

FINAL BUDGET HEARING

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
QUINCY, FLORIDA

September 3, 2013

6:00 P.M.

This final budget hearing was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Isaac Simmons, Chairman; Mr. Roger P. Milton; Mr. Charlie D. Frost; Mr. Judge B. Helms; and Ms. Audrey D. Lewis. Also present were Mr. Reginald C. James, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Ms. Whitney Langston, Attorney for the Board; and others.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The final budget hearing was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Isaac Simmons, at 6:05 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MILLAGE LEVY FOR THE 2013 – 2014 FISCAL YEAR

Mrs. Wood stated that the proposed state law required local effort millage rate was 5.303, the proposed local discretionary millage rate was .498, the proposed supplemental nonvoted discretionary millage rate was .25, and the proposed capital improvement millage rate was 1.50 mills, when all combined amount to less than the rolled back rate by negative 2.81 percent.

Mr. Roger P. Milton made a motion to adopt the recommended state law required local effort millage rate of 5.303, the local discretionary millage rate of 0.498 and a capital improvement millage rate of 1.50 mills, as the millages to be levied for the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year. When all the millages are combined, they amount to less than the rolled back rate by negative 2.81 percent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Judge B. Helms and carried unanimously.

Mr. Roger P. Milton made a motion to adopt the recommended supplemental discretionary millage rate of .25 as necessary for the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Ms. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

3. APPROVAL OF 2013 – 2014 FINAL BUDGET

Fund Source: All Funds

Amount: N/A

Mrs. Wood stated that Board approval was requested for the use of the prior year's salary schedules while negotiations are underway for the 2013 – 2014 instructional and non-instructional salary schedules. She stated that counsel has advised the district that "past practice" was sufficient guidance for paying employees during the period prior to settlement with the two unions. She stated that the Florida Department of Education requires Board approval for the use of prior year's salary schedules as part of the final budget documentation.

Following an overview of the district's 2013 – 2014 budget, Mr. Judge B. Helms made a motion to adopt the final budget for the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year as it was presented. This motion affirms the Board's intention that the services identified in detail supporting this General Fund Summary budget are the only services that the district would provide in the absence of federal fund sources. All federal dollars in this budget are supplementing the general fund. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

4. APPROVAL OF 2012 – 2013 SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Fund Source: All Funds

Amount: N/A

Following discussion and an overview of the 2012 – 2013 Superintendent's Annual Financial Report, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation for approval of agenda item #4. The motion was seconded by Ms. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mr. Simmons added to the agenda items #'s 6b – Havana Middle School New Classroom Building Layout, and 6c – Use of Prior Year's Salary Schedule During 2013 – 2014 Negotiations. Mr. Simmons entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Roger P. Milton, seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

5. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

a. Budget Amendment Number Thirty-Six

Fund Source: 110 General Funds

Amount: \$1,913,997.05

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Items preceded by an (*) asterisk were removed from the CONSENT agenda at the beginning of the meeting and acted upon during the DISCUSSION portion of the agenda.

*6. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS

a. Agreement Between Gadsden County School District and Alternatives Unlimited, Inc.

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

Mr. Helms questioned the terms of the agreement with Alternatives Unlimited, Inc. He requested the compensation fee for the district be increased to 15%.

Mr. Ronterrious Robinson, Director of Drop Back In Academy, introduced Mr. Levi Williams, Regional Director, and Dr. Herman with Catapult Learning. He thanked the Superintendent, Board members, and staff for their assistance throughout the year. He requested the students be provided meals at no cost to the district upon approval of the agreement.

Mr. Simmons requested the Board defer action on agenda item #6a until further review. He stated that he supports the Drop Back In Academy Agreement with a term of one year and a percentage increase.

Mr. James stated that the Drop Back In Academy was currently serving students. He stated that the district's primary responsibility is to educate students.

Following discussion, Mr. Judge B. Helms made a motion to defer action on agenda item #6a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

b. Havana Middle School New Classroom Building Layout

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

Mr. Shepard introduced Mr. Finley Cook, Construction Manager, and Ms. Linda Stevens, Architect, to share with the Board an overview of the cost savings layout for the new classroom building at Havana Middle School.

Mr. Cook stated that the cost savings will derive from using grades across the site.

Following discussion, Mr. Roger P. Milton made a motion to approve the cost savings layout #2 for the new classroom building at Havana Middle School. The motion was seconded by Mr. Judge B. Helms and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval

c. Use of Prior Year's Salary Schedule During 2013 – 2014 Negotiations

Fund Source: All Funds

Amount: Dependent Upon Employee Placement on Salary Schedules

Following an explanation of the use of the prior year's salary schedule during the 2013 – 2014 negotiations, Mr. Charlie D. Frost made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #6c. The motion was seconded by Ms. Audrey D. Lewis and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS

a. Charter for Crossroad Academy School of Business

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

Mrs. Smith stated that there was new legislation for high performing charters.

Mr. Simmons stated that the two major changes to the charter for Crossroad Academy Charter School were transportation and school food service.

Following much discussion, Mr. Milton requested the Board defer action on agenda item #7a in order to gather and review Florida Statutes for charter amendments. He stated that he appreciated the services provided by Crossroad Academy Charter School. He stated that the district is trying to identify cost saving measures.

Mr. Milton made a motion to defer action on agenda item #7a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Judge B. Helms and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent did not recommend approval.

- b. Certificates of Participation – Financing for Classroom Addition at Havana Middle School – Resolution in Accordance with Section 1001.453 F.S.

Fund Source: Financing for Construction of Havana Middle School
Classroom Addition

Amount: Estimated \$5,000,000.00

Following discussion, Ms. Audrey D. Lewis made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve agenda item #7b. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

8. ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

None.

9. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Board members scheduled a Special Board meeting on Tuesday, September 10th at 4:00 p.m. to discuss and act on the Agreement with Alternatives Unlimited, Inc., and the Charter for Crossroad Academy Charter School of Business; and a Budget Workshop at 5:00 p.m. to discuss the district’s budget.

- 10. The final budget hearing adjourned at 8:20 p.m.