

STAUNTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD  
STAUNTON, VIRGINIA  
Meeting Minutes  
March 8, 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, March 8, 2021, with members in attendance as follows:

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

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order and announced that Robert Boyle was unable to attend in person tonight and would be participating virtually.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**III. REPORTS**

**A. Reports from Superintendent**

Vaccinations – Dr. Smith reported that the second round of vaccinations for the COVID-19 has taken place earlier in the day and that the process was very smooth. He reminded that in preparation for any adverse reactions with staff, the next two days would be asynchronous learning days for students.

Summer School Update – Dr. Smith shared plans for the expanded summer school program, SCS Student University.

- Four week program, Monday through Thursday, June 7-July1.
- Elementary School program for K-5 w be in partnership with YMCA, with academics in the morning and enrichment in the afternoon. Using all three elementary schools. Approximately 300 students.
- Middle School program would have academics in the morning with extension camps in the afternoon. Approximately 120 students.
- High School program would focus on courses needed for graduation. Approximately 200 students.
- Have received a great response from staff. This will be the largest summer school offering. Mitigation strategies will remain in place.

**B. Reports from School Board Members**

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

**Christine Poulson:**

- Reported on the Governor's Summit on Equitable Collaboration.
- Participated in a recent VSBA webinar.

**Amy Wratchford:**

- Also participated in recent VSBA webinar, Culture of Love, Liberation and Belonging.
- Attended band boosters meeting. Appreciate the work of this group in keeping music alive in our schools.

**Natasha McCurdy:**

- No report.

**Ronald Ramsey:**

- Took part in the joint work session with City Council regarding budget.
- Participated in VDOE webinar: Schools as Racial Justice Engines.
- Have been participating in pen pal program with Ware Elementary and will be going to Ware this month to speak with the class and meet pen pal.

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**Kenneth Venable:**

- Spoke with Ms. Linhares' class at Ware last week about black history. Have been invited to do this again periodically.

**Robert Boyle:**

- Looking forward to visiting with pen pal at Ware as well.
- Participated in the regular meeting of SVRP.

**IV. UPDATES AND INFORMATION**

**A. Finance Update by Brad Wegner, Budget Director**

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

**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, thanked School Board members for their efforts to increase resources, staffing and salaries as this will improve teaching and learning in SCS.
- Elizabeth Shreckhise, Braeburn Place, urged the Board to return to school full-time this spring.
- Ashley Strickland, Selma Boulevard, requested the Board return to school five days per week.

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 February 8, 2021
- Minutes of Joint Work Session with City Council on February 11, 2021
- Minutes of Work Session on February 22, 2021
- Minutes of Called Meeting / Public Hearing on March 1, 2021
- Personnel Actions

**On a motion by Amy Wratchford, seconded by Ron Ramsey, the Board voted, as recorded below, to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

**Votes: Robert Boyle – aye      Christine Poulson–aye      Kenneth Venable–aye  
Amy Wratchford–aye      Natasha McCurdy–aye      Ronald Ramsey–aye**

**VII. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Proposed School Division Budget for 2021-2022**

Brad Wegner reviewed the proposed FY22 budget as was previously reviewed at the called meeting and public hearing held on March 1. He noted that the budget proposal includes a 4% pay increase of all employees and an additional 2% for operations staff. He explained that if the final state budget were to include the 5% compensation supplement as proposed by the House of Delegates, the school division would need to match this rate in order to receive the compensation supplement. This action would place this proposed budget out of balance by approximately \$250,000 and necessitate an amendment.

In response to a question, Mr. Wegner clarified that if the pay increase was in fact raised to 5%, the pay increase would still be provided to all employees of the division. He also reviewed the possible options available to the Board in order to balance the budget should that take place and an amendment became necessary. Dr. Smith added that the 2% additional increase for operations staff would remain in place even if the pay increase went to 5%.

A question was raised about the loss of full-time positions in the 2009 recession and how much this budget proposal would help to close that long-time gap. Dr. Smith confirmed that the additional positions included in this budget would allow the division to fill about 20 of the more than 50 full-time positions cut during the 2009 recession. He explained that, coming out of the pandemic, the division would need extra resources to address the tremendous learning loss, to provide mental health supports, etc., and that this budget strategically targets those needs.

Mr. Wegner requested approval of the proposed budget, totaling \$40,515,866.

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On a motion by Natasha McCurdy, seconded by Amy Wratchford, the Board voted, as recorded below, to approve the FY22 Staunton City School budget totaling \$40,515,866, as presented.

Votes: Robert Boyle – aye      Christine Poulson – aye      Kenneth Venable – aye  
Amy Wratchford – aye      Natasha McCurdy – aye      Ronald Ramsey – aye

**B. 2021 Business Honor Roll**

Dr. Smith, Superintendent, reviewed the request to approve the business honor roll list and announced the three nominees for the 2021 VSBA Business Honor Roll.

On a motion by Ronald Ramsey, seconded by Christine Poulson, the Board voted as recorded below, to approve the list of businesses slated for recognition as part of the Business Honor Roll and to approve the resolution for the 2021 VSBA Business Honor Roll.

Votes: Robert Boyle – aye      Christine Poulson – aye      Kenneth Venable – aye  
Amy Wratchford – aye      Natasha McCurdy – aye      Ronald Ramsey – aye

**C. Equity in Education Resolution**

Kenneth Venable explained that VSBA has declared the month of March as Equity in Education Month. Per the School Board's review in the work session, members recited the statements of a resolution in support of this designation and in keeping with the ongoing work of the school division.

On a motion by Ronald Ramsey, seconded by Amy Wratchford, the Board voted as recorded below, to approve the resolution regarding Equity in Education Month in March.

Votes: Robert Boyle – aye      Christine Poulson – aye      Kenneth Venable – aye  
Amy Wratchford – aye      Natasha McCurdy – aye      Ronald Ramsey – aye

Having completed the agenda as posted, the Chair declared the regular meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

  
CLERK / DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD