6.7 million. The district received approximately \$3 million in budget cuts from the state in FY 2008-09, resulting in a \$3.7 million fund balance as of June 2009. The predicted fund balance for June 2010 was \$5.9 million; however, the current budget reflects a deficit of \$500,000 after expending \$750,000 to retain district food service, changing the schedule on custodial days, leaving the warehouse open, and other revisions when the budget was approved June 14, 2010. The district cannot rely on excess sales tax monies or stimulus money as revenue sources and will need to cut approximately \$4.5 million out of the current budget. Dr. Taylor recommended that the board look at a long-range budget plan for up to five years when the budget process begins next year,

especially in lieu of the fact these two sources of revenue will not be available. **This item was received for information only; the Board required no action.** Ratification of Claims has previously been listed as an action item on the agenda; however, it is not a necessary action of the board.

Personnel Recommendations was the next item on the agenda. Trustees were asked to approve the superintendent's recommendation of Certified Personnel. **Mr. Garner made the motion to approve certified personnel recommendations, seconded by Ms. Harper. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Smith, Mr. Garner, Mrs. Harper, and Ms. Smith. The following trustee voted in opposition to the motion: Mr. McEntire. The motion passed by a majority vote.** Dr. Taylor also noted that changes in the status of classified personnel do not require Board approval and were listed on the agenda for information only.

The next item on the agenda was announcements. Dr. Taylor reminded trustees of upcoming events. PSAT will be administered to all 10th grade students on October 13, 2010. The Fall HSAP test will be administered on October 19 – 21. Red Ribbon Week has been scheduled for October 25 – 29. Schools have been requested to send a list of their activities for the week so this information can be sent this to the newspapers. The Explore Test will be given to all 8th grade students on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The next scheduled board meeting is Monday, October 11<sup>th</sup>. A workshop on Boardsmanship and Superintendent Searches will be conducted October 25<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 PM - 8:00 PM.

Other Matters was the next item on the agenda. Ms. Smith congratulated Alma Elementary, thanked teachers and staff for their hard work and dedication.

Mr. McEntire echoes her comments and asked for clarification on hiring substitutes on a long term basis for food services in lieu of hiring part-time or full-time employees. This will be an agenda item for the board meeting October 11, 2010.

Mrs. Harper congratulated Alma Elementary, thanked teachers and staff for their hard work, and thanked everyone for the flowers and cards received during her recent surgery.

Mr. Garner congratulated Alma Elementary and agreed with Mr. McEntire regarding treating all employees fairly.

Mr. Crosby congratulated Alma Elementary and thanked administrators, teachers, and staff for their hard work and dedication.

Mr. Ellis congratulated Alma Elementary and thanked everyone for working for the district. He also agreed with Mr. McEntire's comments.

Mr. Blackwell echoed the same comments and congratulated Alma Elementary.

Mr. Bailey welcomed Dr. Taylor to Cherokee County and said it would be a learning experience.

Mr. Smith congratulated Alma Elementary and officially welcomed Dr. Taylor on board.

Mr. Smith called for a motion to adjourn. **Mr. Ellis made the motion, seconded by Mr. Crosby. All trustees voted unanimously to adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

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