

RECORDED MINUTES OF THE MARCH 16, 2021

GLOUCESTER COUNTY JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF THE
GLOUCESTER COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
GLOUCESTER, VIRGINIA 23061

March 16, 2021

A joint meeting of the Gloucester County School Board and Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, in the Gloucester High School Auditorium. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Board of Supervisors chairperson.

I. ROLL CALL

A. Roll call for the Board of Supervisors was taken and the following persons recorded as present: Ashley Chriscoe, Christopher Hutson, Michael Hedrick, Robert Orth, Kevin Smith, Michael Winebarger and Phillip Bazzani.

B. Roll call for the School Board was taken and the following persons recorded as present: Robin M. Rice, Chairperson, Elisa A. Nelson, Vice-Chairperson, Troy M. Andersen, George R. (Randy) Burak, Anita F. Parker, and Darren P. Post. Brenda F. Mack was absent.

- 1) Mrs. Nelson made motion to allow electronic participation of School Board Member, Anita Parker. Mr. Burak seconded the motion, with all members approving unanimously.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Phillip N. Bazzani, Supervisor, York District led the boards in the invocation and pledge of allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – Board of Supervisor members approved the minutes of the October 20, 2020 Board of Supervisors meeting.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA – Board of Supervisor members voted to adopt the agenda for the March 16, 2021 joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and School Board.

V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA – Board of Supervisor members voted to approve the items in the consent agenda.

VI. MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE BOARDS – Mr. Winebarger publicly apologized to Joanne Harris, Commissioner of Revenue, and staff regarding comments made at the March 2 Board of Supervisors meeting. Mr. Chriscoe provided Board of Supervisor members with information he has compiled during his time on the board.

There were no matters presented by School Board members.

Brent Fedors, County Administrator, announced March 14-20 as Virginia Flood Awareness and Severe Weather Awareness Week. The 20-21 Daffodil Festival is planned with limited attendance and tickets required. There will be a shoebox parade instead of a traditional parade and the daffodil exhibit will not be open to the public. Board of Supervisor meetings resumed to in-person meetings on March 10.

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At risk citizens may submit comments by 4:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The next Board of Supervisor meeting will be held on March 24 at GHS. Planning Commission meetings will remain virtual until April.

VII. CITIZENS' COMMENT PERIOD (Limited to topics on the Work Session agenda only)

Mr. Orth asked if there were any persons present who wished to address the Boards. He asked that all persons state their name, district in which they reside and limit remarks to three (3) minutes. The following persons came forward.

John Meyer/Abingdon District – Spoke in favor of schools returning to five days per week and summer sessions.

Teresa Altemus/Gloucester Point – Spoke regarding transparency of both boards regarding budget.

Lawrence Coen/York District – Spoke against compensation increases for school staff and how the division is operating during the pandemic.

Don Mitchell/York District – Spoke against compensation increases for school staff and schools needing to be in person every day.

Kenny Hogge/Gloucester Point – Spoke against compensation increases for school staff and is in favor of having only the roof and HVAC replaced at GHS.

Jennifer West/Gloucester Point District / Patrick West/Gloucester Point – Spoke in favor of the Page baseball field being completed.

*The last call in message was unable to be heard clearly.

VIII. WORK SESSION AGENDA

A) Presentation of School Board's Proposed FY22 Budget and FY22-FY26 Capital Improvement Plan – Dr. Clemons presented the School Board's recommended overall budget of \$126,974,984 for FY'22, with a local request of \$2,221,100, which includes a scale and step increase for employees (AVG 5%) at a rate of \$444,220 per 1% increase. Dr. Clemons indicated the General Assembly has approved a 5% increase for SOQ positions, with a portion required of localities. The FY'22 budget includes four days added back to the school year to reach 180 days at a cost of \$137,552 annually (\$34,388 per day), with ESSER II funding being used to help over the next two years. Additional considerations include a full service school program at GHS, additional positions, and phased restoration of temporary line item reductions that occurred in FY'21. A virtual academy may be needed and is allowed for in the budget, as well as intervention teacher positions and six additional classroom positions to help with the learning loss during the pandemic. General property and liability insurance figures are not in, however, Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, does not anticipate a notable increase. Discussion was held regarding SOQ funded positions.

*Ten minute recess at 9:05.


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Brian Hartley, Director of Operations discussed the FY'22-26 CIP projects and FY'22 capital needs, by starting with long range plans for FY22-26 to include HVAC replacements; lighting replacement; playground equipment; school bus replacement; roofing replacement; paving projects; and renovations of GHS. Some projects have been bundled into FY'22 by the County Administrator and some items deleted. Options for the GHS roof replacement were discussed by representatives from Moseley Architects. BOS members would like a chart indicating the time remaining on warranted areas of the roof. Mr. Fedors asked if the BOS would like to have representatives from Moseley come back to present to them after charts are sent and reviewed.

Dr. Clemons reviewed the total budget request of \$126, 947,984. Mrs. Rice asked about debt service and how it impacts funding to the School Board. Mr. Orth indicated a new model was presented when looking at the sales tax referendum, which is expected to produce approximately 39 million over the course of twenty years, to include paying for past debt as well as funding for the schools necessary for the completion of Option 3 for GHS. Mrs. Rice clarified that this would be using the sales tax referendum for past debt, that citizens just voted to be used for school infrastructure projects. Mr. Orth confirmed that it is the position of the BOS, to support Mr. Fedors' presentation at this point. Mr. Andersen, Mrs. Parker, and Mr. Burak expressed their disappointment. Mr. Orth indicated there was mention of both future and past projects. He feels it is transparent and helps the citizens by keeping tax rates low. Mrs. Rice indicated she would like to obtain a legal opinion from the State Attorney General regarding what is being considered. This is not what citizens voted on and leaves no room for any future needs that may arise. Mr. Fedors indicated he had not initially planned to pay previous debt with the sales tax, but by doing so, is leveraging funds for the community. Mr. Andersen made a motion to seek the legal opinion of the State Attorney General, Mr. Burak seconded the motion, which passed 5/1.

- B) Other Matters (at the discretion of the Boards) – Mr. Chriscoe said when Virginia started the lottery, it was supposed to provide funding to school divisions, however that money was then pulled from somewhere else when lottery funding was given. Mr. Andersen stated that while the boards do not typically respond to citizen comments, he would not stand for people tainting reality. Teachers have been working full time and the comments made earlier were insulting to the school division from top to bottom. Mr. Post asked if the 5% increase for staff would include senior administration, which it would.
- C) School Board Adjournment – At 10:44 p.m., there being no further School Board business, Mr. Post made a motion to adjourn the School Board from the joint meeting of March 16, 2021. Mr. Burak seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.



Robin Rice, Chairperson



Carol Dehoux, Clerk

