

**AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ROCKBRIDGE
COUNTY VIRGINIA, HELD WITH THE ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AT
THE ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE AT 2893 COLLIERSTOWN
ROAD, LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2015,
AT 4:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: CHAIRMAN J.M. HIGGINS,
MEMBERS: R.R. CAMPBELL, R.S. FORD,
D.W. HINTY, JR., A.W. LEWIS, JR.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AND CLERK TO BOARD:** SPENCER H. SUTER
**FISCAL SERVICES
DIRECTOR:** STEVEN J. BOLSTER

ALSO PRESENT: CHAIRMAN A.J. LEWIS, II
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: K. BROOKS, L.C. HOOFNAGLE, L. STRONG
D.B. MCDANIEL
RCS SUPERINTENDENT: DR. JACK DONALD
ASST. SUPERINTENDENT: PHILLIP THOMPSON
FINANCE DIRECTOR: RICHARD PATTERSON
CLERK TO THE BOARD: RHONDA HUMPHRIES

Call to Order

Board of Supervisors Chairman John Higgins and School Board Chairman Jay Lewis called the joint Board of Supervisors / School Board Meeting to order at 4:05 P.M.

Mr. (Jay) Lewis introduced the agenda and noted that all present were provided a copy of both the School and County budget calendars. He and school board member David McDaniel provided an overview on the School Board's needs via Power Point.

School Board member Kevin Brooks commented on Chromebooks, which are requested to be provided to students entering the 8th grade, so that they may be utilized right through graduation. He noted that if distributed prior to the 8th grade, the units would be outdated by the 12th grade year. School Board members Ms. Hoofnagle and Mr. McDaniel offered additional comments, noting that hard copy textbooks are on 7-year replacement schedule, while PCs can update every year.

Mr. Brooks noted that in the downturn of the late 2000s, 50 positions were cut from the schools and that 20% of those were central office positions. He noted that the School Board had asked for 6 new teacher

positions last year and that Dr. Donald had been able to scrape enough funds together for 2 of those. He further noted that Elementary P.E. and Art teachers are needed. Mr. McDaniel concurred. Board member Ms. Strong added that if P.E. classes are offered, there is less food waste.

Mr. McDaniel noted that everything on the list that the school presents is a need, not a want. He noted that the schools are playing catch up from 4-5 years ago to get back to where they need to be. He stated that SOL scores are coming down due to removal of P.E., summer school, and after-school programs. He noted that the schools had scraped together enough budget funds to add back a 1 hour, 3-day-a-week after school program that reaches 10% of the students. He explained that it helps them with homework and exercise and added that unfortunately, some kids do not have help at home. He also mentioned that the Century 21 grant will expire at the end of fiscal year 2015, and that it supports after-school programming.

Dr. Donald explained that the goal of the after-school program was 30 minutes for homework and 30 minutes for physical activity. He noted that Fairfield Elementary only does the academics due to the challenges of the bus schedule.

Mr. Brooks reviewed automobiles, noting that the automobiles currently being driven are worn out, with 13 cars having over 150,000 miles and of these, 2 or 3 have over 200,000.

Mr. (Jay) Lewis noted that there are capital infrastructure needs at the high school and that an A&E study should be completed to assess all the needs. He stated this was a number one priority.

Mr. McDaniel discussed HVAC needs at the high school, noting that there are 12 units and that repairs are becoming expensive. He noted that last year, when the schools estimated replacement costs, the units were thought to cost approximately \$90,000 each. Since then, he continued, Trane has provided figures showing costs of \$180,000 - \$300,000 for each of the 12 units.

Mr. Brooks cited the County CIP, noting the 20-25 years life cycle for HVAC units. He pointed out that the high school is reaching that limit and that the VoTech center is approximately 40 years old.

Assistant Superintendent Phillip Thompson noted that VoTech often does not have air conditioning due to the maxed out electrical service (not enough amperage to serve).

Dr. Donald added that the breakers are 40 years old and that replacement costs will need to be factored in

Mr. (Jay) Lewis briefly reviewed the FY16 Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Brooks then discussed the VETC program for autistic youngsters at NBE. He and Dr. Donald explained that kids in existing K-2 program are graduating out and that teachers and classroom space will be needed for upper elementary.

He also noted that the next priority after an A&E study would be an environmental control system for the high school, followed by hallway gates at the middle school. He noted that the gates allow for increased community service by limiting activities to certain areas of the school.

Mr. (Jay) Lewis then introduced the Capital Purchase Plan.

Mr. Brooks and Mr. McDaniel reviewed bus replacements.

Mr. Brooks explained the difference between the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and the Capital Purchase Plan (CPP), noting that the Capital Improvement Plan was related to bricks and mortar and that Capital Purchases were everything else. He noted that there was a waiting list of students trying to get into VoTech.

Mr. McDaniel thanked Board of Supervisors for the foresight to fund the technical programs (CTE) at Maury River Middle School (MRMS). He pointed out that now we have more students coming out of the MRMS CTE programs and that we need space in the Rockbridge County High School (RCHS) to continue their education in these areas.

Ms. Hoofnagle noted that research/reports show that 60% of workforce employment will come in sectors not requiring a 4-year college degree.

Mr. McDaniel discussed dual enrollment with DSLCC and the potential for seniors to graduate with certifications necessary to get a job.

Mr. Brooks reiterated that these are all needs, not wants. He requested feedback from Board of Supervisors on the CIP/CPP so that it can be adjusted.

Supervisor David Hinty noted that during the planning of MRMS, it was known that the CTE program would eventually catch up with the RCHS and the RCHS program would have to expand and upgrade.

The Boards then discussed the schedule moving ahead.

County Administrator Spencer Suter noted that in order for County staff to be able to present a draft budget to the Board of Supervisors on February 25th, we would need a number from the schools by February 20th.

Supervisor Lewis asked if the school CIP would be separate from the County's CIP. Fiscal Services Director Steve Bolster affirmed that the two would be separate.

Mr. McDaniel stated that we need to look mainly at the FY16 budget.

Supervisor Ford asked where an agreement with the Lexington School Board stands.

Mr. (Jay) Lewis responded that it was on City Council's agenda for that evening (February 5th).

Dr. Donald noted that it is simply a clarification of the existing agreement, not a new agreement.

Supervisor Ford asked Lexington Schools Officials who were present for their input.

Lexington City Schools Superintendent Dr. Dan Lyons confirmed that agreement was being presented to City Council on that night.

Supervisor Ford asked about the health insurance rate and if there was a solid estimate yet.

Mr. Brooks noted that a 10.5% estimate was being used. He further noted that it appears that the legislature will allow schools to join state system in FY17 and that a \$166,000 increase is expected for the current year. He pointed out that 92% is paid by the school board.

Supervisor Ford asked what the schools are hearing from state regarding teachers' raises.

Mr. Brooks answered that it appears that a 1%-2% increase is being discussed.

Chairman Higgins reviewed his understanding of the impact of the composite index recalculation which occurred last year. He asked for confirmation that the schools would receive \$1.7M additional for each year in the biennium.

Dr. Donald conformed.

Chairman Higgins asked what the schools have to do to get/qualify for the aid.

Dr. Donald then explained how the \$1.7M was being used:

- Salary increase and VRS increase totaled \$911,102
- Math elementary specialists - \$128,677
- Grounds Keeper at MRMS - \$41,802
- Textbooks - \$162,922
- Summer curriculum work - \$50,163
- CTE Program - \$13,000
- Technology Contract services - \$25,000
- Property and casualty insurance - \$13,000

- Schools supplies- tissues, glue sticks and other school supplies - \$13,000
- Bus training program (Dr. Donald mentioned but did not have a cost figure at the time of the meeting)
- 4 bus replacements - \$85,000
- Fuel costs - \$30,000
- Drivers' salary increase - \$26,000
- Early retirement incentive - \$26,913
- Health care increase - \$97,597
- Tuition city reduction - \$60,000
- State funding - \$30,000

Mr. Brooks pointed out loss of federal funding (Forest Fund PILT) - decrease from \$35,000 last year to \$12,000 this year. Next fiscal year's funding will be zero,

Dr. Donald noted that the total loss in revenue is expected to be about \$182,000.

Supervisor Lewis noted that this gives the Board of Supervisors a lot to consider. He further noted that it appears as though the School Board has come together very cohesively and congratulated the members.

Chairman Higgins stated that he has not brought forth the question to the whole Board of Supervisors as to whether or not to keep the existing process or have a finance committee of the whole Board when discussing the school budget.

Mr. Brooks noted that we were of the understanding that after this initial meeting, the regular process would start back up with the two Boards' finance committees working together.

Chairman Higgins noted that he would bring the question to the Board of Supervisors at its Monday, February 9th meeting.

Additional steps moving forward were discussed. Mr. Suter reiterated the need to have a budget number from the schools by February 20th. It was discussed that there needs to be another joint finance committee meeting by February 17th so that the schools may have some direction on providing a budget number. Mr. Suter asked Dr. Donald if he would have enough time to generate a budget figure if the joint finance committee meeting was on the 17th. Dr. Donald noted that it would be tight but that he thought they would do it.

Chairman Higgins asked that Mr. Suter and Dr. Donald work to schedule a joint meeting, pending the outcome of the discussion as to how to handle the joint meetings moving forward.

A motion to adjourn at 5:35 P.M. by Supervisor Hinty, seconded by Supervisor Ford, and unanimously approved.