

MINUTES
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE
SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, January 7, 2021 (5:00 PM)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held electronically.

Electronic roll was taken, and the following persons were present:

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck
Phyllis Byrum
Karen Jenkins
Lorita Mayo
David Mitnick
Tyron Riddick
Sherri Story

Also Present: Dr. John B. Gordon III, *Superintendent*
 Wendell M. Waller, *School Board Attorney*
 Tarshia L. Gardner, *Clerk*
 Keesha L. Hicks, *Deputy Clerk*

5:00 P.M - OPENING OF MEETING:

The Organizational Meeting of the Suffolk City School Board was called to order by Dr. John Gordon, Division Superintendent.

Phyllis Byrum lead all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Oath of Office for re-elected School Board Members (Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, Phyllis Byrum, David Mitnick) was conducted by Mr. W. Randolph Carter, Jr., Clerk of Circuit Court.

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, CLERK AND DEPUTY CLERK:

Nomination /Election of School Board Chairman

Dr. Gordon presided over the election of the Chairman of the School Board and asked for nominations for the position of Chairman of the Suffolk City School Board.

Phyllis Byrum nominated Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck to serve as Chairman. The nomination was seconded by Member Lorita Mayo.

Dr. Gordon asked if there were any other nominations for School Board Chair. There being no other nominations, Dr. Gordon closed the call for nominations and called for the vote.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 1 (Story). The motion Passed. 6 to 1

Dr. Gordon congratulated Dr. Brooks-Buck on being selected as the new Chair for the Suffolk City School Board. He then turned the meeting over to Dr. Brooks-Buck. Dr. Buck thanked her colleagues and stated she will do her best to fulfill the duties as Chairman of the School Board to the best of her ability.

Nomination /Election of School Board Vice-Chairman

Dr. Brooks-Buck opened the nominations for School Board Vice-Chairman.

Member Lorita Mayo nominated Phyllis Byrum for Vice-Chairman of the School Board. The nomination was seconded by Member David Mitnick.

Dr. Brooks-Buck asked if there were any other nominations for School Board Vice-Chairman. There being no other nominations, Dr. Brooks-Buck closed nominations and called for the vote.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion Passed. 7 to 0

Appointment of Clerk and Deputy Clerk through December 31 2021

Vice-Chair Byrum moved, and Member Karen Jenkins seconded the motion to continue with Ms. Gardner as Clerk and Ms. Hicks as Deputy Clerk through December 31, 2021.

Upon roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion Passed. 7 to 0

SETTING OF SALARIES:

Setting of School Board Members and Chair Salaries for Year 2021

Board Chair, Dr. Brook-Buck indicated that the salary for Board Members is \$10,000 and Board Chair receives an additional \$1,400, due to extra duties. Dr. Brooks-Buck called for a motion.

Vice-Chair, Byrum moved, and Member David Mitnick seconded the motion to continue with the \$10,000 per year for School Board Members and an additional \$1,400 for the Chair.

Upon a call for vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion Passed. 7 to 0

SETTING OF SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS:

Setting of School Board Meetings for the 2021 Calendar Year

Board Chair Dr. Brooks-Buck asked Dr. Gordon to share with the Board the meeting dates.

Dr. Gordon stated that meetings are held the second Thursday of the month with a 5 p.m. work meeting, and the general public meeting at 7 p.m. He indicated that the 5 p.m. meeting will also include a closed session, with dinner for the School Board immediately after. Dr. Gordon also mentioned that next Thursday, the Board will be voting on a date so that April's meeting is not scheduled during spring break as it is currently. Other than that, all school board meetings will continue to be the second Thursday of the month.

Member Tyron Riddick requested that Board be considerate of the two working members who when scheduling work sessions going forward.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member David Mitnick seconded the motion to continue to meet at 5 p.m. for work sessions, and 7 p.m. for the Public Meeting on the second Thursday of the month with the exception of April's meeting to be held on the 21st of April.

Upon a call for vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion Passed. 7 to 0

Member Mitnick asked the question if the Local Advisory Committee for Special Education was intentionally left off the list of committee appointments.

The Board Chair stated that the Local Advisory Committee for Special Education had been omitted due to it being the only advisory committee that has a board member appointed. She indicated that after searching the history of the advisory committees, all other advisory committees have parents as advisors. Dr. Brooks-Buck also stated that any Member can still attend the meeting but no Member will be appointed to the advisory committee.

Mr. Mitnick thanked the Chair for her clarification.

Chair Brooks-Buck asked for a 10-minute break to review letters of interest from members and to appoint members to committees/boards. The Board agreed and this section of the meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Approval of Board Member Appointments

Board Chair Brooks-Buck requested a 10 minutes break to give her time to review requests from members regarding appointments.

There was a 10 minutes recess.

Board Chair Brooks-Buck called the meeting back to order.

Board Chair, Brooks-Buck stated that according to policy, board members shared credentials and information regarding standing committees and board appointments and after reviewing this information, Standing Committees and Board Appointments are ready to be made.

- Finance Committee: Two (2) Members (Chair & Vice-Chair) / Other Members as Alternates – Meets two (2) times per year, as needed (January & May)
Members: Dr. Brooks-Buck, Phyllis Byrum
Alternates: Jenkins, Mayo, Mitnick, Riddick, Story
- Legislative Committee: Two (2) Members / Alternate – Meets at least two (2) times per year.
Members: Lorita Mayo, Karen Jenkins
Alternate: Tyron Riddick
- School Board Policy Sub-Committee: Two (2) Members / Alternate – Meets as needed
Members: Phyllis Byrum, Brooks Buck
Alternate: David Mitnick
- ACCESS College Foundation Board of Directors: One (1) Member / Alternate – Meets four (4) times per year, (12 p.m. – 2 p.m., location TBD)
Member: David Mitnick
Alternate: Tyron Riddick
- The Governor’s School for the Arts: Member / Alternate – Meets four (4) times per year.

Member: Lorita Mayo
Alternate: Dr. Brooks-Buck

- SECEP Board Member: Member / Alternate – Meets four (4) times per year.
Members: Dr. Brooks-Buck
Alternate: Lorita Mayo
- Suffolk Education Foundation: Member / Alternate – Meets five (5) times per year.
Member: Sherri Story
Alternate: Phyllis Byrum
- Virginia School Board Association (VSBA): Voting Delegate & Alternate @ VSBA Delegate Assembly and Regional Meeting in November 2021 (Chair & Vice-Chair)
Delegate: Dr. Brooks-Buck
Alternate: Phyllis Byrum
- WHRO/HRETA Educational Advisory Board: Member / Alternate – Meets four (4) times per year.
Member: Karen Jenkins
Alternate: Dr. Brooks-Buck

Board Chair Brooks-Buck asked if there were any comments or concerns.

David Mitnick moved, and Member Karen Jenkins seconded the motion that the committees and board appointments be approved as designated by the Board Chair.

Upon a call for vote, the vote was: Aye: 7 Nay: 0. The motion Passed. 7 to 0

SUPERINTENDENT'S DESIGNEES:

Superintendent's Designees to appear at meetings in absence of the Superintendent

Dr. Gordon recommended the following to serve as designees for the Superintendent at any point and time in his absence:

- Dr. Okema Branch, Chief Academic Officer
- Dr. Suzanne Rice, Chief of Administrative Services

Vice-Chair Byrum moved, and Board Member Mayo seconded the motion to accept the Superintendent's designees, Dr. Branch and Dr. Rice to serve if he is absent.

Upon a call for vote, the vote was: Aye: 5 Nay: 1 (Story) Abstain: 1 (Mitnick). The motion Passed. 5 to 1 to 1.

ADJORNMENT:

There being no further business or questions, the Board Chair adjourned the January 7, 2021 Organizational Meeting at 5:37 p.m.