

STAUNTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD  
STAUNTON, VIRGINIA  
Work Session Minutes  
January 25, 2021

The Staunton City School Board convened in the School Board Conference Room, 116 W. Beverley Street, Staunton on Monday, January 25, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., for a work session 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

**Closed Meeting**

On a motion by Robert Boyle, seconded by Ronald Ramsey, the School Board entered into a closed meeting for consultation and discussion with the Board's legal counsel requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel regarding federal administrative proceedings, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(8).

Votes: Christine Poulson-aye                      Robert Boyle-aye                      Kenneth Venable-aye  
Amy Wratchford-aye                      Natasha McCurdy-aye                      Ron Ramsey-aye

On a motion by Ronald Ramsey, seconded by Natasha McCurdy, the School Board voted, according to the votes recorded below, to return to open session.

Votes: Christine Poulson-aye                      Robert Boyle-aye                      Kenneth Venable-aye  
Amy Wratchford-aye                      Natasha McCurdy-aye                      Ron Ramsey-aye

On a motion by Amy Wratchford, seconded by Ronald Ramsey, the School Board voted to approve the following certificate:

**CERTIFICATION**

According to the votes recorded below, the Staunton City School Board does hereby CERTIFY to the best of each member's knowledge:

1. Only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed in the Closed Meeting to which this certification applies; and
2. Only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by the School Board.

Votes: Christine Poulson-aye                      Robert Boyle-aye                      Kenneth Venable-aye  
Amy Wratchford-aye                      Natasha McCurdy-aye                      Ron Ramsey-aye

**Report on the First Week of the Hybrid Option in Staunton City Schools**

Dr. Smith reported that the return of students to in-person learning through the hybrid option on January 19 had gone very well, as last week was the first week this option had been available to parents this school year. He shared that he had been in all of the buildings last week and the schools were very busy but quiet. He noted that some students were a little tentative and uncertain at first, but the teachers made the students feel comfortable. Some very positive feedback was received from parents and students.

Dr. Smith shared information on plans that are underway to help mitigate the learning losses that have occurred this year in the virtual environment, including the expansion of the summer school program, and the division joining the Comprehensive Instructional Program, which is a consortium of Virginia school divisions who work collaboratively to improve student achievement.

As an addition to the school safety protocols already in place, Dr. Smith reported that the division plans to build outdoor learning spaces using CARES Act funds. Plans are currently being reviewed with the City's Building Services office.

Dr. Smith reported on the most recent COVID-19 data and information received from VDH regarding community spread.

**Sports Update**

Dr. Smith provided an update regarding athletics and VHSL activities at the middle and high school schools.

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**Community Engagement and Communications**

Board members discussed various ideas relative to increasing community engagement, communication with families, access to information, etc.

**Review of Next Month's Draft Agenda**

Board members reviewed the draft of the preliminary agenda for the regularly scheduled meetings on February 8, 2021.

**Calendar Considerations**

The Clerk confirmed attendance for the upcoming VSBA conference.

**Unfinished Business**

Board members expressed appreciation for the addition of this new work session and the added time to discuss board-related matters.

The Chair adjourned the work session at 6:30 p.m.

  
CLERK / DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

  
CHAIR OF THE BOARD