

CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING

AUGUST 16, 2010

The Cherokee County School District No. 1 Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday, August 16, 2010 at 7:00 PM in the Board Room at the District Administrative Office. Board members present were Chair Mr. Donnie Lee 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. Alan McEntire, and Ms. Cheryll D. Smith. Administrators present were Interim Superintendent Mrs. Kim Bagwell, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services & Instruction Dr. Carlotta Redish, and Interim Director of Finance Mr. Charlie Tillotson. News media present were Mr. Scott Powell - Gaffney Ledger, Mrs. Janet Spencer – The Blacksburg Times, and Mr. Tommy Martin – Cherokee Chronicle.

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.

Interim Superintendent Mrs. Kim Bagwell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Mr. Garner led in the opening prayer. The Gaffney High School AFJROTC made the presentation of colors.

Dr. Clyde Thomas, Pastor of Cherokee Avenue Baptist Church, administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Garner, Mr. McEntire, Mr. Bailey, and Mr. Ellis. Family members of the recently elected trustees were present and held Bibles for their respective spouse or parent.

Reorganization of the Board was the next item on the agenda. **Mr. Ellis nominated Mr. Smith for Board Chair, seconded by Mr. McEntire. Mr. Blackwell made the motion to close nominations, seconded by Ms. Smith. All trustees voted unanimously for Mr. Smith as Board Chair.**

Mr. Smith thanked trustees for their support and stated the board's focus would be on students. He asked trustees to remember that the decisions made by the Board would affect students, individuals, households, and taxpayers of this county. Mr. Smith called for nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Bailey nominated Mr. Garner, seconded by Mr. Ellis. Mr. Blackwell nominated Mr. Crosby, seconded by Ms. Smith. **The following trustees voted for Mr. Garner: Mr. McEntire, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Garner, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Ellis. The following trustees voted for Mr. Crosby: Ms. Smith, Mrs. Harper, Mr. Crosby, and Mr. Blackwell. Mr. Garner was nominated Vice Chair by a majority vote.**

Mr. Smith called for a motion for Secretary. Mr. Crosby nominated Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Blackwell. Mr. Bailey nominated Mr. Crosby, seconded by Mr. Garner. **The following trustees voted for Ms. Smith: Mr. Crosby, Mr. Blackwell, Mrs. Harper, and Ms. Smith. The following trustees voted for Mr. Crosby: Mr. McEntire, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Garner, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Smith. Mr. Crosby was nominated Secretary by a majority vote. A Short Recess was held for a Photo Opportunity for Media Representatives.**

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

Regular Board Minutes dated June 14, 2010 were presented for approval. **Mr. Blackwell made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Ms. Smith. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Called Board Minutes dated July 1, 2010 were presented for approval. Mr. Bailey stated he had made the motion and Mr. Smith had seconded the motion to seek cost information on an external forensic audit on July 1, 2010 and asked that the minutes be amended accordingly. **Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Ellis. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. McEntire, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Smith. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mrs. Harper, Ms. Smith, and Mr. Blackwell. Mr. Garner abstained from voting. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

Called Board Minutes dated July 13, 2010 were presented for approval. **Mr. Blackwell made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Ms. Smith. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

School Board Policy BCBI - Public Participation was the next item on the agenda. Dr. Rufus H. Foster, representing the Cherokee County Coalition, addressed trustees regarding the importance of providing a quality education for all students, improving the drop out rate, changing attitudes, and increasing the percentage of minority staff employees in the school district. He encouraged trustees to listen to the needs of students and the community to ensure that all students received the same educational opportunities.

Rev. Tony Macomson with Thicketty Mountain Baptist Association addressed trustees regarding the number of minority employees in the district and in particular, the hiring of top administrators and/or principals. He expressed concern that a minority principal was not in administration at the secondary level and stressed the importance of having proper role models in these areas for minority students. He thanked Dr. J.W. Sanders, Sr. for his leadership and assistance in securing qualified minorities for the school district. He offered continued support in this endeavor.

Ms. Monita Williams addressed trustees regarding activity fees, tardies, and alternatives for out-of-school suspensions. The administration addressed her concerns and provided an explanation for the issues addressed. Mr. Smith thanked each individual for speaking to the board.

The next item on the agenda was Honors/Accomplishments/Commendations. Mrs. Bagwell recognized Mrs. Robin Harper for earning the South Carolina School Boards Administration Level II Boardmanship training.

The next item on the agenda was Approval of Applications for Home School Instruction. The administration has received applications for two students for home school instruction for the 2010-2011 school year. The applications are complete and in compliance with state requirements. **Mr. Crosby made the motion to approve the applications, seconded by Mr. Blackwell. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Approval of Outside Food Vendors was the next item on the agenda. The administration recommended that outside food vendors be allowed to continue their services this school year since the Board voted to continue in-house food service. The cafeteria at Gaffney High School is unable to provide lunch for 1,000 students with only two lunch shifts. There was lengthy discussion regarding the pros and cons of using outside vendors, including contract specifications, conducting a study on expenses versus profit, and liability should problems occur. **Mrs. Harper made the motion to continue using outside vendors at Gaffney High School for the 2010-2011 school year, seconded by Mr. Crosby. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Garner, Mr. Smith, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Blackwell, Mrs. Harper, and Ms. Smith. Mr. McEntire voted in opposition to the motion. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

Security Guards at Gaffney High School was the next item on the agenda. The use of contracted security guards at Gaffney High School was eliminated in the budget process as a cost savings measure. Contracted security guards also directed traffic in peak hours at the high school since they were bonded. The administration recommended using contracted security to direct traffic for one hour in the mornings and afternoons. There was lengthy discussion on the number of hours required, wages and benefits, funding sources, and other issues. **Mr. Garner made the motion to direct the administration to secure costs and assess time constraints or needs to provide traffic and security guards at Gaffney High School, seconded by Mr. McEntire. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. McEntire, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Garner, Mr. Smith, Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Ellis, Mrs. Harper, and Ms. Smith. Mr. Crosby voted in opposition to the motion. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

The next item on the agenda was Warehouse Information. The recommendation was made during the budget process to close operations at the warehouse as a cost savings measure and to relocate the department and warehouse personnel. Since a new maintenance supervisor was recently hired, the administration recommended continuing warehouse operations for the 2010-2011 school year, to allow the maintenance supervisor the opportunity to assess overall operations in the maintenance department, and to bring back a report in the spring. **Mr. Garner made the motion to approve the recommendation of administration, seconded by Ms. Smith. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

FY 2010 – 2011 General Fund Budget Update was the next item on the agenda. Dr. Redish introduced Mr. Charles Tillotson who is serving as Interim Finance Director during Mr. Childs' medical leave. End of the year activities that would normally take place in late June through early August are being dealt with now by the Finance Department. Payroll records have been updated for 2011 and final claims reports for federal and state special funds are being completed. The payables analyst has been busy processing final FY 2010 payments and gearing up for FY 2011. Mr. Tillotson reviewed the FY 2010 General Fund Preliminary Financial Results. Adjustments still to be made include journal entries to "balance" federal and state special funds, final adjustments on inter-fund transfers, and audit adjustments related to balance sheet reviews. For the year, the District should expect to see a surplus of no less than \$2.2 million. These projected results reflect the \$2.9 million transfer from the one-cent sales tax refund, lower state EFA allocations, partially offset by funding transfers from State special revenue funds, lower salary and fringe benefits expenses, and operating expense reductions, including lower than expected transfers to the Food Service fund. Trustees were also given an update on the projected FY 2011 General Fund Budget. The original approved budget had reflected an anticipated operating surplus of \$ 394,530. As of August 16, 2010 the forecast has been re-set to a projected shortfall of (\$ 512,381) due to the following adjustments: elimination of \$ 750,000 in cost savings projected to be a result of privatization of the Food Service operation, reversing the reduction of 260-day custodial employees to a 245 day schedule, and retaining the district warehouse operations for the present. Overall, the remaining projected revenues and expenses seem to be in line with preliminary results from FY 2010. It was noted that Title VI carry-over of \$280,000, which was budgeted last year to purchase promethean boards but was not used due to the freeze on spending. The administration plans to set up an account at each school and allocate \$275 per teacher for supply monies. Trustees questioned how surplus money had surfaced at this point, discussed cutting each teacher a check for \$275 for classroom supplies, expressed concerns regarding the budget process, inaccuracy of budget information provided previously, and assurance that the monies were available now. **Mr. Blackwell made a motion to process a check for \$275 for each teacher to be used for classroom supplies. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Ms. Smith, Mr. Ellis, Mrs. Harper, and Mr. Blackwell. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mr. McEntire, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Garner, and Mr. Smith. The motion failed due to the lack of a majority vote.**

Mr. Tillotson also reviewed FY 2010 General Fund status including revenues, expenditures, and projected fund balance. He encouraged trustees to be frugal since revenues for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years do not appear to be positive. A review of the low bid for transportation cameras will be completed in the next two business days to confirm that the technical specifications of the bid have been met. The low bid came from IVS, Inc in the amount of \$51,605.25. Proposals have been received for roof consulting services and the list of finalists has been narrowed down to five firms. The next step involves determining who will serve on the review committee in order to allow for final on-site presentations.

The next item on the agenda was Curriculum and Instruction Update. The first day of school went very smoothly with middle school and high school students having schedules. Dr. Redish introduced Mr. Jeff Willis who was recently hired as Maintenance Supervisor. She commended the maintenance department for their hard work and long hours over the weekend to ensure air conditioning was working properly at the high school. She thanked the principals and teachers for a great opening day. PASS scores are back and copies will be sent home on Friday, August 20th. There were only a couple of buses behind schedule for the first day of school and there were no problems with transportation. Traffic concerns at Goucher Elementary and Limestone-Central will be reviewed by the administration. **This item was presented for information only; no action was taken.**

Ratification of Claims was the next item on the agenda. **Mr. Crosby made the motion to approve claims, seconded by Mr. Blackwell. All trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

The next item on the agenda was Personnel Matters. Trustees discussed at length the number of post-TERI employees that have been rehired, the number of new hires by the district, the practice/policy for hiring, board responsibility in the hiring and/or approval process, elective offerings, and posting of vacant positions. **Mrs. Harper made the motion to approve personnel matters, seconded by Mr. Garner. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Garner, Mr. Smith, Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Ellis, Ms. Smith, Mrs. Harper, and Mr. Crosby with the exception that Mr. Crosby abstained on two individuals. The following trustee voted in opposition on post retiree recommendations: Mr. McEntire. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

The next item on the agenda was announcements. Mrs. Bagwell reminded trustees of upcoming events. She applauded the efforts of administrators for ensuring a good opening of the school year. Mrs. Bagwell is required to attend Principal Evaluation Program training on Tuesday, August 31st in Columbia. She will also attend the first session of the superintendent's roundtable on Wednesday and Thursday as well. Schools and the district office will be closed on Monday, September 6 in observance of the Labor Day Holiday. The next regularly scheduled board meeting is Monday, September 13, 2010

Other Matters

Ms. Smith welcomed Mr. McEntire, Mr. Garner, Mr. Bailey, and Mr. Ellis for being elected to the board. She thanked Mr. Tillotson and Mr. Willis for their efforts as well as all teachers, staff, and principals for a good start of the school year. She appreciated the opportunity to serve the school district as trustee and looks forward to a successful school year. She hopes that the board will address the drop out rate, pregnancy rate, and other issues in the district.

Mrs. Harper echoed the same comments and welcomed the new trustees. She welcomed the new hires and encouraged trustees to come together as a board to work for every child. She thanked Mr. Blackwell for his service as Board Chairman.

Mr. Ellis appreciates the opportunity to serve another term as a school board trustee and welcomed the newly elected trustees. He asked trustees to revisit the issue of board pay. He has a number of concerns to bring up before the board and would elaborate on these issues at the special called meeting. He encouraged trustees to work together since this could be the best board ever elected for the district. He encouraged everyone to work for the children.

Mr. Blackwell echoed the same comments. He welcomed all new hires to the district and agreed with Mr. Ellis that the board needs to work together and drop individual personal issues. He said the board made decisions based on the information provided by the administration, which is why the information received should be accurate. Mr. Blackwell asked if the board could receive a monthly report from the cafeterias.

Mr. Garner said he ran a long, hard campaign and thanked those who supported him. His goal as a trustee is to ensure students are provided the best possible education that tax dollars can provide. He fully supports teachers in the classroom and will make decisions based on what is in the best interest of students.

Mr. Crosby thanked staff and administrators for their efforts. He welcomed new trustees to the board. He thanked Mrs. Bagwell and Dr. Redish for doing a good job; however, he thinks the administration could have done a better job of hiring minorities for the district. He stressed the importance of giving local people an opportunity to work in the district.

Mr. Bailey thanked everyone for a job well done. He welcomed Mr. Garner and Mr. McEntire. He stated the football coach was given a pay increase, he had no part of the action to transfer the principal at Grassy Pond, and that he had no idea about the transfer until he started receiving phone calls from parents/teachers.

Mr. McEntire thanked those who supported him in the election and said it was a hard campaign. He challenged board members to step up and do what's right for students in the district. He asked for a study on every aspect of the cafeteria. His goal as a trustee is to do what is right for the children of the county.

Mr. Smith asked trustees to inform him what committees they were interested in serving on so the committees could be set up. He announced a called meeting on Monday, August 23rd for a legal update from the attorney. He thanked the speakers for their comments and attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Smith called for a motion to adjourn. **Mr. McEntire made the motion, seconded by Mr. Crosby. All trustees voted unanimously to adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 9:38 PM.