

AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA, HELD AT ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD  
OFFICE, 2893 COLLIERSTOWN ROAD, LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA  
ON THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2017 AT 4:30 P.M.

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

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

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:** CHAIRMAN DAVID MCDANIEL  
ALBERT LEWIS II, WENDY LOVELL, LAURIE STRONG,  
KEVIN BROOKS

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Hinty called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m. School Board Chairman David McDaniel called their meeting to order.

**Opening Comments:**

Chairman McDaniel announced that the School Board would hold a closed session meeting after the joint meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Chairman Hinty asked County Administrator Spencer Suter and Fiscal Services Director Steve Bolster for a budget update.

Mr. Suter informed the Board that an effective tax increase of \$0.02 would provide an additional \$504,000 and result in a balanced budget. He noted that the request for \$100,000 from the School Board for consulting services has not been added to the budget, but if it is added, it will be a "wash" since the funds will come from the schools capital reserve account.

Chairman McDaniel referred to page four of the School Division Draft Budget Overview to explain the Schools' budget request. The total increase in funding requests total \$916,055, which includes: VRS rate increase; health care premium increase; life insurance increase; utilities increase; across-the-board salary increase; and two new positions.

Chairman Hinty inquired about the \$100,000 that is being requested from restricted capital escrow funds.

Chairman McDaniel replied that the money would be used for consulting fees. He explained that many of the employees had been with the school system for a long time and this year a lot of them would be retiring. The new computer system will require an eighteen-month transition period, and thus the funding will pay for extending the retirees' work period and help with the transition; the retirees will be paid their hourly rate beyond the hours they owe the schools.

Supervisor Campbell asked why the cost of the software did not include the training.

Chairman McDaniel responded that the costs cover part of the training and part of the implementation, but that there will continue to be internal training needs.

Supervisor Ford informed the School Board that he often hears of how the teachers and staff are underpaid, and inquired if the expenses such as the Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP) are taken into account when comparing salaries with other school divisions.

Chairman McDaniel replied that they were not taken into account. He stated that the salaries have been tracked against twenty neighboring school districts of similar size and provided salary data for employment milestones.

Supervisor Ford requested to see a footnote showing comparisons that take the extra money and ERIP into consideration.

Chairman Hinty asked Mr. Suter for his recommendation as to how to move the \$100,000 for consulting into the budget.

Mr. Suter replied that in order to adequately advertise the budget, the Board would have to include it or not include it, but could appropriate the funds at a later date because it is currently in a restricted account. He noted that ideally, a decision would be made during the meeting.

Supervisor Ford asked for the current amount in the schools' capital escrow account.

Chairman McDaniel stated that the account holds a total of \$988,334, but he noted that not all of the approved expenditures for FY 2017 have been used. He added that, if they were used, the balance would be \$582,334. He listed the following items as incomplete: A&E studies for Rockbridge County High School, Central and Natural Bridge Elementary schools, and the remaining phases of the financial software implementation. It was agreed that the sound system at the high school was completed to satisfaction and was done so under budget.

Supervisor Lewis stated that he would like for the \$100,000 to be included in the budget for accuracy and transparency.

Mr. Suter informed the Board that they could do so at the next meeting (immediately following), if desired.

Supervisor Lewis asked Supervisor Ford to discuss questions he had submitted to the School Board.

Supervisor Ford stated that the topics to be addressed all concerned the RCHS Foreign Language program, Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses, and the role of Dabney S. Lancaster Community College plays in effecting foreign language offerings.

Chairman McDaniel invited RCHS Principal Mr. Haywood Hand to the floor to share some information on the subject. Mr. Hand provided information pertaining to the levels of foreign languages that were offered at the high school and the types of courses that were listed as Dual Enrollment/Advanced Placement. He noted that Washington and Lee University has provided additional resources for advanced study in these programs. Chairman Hinty informed the School Board that the County has added a line item to the budget for Career-Technical Education (CTE) credentialing so that costs will be covered for those who meet the criteria for dual enrollment.

Supervisor Higgins asked for cost estimates for the CTE and Dual Enrollment programs.

Chairman McDaniel stated that the costs were \$9,085 and \$4,350, respectively.

Mr. Suter discussed the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and explained to both Boards that it would be advisable for the Boards to

jointly work on the CIP during the second half of March into the beginning of April.

Supervisor Ford inquired about the RCHS HVAC system.

Chairman McDaniel informed him that this is being repaired in portions but that those repairs are not part of the CIP.

In closing remarks, Supervisor Lewis complimented the School Board on their improvements and their "brilliant" work.

Supervisor Higgins agreed that there were some variables the School Board had no control over, but to remain competitive with other schools they needed the two-percent salary increase.

At 5:21 p.m., Chairman McDaniel moved that the School Board enter into a Closed Meeting at a different location.

Chairman Hinty asked for a motion to adjourn the joint session meeting with the School Board. Supervisor Higgins made the motion. Supervisor Lewis provided the second, and the motion carried by unanimous roll call vote by the Board.

AYES: Higgins, Lewis, Campbell, Ford, Hinty  
NAYES: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: None