

STAUNTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD
STAUNTON, VIRGINIA
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2021

The Staunton City School Board convened for the regular monthly meeting in the Rita S. Wilson Council Chambers of Staunton City Hall, 116 W. Beverley Street, Staunton at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, April 12, 2021, with members in attendance as follows:

Kenneth Venable, Chair
Robert Boyle Natasha McCurdy Amy Wratchford, Vice-chair
Christine Poulson Ronald Ramsey
Dr. Garrett Smith, Superintendent/Deputy Clerk
Brenda Lovekamp, Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Chair led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Ramsey made a brief statement in memory of Jim Kivlighan, the beloved former principal at Bessie Weller Elementary School, who passed away in late March. A moment of silence was held in Mr. Kivlighan's memory.

III. REPORTS

A. Reports from Superintendent

Dr. Smith reported on the following:

Air Quality Upgrades

- HEPA filters have been installed in all school buses.
- Bipolar Ionization systems being installed in the HVAC systems in all schools.

Earl McCray shared more information about these air quality upgrades and the installation schedule over the next four weeks or so for the Bipolar Ionization systems.

Fall Back-to-School Plan

- Plan to return to the 5-day per week schedule as reflected in the academic calendar slated for approval tonight, with the first day being August 10.
- No information at this time on any possible changes to the mask guidance for next school year. Will update as we learn more.
- Having heard concerns from parents regarding the current start time for the middle being too early for those students, we are reviewing school start times for a potential change. Will be sending out a survey to parents to get input. Updates will be provided.

B. Reports from School Board Members

Members offered the following reports relative to their service on the School Board.

Christine Poulson:

- Took part in many of the webinar opportunities in March.
- Participated in the SEAC Meeting and learned more about Project Search.
- Participated in the VSBA Valley Spring Regional Forum.

Robert Boyle:

No report.

Amy Wratchford:

- Expressed appreciation to the VSBA for the many webinar opportunities in March as part of their designation of March as Equity in Education Month.

Natasha McCurdy:

- Visited the elementary schools.
- Met pen pal at Ware Elementary School.
- Working to bring the PTA and PAT groups back to life. Encouraged parent participation as many officer positions will be open.

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Ronald Ramsey:

- Attended a VDOE webinar and many of the VSBA webinars on equity in education.
- Took part in the VCTC Board meeting.
- Volunteered at the Teacher Job Fair held at SHS.
- Enjoyed meeting pen pal at Ware Elementary and speaking to that class.
- Attended the joint budget work session with City Council.

Kenneth Venable:

- Appreciated the Governance Training Session with VSBA.
- Participated in the VCTC Board Meeting where that board is working on budget as well.

IV. UPDATES AND INFORMATION

A. Finance Update by Brad Wegner, Budget Director

Brad Wegner, Budget Director, reviewed the finance report for March.

B. Report on Work with VDOE Culturally Relevant and Inclusive Education Practices Advisory Committee by Jen Goss, SHS History and Social Science Teacher

Jen Goss reported on her work with the state's Culturally Relevant & Inclusive Practices Advisory Committee, to which she was appointed by Governor Ralph Northam. She shared that the purpose of this committee is to review and provide recommendations on the history and social science Standards of Learning, and to make recommendations on professional development for school personnel related to culturally relevant and inclusive education practices. She noted the time-line for the work of this committee, with the presentation of the committee's recommendations being scheduled to take place in July 2021. She further explained that any changes to the standards would not take effect until 2022 when the new standards are due to be released.

V. PUBLIC INPUT

The Chair opened the public input portion of the meeting. The following person(s) were present at the meeting to provide comments:

- Christine Hawley, SEA President, expressed appreciation for the air quality upgrades and noted that SEA looks forward to continued collaboration in making next year as safe and productive for learning as possible.

There were no citizens calling in to provide public input.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

The Chair invited Board members to review the following items listed on the consent agenda:

- Minutes of Board Development Session, Work Session, and Regular Meeting on March 8, 2021
- Minutes of Called Meeting / Board Development Session on March 22, 2021
- Minutes of Called Meeting on April 5, 2021
- Minutes of Joint Work Session with City Council on April 8, 2021
- Personnel Actions

On a motion by Natasha McCurdy, seconded by Ron Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.

VII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Surplus Property

Earl McCray, Director of Operations, reviewed the briefing outlining the items deemed to be no longer usable by the school division. He requested the Board authorize the surplus/disposal of these items.

On a motion by Amy Wratchford, seconded by Christine Poulson, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the surplus/disposal of the listed items, as presented.

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B. Special Education Annual Plan

Dr. Jelisa Wolfe, Executive Director of Student Services, thanked the special education staff for the phenomenal job they had done during this past year in continuing to provide special education services to our students during the pandemic. She reviewed the Special Education Annual Plan for 2021-2022 and explained how the school division uses these grant funds.

On a motion by Robert Boyle, seconded by Ronald Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2021-2022 Special Education Annual Plan, as presented.

C. Approval of the 2021-2022 Academic Calendar

Jonathan Venn, Chief Human Resources Officer, reviewed the proposed academic calendar for 2021-2022. He indicated that this draft calendar is aligned with area school divisions and is based on a 5-day week for students, with input from SEA, STAC and various school division stakeholders, all while keeping the best interest of students at the forefront of the efforts.

On a motion by Ronald Ramsey, seconded by Amy Wratchford, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2021-2022 Academic Calendar as presented.

D. Approval of the 2021-2022 State-Operated Program Academic Calendars

Jonathan Venn, Chief Human Resources Officer, reviewed the proposed academic calendars for the State-Operated Programs for 2021-2022. He indicated that these hospital programs have a slightly different calendar as their teachers work on a 220-day professional contact.

On a motion by Amy Wratchford, seconded by Robert Boyle, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2021-2022 Academic Calendars for the State-Operated Programs, as presented.

E. Reemployment of Administrative and Support Staff Employees for 2021-2022

Jonathan Venn, Chief Human Resources Officer, reviewed the request and indicated that the Board's approval would allow the division to move forward in offering contracts and employment notices for the next school year.

On a motion by Robert Boyle, seconded by Ronald Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the reemployment of Probationary Teachers, Administrative and Support Staff Employees for 2021-2022 as per the attached lists pending approval of the succeeding year's budget by City Council and the Commonwealth of Virginia, as presented.

F. Approval of the Salary Scales for 2021-2022

Jonathan Venn, Chief Human Resources Officer, reviewed the briefing and explained that Staunton City Council is scheduled to approve the FY2022 School budget April 22, 2021, which provides funds for a 5% average pay increase for all school employees, effective July 1, 2021, with the transportation, cafeteria, maintenance and custodial staff receiving a 7% increase effective July 1, 2021.

On a motion by Christine Poulson, seconded by Ronald Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to approve the salary adjustments for Professional and Support/Administrative Staff for FY22 based on funds available, pending City Council and Commonwealth of Virginia budget, as presented.

G. Perkins Plan

Cassie Farrish, Instructional Supervisor, reviewed the Perkins Plan application and how those funds would be used for the school division's career and technical education needs.

On a motion by Robert Boyle, seconded by Ronald Ramsey, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2021-2022 Perkins Plan application, as presented.

H. Plan for Review of Tuition and Special Permission Requests for 2021-2022

Dr. Smith, Superintendent, reviewed the plan for review of tuition and special permission requests for the 2021-2022 school year. He explained that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve and as the division works on plans for spacing to return to 5-day week instruction, he recommended that the division continue with the plan currently in place that suspend these policies and freezes all new requests for attendance under special permission or tuition status.

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He noted that any requests considered for students who are currently enrolled would require an attendance and discipline agreement with the parent/guardian to ensure the student's adherence to the division's expectations in these areas.

On a motion by Natasha McCurdy, seconded by Amy Wratchford, the Board voted unanimously to approve the plan for review of tuition and special permission/elementary zone change requests for 2021-2022, as presented.

I. Approval of Fee Schedule

Brad Wegner, Budget Director, reviewed the fee schedule for the 2021-2022 school year, making note of the fees that have been eliminated for next year and that all student meals will be served free of charge through continued CEP eligibility.

On a motion by Ronald Ramsey, seconded by Natasha McCurdy, the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2021-2022 fee schedule, as presented.

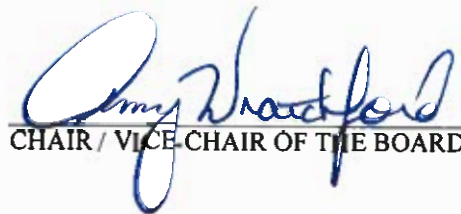
J. School Board and Superintendent Agreements and General Operating Procedures

Amy Wratchford read the *School Board and Superintendent Agreement and General Operating Procedures*, which were reviewed and revised during their VSBA governance training session.

On a motion Amy Wratchford, seconded by Robert Boyle, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the School Board and Superintendent Agreements and General Operating Procedures, as presented.

Having completed the agenda as posted, the Chair declared the regular meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.


CLERK / DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD


CHAIR / VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD