

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SUFFOLK CITY SCHOOL BOARD
Thursday, April 15, 2021 ~ 5:00 P.M.
King's Fork Middle School, 350 King's Fork Road, Suffolk, VA 23434

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held while practicing social distancing.

Board Members Present:

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, *Chair*
Phyllis Byrum, *Vice Chair*
Karen Jenkins
Linda Johnson
Lorita Mayo
Sherri Story

Board Member Electronically:

Tyron Riddick

Administrative Staff 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 PUBLIC MEETING/WORK SESSION

- The School Board Meeting was called to order by Dr. Buck and Board Members began their work session.
- Members discussed information relative to the self-evaluation and the School Board Retreat and decided to schedule the retreat on day during the week of July 19th.
- During this time, Attorney Waller read the following motion to allow Mr. Riddick to attend the meeting remotely:

A MOTION IS NEEDED PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE SECTION 2.2-3708.2. TO ALLOW BOARD MEMBER TYRON D. RIDDICK TO PARTICIPATE IN TONIGHT'S OPEN MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD THROUGH ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION MEANS FROM HIS HOME DUE TO A TEMPORARY MEDICAL CONDITION THAT PREVENTS HIS PHYSICAL ATTENDANCE AT TONIGHT'S MEETING.

Vice-Chair Byrum moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion to approve Mr. Riddick to join the meeting as read.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0 Abstain: 0. The motion Passed. 6 to 0.

- Board members continued their work session with a discussion regarding professional development and retreat topics. They agreed to turn in the self-evaluation to the Clerk by April 30, 2021 and the Board will then use these responses for options for professional development for board members.

MOTION TO GO INTO A CLOSED MEETING:

- Motion to Relinquish Recording Devices in Closed Meeting:
Attorney Waller read the following:

A MOTION IS NEEDED TO REQUIRE ALL SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN TONIGHT'S CLOSED MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD TO RELINQUISH AND HAVE STORED IN A SECURE LOCATION DESIGNATED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD ALL RECORDING DEVICES TO INCLUDE CAMERAS, COMPUTER STORAGE DEVICES, DIGITAL VIDEO RECORDERS, SOUND RECORDING TECHNOLOGY OR TAPE-RECORDING DEVICES.

Member Jenkins moved, and Member Johnson seconded the motion to approve as read.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 1 (Story) Abstain: 0. The motion Passed. 6 to 1.

- Motion to go Into a Closed Meeting:
Attorney Waller read the following motion:

A motion is needed to go into a Closed Meeting to discuss the following items and subjects pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia (1950) as amended:

- 1. The discussion and/or consideration of the Personnel Report regarding prospective candidates for employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific employees of the school board, and more specifically as it relates to the following:**
 - A. The resignations of individuals employed in the following positions: Teachers, Bus Drivers, Teacher Assistants, Cafeteria Associates, Master Trades Worker, Coordinator of Finance, and Director of Elementary Leadership;**
 - B. The disciplinary action of a certain bus driver;**
 - C. The hiring of one instructional personnel for the following subject area: History Teacher;**
 - D. The hiring of one non-instructional personnel for the following position: Records Clerk;**
 - E. The hiring of nine non-instructional personnel for the following substitute positions: Teachers;**
 - F. Request for approval of compensation for a special needs bus driver to receive stipend back pay after being omitted from the original stipend list for the 2020-2021 school year in the amount of \$2,417;**

- G. Request for approval (3) three teachers to receive compensation as 3rd and 5th grade history performance-based assessment (PBA) writers at the rate of \$26.40 per hour;**
- H. Request for the approval of (2) two employees to serve as algebra readiness tutors one at John F. Kennedy Middle and the other at Kings Fork High School at the rate of \$26.40 per hour;**
- I. Request for approval of (4) four specific employee to provide ELL support at John F. K Middle, Nansemond Parkway Elementary, Col. Fred Cherry Middle and Kings Fork Middle Schools at the rate of \$26.40 per hour;**
- J. Request for approval of extra duty supplements for (26) twenty-six teachers assigned to Kings Fork High, Nansemond River High, and Lakeland High Schools to provide English Language Learner Support in the amounts of \$200, \$100, or \$66.67 each;**
- K. Request for approval of extra duty pay for an employee to serve as an administrator for providing a secure exam delivery at the rate of \$26.40 per hour;**
- L. Request for approval of (4) employees to serve as professional learning community (PLC) lead facilitators for Civics 7 and Science 8 at the rate \$26.40 per hour at John F. Kennedy Middle, Col. Fred Cherry Middle and John Yeates Middle Schools;**
- M. Request for approval of extra duty supplements for 50 athletic coaches, a band director, choral director, department head, drama director, flag corps director, forensic director, newspaper and year book director, at Kings Fork High School as per the 2020/2021 published classification and compensation plan for salary supplements;**
- N. Request for approval of (8) eight specific employee to receive a stipend of \$290.40 each for provide ELL Cohort support;**
- O. Request for approval of (42) forty-two specific teachers and coaches to receive compensation for developing professional learning sessions for March 5th and March 12 best practices training series at the rate of \$26.40 per hour not to exceed two hours;**
- P. Request for approval of (4) employees to participate in the Early Start Screening process for the 2021-2022 school year at a rate of \$26.40 per hour;**
- Q. Request for approval of (20) twenty PBIS Coaches to receive stipends at the rate or \$200 each;**
- R. Request for approval of (2) two cafeteria associates to receive extra duty pay at the rate of \$13.37 per hour;**

- S. **The approval for a specific ROTC teacher to receive extra duty compensation at Lakeland High School for the 2020-2021 school year at the rate of 1/7th of their individual contracted pay;**
- T. **The approval for a specific special education teacher to receive extra duty compensation at Nansemond River High School for the 2020-2021 school year at the rate of 1/7th of their individual contracted pay;**
- U. **The request for approval of a specific Spanish employee to provide ELL support during the 2020-2021 school year at Nansemond Parkway Elementary at the rate of \$26.40 per hour;**
- V. **Request for approval for a specific special education teacher to serve as a homebound/homebased teacher for the 2020-2021 school year and the summer of 2021 at the rate of \$27.40 per hour; and**
- W. **The request for approval for a specific employee to provide ELL support at Nansemond Parkway Elementary during the 2020-2021 school year at the rate of \$26.40 per hour.**

All of which is authorized by Section 2.2-3711 A.1 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

2. **The discussion and/or consideration of the Student Services Report where the discussion in an open meeting would involve the disclosure of information contained in a student's scholastic record, and more specifically as it relates to the following:**
 - **Twelve (27) out of zone requests for students enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools to attend school out of their designated school attendance zone.**

Which is authorized by Section 2.2-3711 A.2 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended

3. **Consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the litigating posture of the public body and more specifically as it relates to Sherri D. Story v. Suffolk City School, et als. Which is currently on appeal before the Supreme Court of Virginia.**

Which is authorized by Section 2.2-3711 A.7 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Johnson seconded the motion to approve the motion as read.

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

The Board reconvened in the Public Meeting.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Attorney Waller read the Certification of the Closed Meeting.

Vice-Chair Byrum moved, and Member Mayo seconded the motion to approve the Certification of Closed Meeting as read.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 1 (Story) Abstain: 0. The motion Passed. 6 to 1.

Member Story indicated that her "NO" vote was due to hiring practices being talked about and it was not a part of the agenda.

PRESENTATION OF KING'S FORK HIGH SCHOOL HONOR GRADUATES

- Derrick Bryant, Principal and Mrs. Elke Boone, Assistant Principal, introduced the honor graduates to the Board via PowerPoint presentation.
- Board Members expressed their pride in the students, congratulated them and thanked them for their positivity, hard work and perseverance throughout this difficult year.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting to recess.

RE-OPENING OF PUBLIC MEETING

- The meeting was called to order by the Dr. Brooks-Buck.
- Vice Chair Byrum lead all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACTION ON CLOSED MEETING ITEMS

- Pupil Personnel Reports

Vice-Chair Byrum moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion to accept the Pupil Personnel Reports as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0 Abstain: 1 (Riddick). The motion Passed. 6 to 0 to 1.

- Personnel Report

Vice-Chair Byrum moved, and Member Johnson seconded the motion to accept the Personnel Report as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0 Abstain: 1 (Riddick). The motion Passed. 6 to 0 to 1.

- Personnel Action Item # 20/21-1

Member Story moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion to table this item until next meeting.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0 Abstain: 1 (Riddick). The motion Passed. 6 to 0 to 1.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Johnson moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Resolution 20/21-25 and Resolution 20/21-26.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 0 Abstain: 1 (Riddick). The motion Passed. 6 to 0 to 1.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON AGENDA TOPICS

1. Greg Kasmark – Covid 19

REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Good News Reports: Dr. Gordon introduced Mr. Charles Brabble, Digital Communications Specialist, to present the following information from the Good News Report
 - a. First Lady of VA and State Secretary of Ed. Visit PES
 - b. Grants & Awards
 - c. Staff Recognition
 - d. SPS Teacher Spotlight – March
 - e. City-Wide Teachers of the Year Awards
- Calendar of Special Events – Dr. Gordon highlighted the events on the calendar.

Dr. Gordon highlighted the number of staff members who received the covid vaccine. Discussion ensued relative to an “exposure letter” and not penalizing teachers/employees who got sick when receiving the covid vaccine. Member Johnson asked if the employee(s) sick day(s) could be reinstated. Dr. Gordon agreed to look into this however, due to medical privacy regulations, stated that we must be careful when inquiring about vaccine information.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Jenkins seconded, the motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

- During discussion, Member Story requested to remove Item #2-Payment of Bills and Payroll March 2021 and #3-Local Plan and Budget for Career and Technical Education 2021-2022 from the Consent Agenda and place them under New Business.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of Items #2 and #3 which are to be moved to New Business.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Mayo seconded the motion to accept Ordinance 20/21-11 through Ordinance 20/21-24.

- Discussion ensued and Member Story requested that Items 11 (Ordinance 20/21-21, and Item 12 (Ordinance 20/21-22) be excluded to allow the policy committee to review and add more of the law including due dates, requirements, and allow the board to review the Annual Crisis Plan for each school.
- Attorney Waller explained that specific dates are not in the policy because dates change. He also highlighted that the Superintendent is required to submit to the VA Center for School and Campus Safety, in the prescribed format, school safety audits. They set the requirements and mandates for this to be done.
- Dr. Gordon indicated that all requirements are being met and if the division were not in compliance, the VA Center for School and Campus Safety would certainly let them know.
- Member Riddick called for the question.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Mayo seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 20/21-11 through Ordinance 20/21-24 as presented.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 1 (Story) Abstain: 0. The motion Passed. 6 to 1.

NEW BUSINESS

- Item 1 – Special Education Annual Plan 2021-2022.

Stephanie Whitley, Director of Special Education presented information to the Board via PowerPoint presentation.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Mayo seconded the motion to approve the Special Education Annual Plan 2021-2022 as presented.

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

- Item 2 – Memorandum: Payment of Bonuses to Staff May 15, 2021.

Wendy Forsman, Chief Financial Officer discussed this memo with Board Members and answered all questions.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion, to approve payment of bonuses on May 15, 2021 to staff employed as of February 1 for a job well done.

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

- Item 3 – SPS Health Dashboard Update (Info Item Only).

Dr. Suzanne Rice presented information to the Board via PowerPoint presentation and answered questions regarding covid metrics for Suffolk and Western Tidewater region.

- Item 4 – SPS 2021 Graduation Presentation (Info Item Only).

Dr. Ronald Leigh presented information to the Board via PowerPoint presentation and answered questions regarding graduation.

Graduation will take place on the following dates and times:

- LHS – June 9, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m. – LHS Football Stadium (260 Graduates)
- KFHS – June 10, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m. – KFHS Football Stadium (370 Graduates)
- NRHS – June 11, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m. – NRHS Football Stadium (420 Graduates)

➤ Item 5 – SOL Testing Plan April 15, 2021 (Info Item Only).

Dr. Branch presented information to the Board via PowerPoint presentation and answered questions asked by Board Members.

➤ Item 6 – Resolution Number 20/21-25 A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia Honoring the National Counseling Group and requesting that it be named to the 2021 Virginia School Boards Association Business Honor Roll.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Mayo seconded the motion to approve Resolution Number 20/21-25 as presented.

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

➤ Item 7 – Resolution Number 20/21-26 A Resolution of the School Board for the City of Suffolk, Virginia honoring ATCO Hauling Company and requesting that it be named to the 2021 Virginia School Boards Association Business Honor Roll.

Vice Chair Byrum moved, and Member Johnson seconded the motion to approve Resolution Number 20/21-26 as presented.

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

➤ Item 8 – Payment of Bills and Payroll March 2021.

Member Johnson moved, and Member Mayo seconded the motion to approve the Payment of Bills and Payroll March 2021 as presented.

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

➤ Item 9 – Local Plan and Budget for Career and Technical Education 2021-2022.

Member Mayo moved, and Member Jenkins seconded the motion to approve the Local Plan and Budget for Career and Technical Education 2021-2022.

Upon a roll call vote, the vote was: Aye: 6 Nay: 1 (Story) Abstain: 0. The motion Passed. 6 to 1.

Member Story indicated that she voted “NO” because she was not clear on the local plan and budget.

➤ Items 10 – 24 Ordinances 20/21-25 through Ordinance 20/21-39 were info/first reading items only. There were no questions regarding these ordinances.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON NON-AGENDA TOPICS

- There were no speakers on Non-Agenda Topics.

BUSINESS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Board Members:

- Congratulated and expressed pride in the Honor Graduates,
- Thanked all graduates of the SPS 2021 graduating class for making it through this difficult year successfully,
- Encouraged the public to attend meetings and speak,
- Thanked Dr. Gordon, his team, SAO employees and all support staff for all that they do each day and for being on the front lines keeping our students safe,
- Congratulated the Teachers of the Year for a job well done,
- Thanked Dr. Gordon and staff for transparency in all they do despite the negative comments,
- Stated that SPS staff is the best throughout the Hampton Roads area,
- Expressed gratitude for working together as a Board and they are looking forward to helping each other and the district excel to new and bigger heights.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- The following items are info items only and Board Members asked no questions.
 - Financial Report: Capital Projects
 - Financial Report March 2021
 - Accident Report March 2021
 - Capital Improvement Plan Approved by City 2022-2023
 - Coronavirus Federal Relief Money – CARES Act I and GEER/ESSER Monthly Reports

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business or questions, Board Chair Dr. Brooks-Buck adjourned the April 15, 2021 School Board Meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, *Board Chair*

Tarshia L. Gardner, *Board Clerk*