

**MINUTES OF THE CALLED MEETING OF THE
JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS
MAY 17, 2016 – 4:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Jarnigan who then asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence. Board members present were Chairman Jarnigan, Vice Chairman Jim Vines, Randall Bradley, Anne Marie Potts, and Judy Cavanah. Board members Ralph Lowery and Jonathan Rogers were absent. Dr. Charles Edmonds, Director of Schools and Secretary to the Board, was also present.

The purpose of the called meeting was to review the second pass of the 2016-2017 School Budget.

BUSINESS

1. 2016-2017 Budget Second Pass

Langdon Potts, County Finance Director, went over the reconciliation to the prior year's budget showing revenue, expenses, the first pass of the budget and the second pass showing were the budget currently stood. He pointed out the following changes under revenue: 2 cents out of property tax and update on two grants making the total decrease in revenue \$231,000. Mr. Potts then went over changes on the expense side as follows: under compensation there was a reduction of the math stipend in the amount of \$5,000, under transportation there was a reduction of \$33,000 in diesel and transportation equipment under technology there was a reduction of \$84,000 in contracted services and other equipment, under custodial/maintenance a reduction of \$54,000 in line items custodial promotions, custodial supplies and contracted services, library books were reduced by \$23,000 and other small reductions which balanced the budget at \$54,455,000.

Board member Bradley requested that the motion from the last school board meeting regarding the budget be read. The motion was read as follows, "Board member Potts made the motion to reduce the maintenance of effort by \$253,000 and establish a \$200,000 capital projects fund with no cuts in raises, textbooks and no used school buses. Board member Bradley seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0." Mr. Potts pointed out there were no reductions in salaries, textbooks or purchasing used school buses but there was no allocation for capital projects in the budget proposed.

Board member Bradley expressed concern regarding no funding for capital projects in the budget as was directed in the motion from the last meeting. Dr. Edmonds responded there was no money available.

Budget – continued

Mr. Bradley asked what the board should do about the motion that had been made since there was no allocation for capital projects. Board member Vines suggested taking the \$200,000 out of fund balance. Board member Potts commented the motion had been ignored and not carried out by central office. Dr. Edmonds commented that he did not know where they could find the \$200,000 in this budget. Board member Potts pointed out there was still over \$16,000 in technology over last year's budget, an additional \$355,000 in maintenance and an additional "other" of \$17,000 totaling almost \$400,000.

Vice Chairman Vines made the motion to amend the motion from the May 12, 2016 board meeting to take \$200,000 out of fund balance for the capital projects fund.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

Sherry Finchum, Central Office Director, commented that she thought when she, Michael Phagan and Langdon Potts met after the directive by the board to find the funds it was their recommendation to take the \$200,000 from fund balance in order to cover the capital projects. She commented she thought that was part of the proposal and didn't understand why it was not brought back to the board.

Board member Potts expressed her displeasure with the budget and called it an insult. She stated the board should hold central office accountable.

Dr. Edmonds presented a statute of Tennessee law reflecting the duty of the Director of Schools in presenting the budget. He commented that when a budget is presented, it can be changed in anyway. He stated it was his duty and the staff's duty to present a budget to the board reflecting the needs of the school system. He further stated that if the board wanted to change the budget they could but he thought it was wrong to attack the staff that had worked so hard with one motive in mind and that was to do the best for the school system. He stated he thought it was uncalled for. He went on to say the staff had done their best and worked diligently to develop the budget. He stated to restrict the staff in recommending through a budget document what a school system needs is wrong. He commented that everything was done in good faith.

Board member Bradley commented that he was offended by Dr. Edmonds using the term "attack". He stated that he had not attacked anyone.

Vice Chairman Vines stated the board needed to find a solution.

Budget – continued

Chairman Jarnigan commented that everyone needed to work together in order to get anything accomplished. He commented that he disagreed with some of the remarks that had been made.

Board member Cavanah suggested compromising and asking for \$100,000 for capital projects instead of \$200,000.

Sherry Finchum went over the budget preparation process and answered any questions from the board.

Board member Potts suggested looking at the technology line item under supplies and materials where there was a \$13,000 gain from last year, \$4,000 staff development increase and reduce other equipment to \$20,000 instead of \$40,000. She pointed out this would be \$37,000 out of technology. Ms. Potts commented this was not the year to start the lead custodian position at \$56,000, the receiving personnel at \$43,000 or increase supplies and materials at \$22,000. She pointed out this would reduce the operation/maintenance budget by \$121,000 but it was still an increase of \$234,000 which is \$250,000 over last year. She further commented that under other there was an increase of \$17,000. She pointed out the total of these seven accounts totaled \$175,000. She stated this could establish a capital projects fund for the board to move forward and maintain in the budget.

Board member Cavanah expressed concern cutting supplies and materials. There was some discussion regarding the consequences of cutting the line items suggested by Ms. Potts. Michael Phagan answered questions from the board.

Board member Bradley commended Dr. Edmonds and the staff on the work they did on last year's budget. He stated that he appreciated the effort last year.

Chairman Jarnigan asked that Dr. Edmonds, his staff and the county finance office work on the budget with the suggestions made and bring the budget back to the board for review at the May 19, 2016 meeting.

Board member Potts commented that she would be willing to compromise for a \$175,000 capital projects fund and to go ahead and make the changes as stated above. Board member Cavanah was not in agreement to cut supplies and materials. Vice Chairman Vines suggested looking at the cuts at the next meeting and what the consequences of each line item would be.

Budget – continued

Sherry Finchum asked the board why it was not reasonable to take \$200,000 for capital projects out of the fund balance. Board member Bradley commented that he wanted to keep the fund balance for the White Pine School project.

Dr. Edmonds recommended that he and the staff take the budget and reduce line items where they could.

There was some discussion regarding the 20/20 Vision program and whether the board was in agreement with the program. Board member Bradley stated he would like more information regarding the program before he could approve it. Other board members commented they were in favor of the program but also wanted more information to better understand it.

The board agreed with Dr. Edmonds recommendation that he and his staff take another look at the budget and reduce line items where they could. The budget will be brought back to the board at the May 19th meeting.

ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Bill Jarnigan, Chairman

Dr. Charles Edmonds, Director of Schools &
Secretary to the Board

Date

Date

