

April 23, 2015
MINUTES OF THE MEETING – Joint Work Session City of Hopewell School Board

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING WITH CITY OF HOPEWELL SCHOOL BOARD HELD APRIL 23, 2015

A Special Meeting and Work Session of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held Thursday April 23, 2015, at 8:57 p.m. at Hopewell High School 400 S. Mesa Drive, Hopewell, Virginia.

PRESENT: Brenda S. Pelham, Mayor
Christina J. Luman-Bailey, Vice Mayor
Arlene Holloway, Councilor
Anthony J. Zevgolis, Councilor
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor
K. Wayne Walton, Councilor
Jackie M. Shornak, Councilor

Mark A. Haley, City Manager
Thomas Lacheney, Interim City Attorney
Cynthia Y Ames, City Clerk

ROLL CALL

Mayor Pelham opened the meeting at 8:57 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Mayor Pelham	-	present
Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	present
Councilor Holloway	-	present
Councilor Zevgolis	-	present
Councilor Gore	-	present
Councilor Walton	-	present
Councilor Shornak	-	present

ALSO PRESENT

Dr. John A. Fahey, Superintendent; Dr. Kim F. Evans, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction; Mrs. Melody F. Bage, Director of Personnel; and Mrs. Monique G. Barnes, Director of Finance/Board Clerk

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. FY 2016 Budget –

Dr. Henry discussed the gentleman's agreement that nothing would be cut. He stated that priorities had been provided to the Council on what additions they would ask for if those funds could be made available.

Dr. Fahey stated there were good questions from Council. He explained the shortfall of state and federal revenues. He thanked the Council for covering this shortfall. He noted that next on the list was the additional teachers that are requested. He stated that the salaries had been estimated. He indicated that the positions would be a part of a three year plan. He stated that we could take a look at our test scores.

Mayor Pelham asked about the difference between the first and second sheets. Mrs. Barnes was asked a question regarding the recurring expenditures. Mrs. Barnes stated that one is the proposal based upon the governor's budget and the other is based on the General Assembly budget. She stated that this is why

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there is a discrepancy. Councilor Gore stated that the new request, which would include all of the positions, would be the one for 2.5 million, because the General Assembly had a different budget. Councilor Gore raised a question regarding the revenue sources. Mrs. Barnes noted that the revenue figures were on pages 3 and 4. The information provided to the Council this evening was with regard to the school division's Operating Fund.

Dr. Fahey had the members number their sheets for ease of discussing them.

Dr. Fahey explained how the raises for administrators were funded through attrition. He noted that he did not take an increase, as he has an annual contracted salary. He also noted that the custodians, nurses and cafeteria workers were also provided raises.

Councilor Luman-Bailey asked a question regarding the annual increase in salaries. She also had a question regarding the reduction in the per pupil expenditure level. Mrs. Barnes explained which actual expenditures were counted in the formula.

Councilor Zevgolis asked a question regarding the fact that the per pupil expenditure has dropped from \$13,000 to \$11,000. He had a question regarding how the high school earned accreditation without the high per-pupil expenditure. Dr. Fahey explained the 1.2 million dollar grant for School Improvement was federal dollars targeted at only the high school. This was not in the formula per pupil formula, because it was not local funds.

Councilor Zevgolis asked about the money that is taken at the gate and at the door of athletic events. Dr. Fahey noted that our gate and door rates are set by the district, not by us. All of the gate money goes straight to the high school, not to the division.

Councilor Walton asked a question regarding the ranking for funding of schools. Mrs. Barnes noted that this data is not current and that those figures are generally two years old. Mrs. Barnes noted that the composite index is so low that the portion of services which are required is low. It is based on per pupil expenditures. Hopewell makes a greater effort than what is required.

Councilor Gore asked a question regarding the school budget with regard to any salary increase. She asked whether some people would be getting two raises. Mrs. Barnes noted that it is not best practice to bank on just one year of attrition, but rather two. Councilor Gore asked a question regarding the Hopewell Foundation. She had questions regarding why Hopewell does not do like Chesterfield and use the Foundation money for reading and math.

Dr. Fahey explained the CDs that are in the bank for the foundation. He noted that there is a requirement to keep \$50,000 in the bank. He explained the teacher grant process which goes directly to teachers to be used in innovative instructional programs. Dr. Fahey stated that if we could boost the amount in the Foundation, we could use the money. Ms. Hyslop is looking at the possibility of moving the Minds in Motion program over to funding from the John-Randolph Foundation. There is hope that grant funds will be obtained in time, so that there will be no lapse. Councilor Gore suggested we attempt to capture some of this energy and see if we can boost the Foundation. There was discussion regarding the original intent of the Foundation money and the early learning college initiative.

Councilor Luman-Bailey asked whether some of the things could be one-time expenses rather than recurring. She stated that if the City could provide the additional money that was not recurring, then that may enable other recurring expenses to be covered by the school division. She discussed the logistics of

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closing Mallonee gym in terms of benefits to both the City and the school division for keeping it. She stated that things such as the gym that only had to be funded for the short term would be a suggestion.

Mr. Reber expressed that he is concerned that the two respective bodies need to look at the problems for the long-term. Mayor Pelham asked a question regarding our professional development program. It was explained that this was new teacher, conferences, training for teacher related to curriculum and Board travel.

Councilor Walton asked how we could impose some assessment measure so that if the division was given the money, the Council could assess how that the money was spent. Dr. Fahey stated that our funding can be tied back accreditation. He stated that the outside independent auditor for the school division is the Virginia Department of Education.

Councilor Shornak asked whether the Council was going to decide exactly how much we are going to give the division. There was a discussion that reading specialists need to have a masters and would most likely have years of experience.

Mr. Reber explained the role of a transition specialist and how important those positions are. He noted that the changes will be incremental over time. He explained that we need to have a priority for the schools.

Councilor Zevgolis stated that he would like to hear what a new Superintendent might say about the positions. He stated that he would put money aside with some conditions of what to expect if those funds were released. He stated that the Council is accountable to the citizens.

Dr. Evans spoke about the requested positions and why they are needed. She provided and reported on the data and what is says about the literacy of our students. Dr. Fahey explained the reasons he believes that the Board and Council should implement these initiatives.

Mrs. Bage responded to questions from the Councilors regarding health insurance for the upcoming school year. There was discussion on the appropriateness of paying memberships.

Mayor Pelham asked that the cut list be prioritized so better choices could be made. She also stated that it had been a good dialogue. Dr. Henry and the Board members agreed.

No additional comments were made.

ADJOURN

At 10:44 p.m., Council adjourned the meeting:

/s/ Brenda S. Pelham
Brenda S. Pelham, Mayor