

TENTATIVE BUDGET HEARING  
 GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD  
 MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
 35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.  
 QUINCY, FLORIDA 32351

July 29, 2021

5:30 P.M.

The tentative budget hearing was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Mr. Steve Scott; Mrs. Karema D. Dudley; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; and Mr. Charlie D. Frost. Also present were Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. McMillan stated that in the future he wanted to begin all meetings with a prayer and pledge.

2. PUBLIC HEARING – Tentative Budget and Millage Rate

- a. Approval of Resolution Number 21-01 for the Tentative Millage Rates for the 2021 – 2022 fiscal year

Fund Source: General Fund and Capital Project

Amount: Refer to the millage rates and amounts stated on the resolution

Following Mr. May's reading of Resolution Number 21-01, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #2a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Approval of Resolution Number 21-02 for the 2021 - 2022 Tentative Budget for fiscal year 2021 – 2022

Fund Source: All Funds Budget

Amount: Refer to tentative budget

Following Mr. May's reading of Resolution Number 21-02, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve agenda item #2b. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

**ACTION REQUESTED:** The Superintendent recommended approval.

### 3. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

#### a. Approval of 2021 – 2022 Code of Student Conduct

Fund Source: N/A

Amount: N/A

**ACTION REQUESTED:** The Superintendent pulled from the agenda.

Mr. Mays requested the Board schedule a special meeting next week to discuss and act on health insurance.

Mr. Frost stated that he wants to make sure all companies have an opportunity to participate in the bidding process.

Mr. Mays stated that the bidding information was advertised and sent out. He stated that the Board makes the final decision.

In response to Mr. Frost's question regarding high insurance premiums, Mr. Mays stated that the Board only pays a portion for the employee.

Mrs. Minnis stated that she will research information for Mr. McMillan in regards to the district joining other districts to combine health insurance to possibly lower the cost.

In response to Mrs. Dudley's concern regarding the district paying more of the insurance cost, Mr. Mays stated that he had previously researched the Board increasing their insurance cost for employees, but nothing has been done yet.

Mrs. Mandela, President GCCTA, addressed the Board and stated that a letter was sent to the Board and the Superintendent stating GCCTA's desire to collaborate. She stated that in the contract there are several places to collaborate and the Code of Student Conduct is one of those places. She stated that the union wishes to collaborate with the district on the Code of Student Conduct in order to gather input from the teachers. She stated that did not happen and that parts of the Code need to be addressed. She stated that collaborative effort was needed in order for teachers to have support. She stated that there are several committees in the contract such as facilities, evaluation, and others.

In response to Mrs. Dudley's question to Mrs. Mandela regarding whether six teachers were to be notified, Mrs. Mandela stated yes.

Mr. Matthew Bryant stated he was not aware of the contract but he had principals, assistant principals, parent, and a student on the committee.

Mr. Key stated that he was not a part of the committee and that he had not notified Mr. Bryant of who to put on the committee. He stated that the Code of Student Conduct was pulled from the agenda at the last meeting because Corporal Punishment conflicted with the policy. He stated that the Code of Student Conduct was pulled at this meeting because it did not state when corporal punishment could be used. He stated that as a school administrator he found a lot of guidelines that must be followed in the classroom. He stated that what is written in the policy is not being followed in the classroom; and therefore the student is sent back to class and the teachers are upset.

Mr. McMillan asked Mrs. Mandela if she wanted the committee to reconvene and review the Code, she stated yes. He stated that the Board wants to work with Mrs. Mandela and the union. He stated that the Code of Student Conduct will not be published until the teachers provide input.

Mr. Frost asked Mrs. Mandela to not wait until Board meeting to present her concerns. He stated that she could call prior to the meeting and state her concerns so they could be addressed prior to the meeting. He stated that collaboration doesn't mean we all have to sit around a table. He stated that she could call and speak to someone prior to board meeting.

Ms. Johnson stated that from this point the district has to start looking at statutes, policies, and all documents to make sure we follow what is required.

In response to Mrs. Mandela's concern regarding another item that needed discussion, Mr. McMillan asked if it could be handled outside of the meeting.

Mrs. Mandela discussed the provisional teachers' job description and stated that 20 teachers were approved at Tuesday's meeting on annual contract. She stated that the teachers are not being paid as provisional teachers. She stated that she wanted to make sure that the district provide the support and professional development needed to teachers so that this situation does not arise again in two years. She stated that the teachers know they have a responsibility but she wants to make sure the district provide help.

Mr. McMillan stated that the Superintendent will make sure Mrs. Ella Mae Daniel do what is required of teachers to help them with certification.

Mrs. Mandela stated that the union supports all teachers, not just members. She stated that they want certified teachers, but their complaint is that the district needs to make sure that requirements for beginning teachers are in place, and the teachers have mentors.

Mr. Frost stated that some of the uncertified teachers have not even tried to take the test. He stated that Mrs. Mandela need to make sure teachers attend trainings.

Mrs. Dudley stated that accountability is on the district and teachers. She stated that the district is trying to get the beginning teacher program in place. She stated that she feels like there will be a change. She asked Mrs. Mandela to work with the teachers and she will be willing to help.

#### 4. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key stated that changes have been put in place for professional development and the district just need to make sure communication is improved so information is disseminated. He stated that principals are assigning mentors to teachers. He stated that some of Mrs. Mandela's issues can be handled at the school level. He stated that new administration is in place. He stated that the district has been overstaffed. He acknowledged that Mrs. Mandela has a public records request for finance. He stated that finance is tied up with closing and opening the budget for the new fiscal year. He stated that the district must give raises in order to get and retain certified teachers. He stated that some of the teachers whom he asked DOE for extensions have left the district anyway. He stated that the teachers are not following the requirements for the classroom behavior form. He stated that the leadership institute was very successful and provided a lot of information. He stated that test scores have arrived. He stated that everyone must push forward to accelerate the kids.

#### 5. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Charlie Frost led a prayer.

Ms. Johnson stated that she wanted to see the test scores. Mr. Key stated that he will break down the test score numbers and share with the Board.

Mr. Scott stated that he was concerned about teachers not passing the general knowledge test. He stated that professional development doesn't address things that are covered in college. He stated that professional development is to help manage classroom.

Mrs. Dudley stated that the student state assessments are challenging and so are teacher assessments. She stated that some people are not good at taking tests. She stated that to say that teachers are teaching class but not passing the general knowledge test is not right. She stated that the test is not easy.

The Board scheduled a Special Board meeting on Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. to discuss health insurance.

Mr. Key stated that he and Mr. McMillan were invited to attend a meeting along with the county representatives on Tuesday, August 24<sup>th</sup> in Mississippi. He requested the Board reschedule the August Board Meeting date to Tuesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>.

The Board rescheduled the Regular Board meeting on Tuesday, August 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m.; and the workshop at 4:30 p.m.

6. The tentative budget hearing adjourned at 6:48 p.m.