

Special Session
December 9, 2004

The Randolph County Board of Education met in a special called joint meeting with the Randolph County Board of Commissioners on Thursday, December 9, 2004, at 4 p.m. at the Commissioners Meeting Room, 725 McDowell Road, Asheboro, North Carolina. Board of Education members LaVerne Williams, Becky Coltrane, Barry Scott, Grady Lawson, Tommy McDonald, Paul Guthrie, and incumbents Gary Cook and Janet Johnson were present for the meeting. Commissioners Harold Holmes, Darrell Frye, Phil Kemp, and Arnold Lanier were present.

Call to Order

Chairperson LaVerne Williams called the meeting to order for the Board of Education. Chairman Harold Holmes called the meeting to order for the Board of Commissioners.

Capital Project Needs

Chairman Holmes stated that the Commissioners wanted to make sure that the Board of Education was comfortable with their identified capital project needs and the priorities which they were assigned.

Discussion began about possible alternatives, such as night school, construction of a ninth grade school at Eastern Randolph High School, and converting Randleman Middle School for use by Randleman High School and building another Randleman High School. The Board of Education assured the Commissioners that these issues had been considered and dismissed for various feasibility reasons.

There was considerable discussion about the immediate need to relieve the serious overcrowded conditions at Trinity High School. With the Board of Education's current capital projects prioritization, a favorable bond referendum vote next May would not help alleviate overcrowding at Trinity High School. Also, the current Archdale-Trinity Supplemental School Tax District makes it impossible to redraw school attendance lines in the Trinity area to include Randleman attendance area students.

Although both boards agreed that there is a great need for relief at the county schools, the problem is how to pay for it. The borrowing capacity for the county is limited to approximately \$44 million dollars for school capital project purposes in the 2005 calendar year, with the earliest possible sale date for the Certificates of Deposit (COPS) being January 2006. There was also discussion about whether to proceed with a COPS deal immediately rather than waiting for the outcome of a May 2005 bond referendum

County Manager Frank Willis said that if the bond referendum fails in May 2005, the County could still do a COPS deal, but the Local Government Commission likely would not approve a deal consisting of the same projects and funds that failed in the referendum, the projects and dollar amounts involved would need to be considerably less. Also, a sufficient amount of time (at least six months) would need to pass between the failed referendum and the application for a COPS deal.

Commissioner Darrell Frye mentioned the possibility that the Asheboro City Schools and Randolph Community College capital requests, which are a part of the proposed bond referendum slated for May 2005, could be put on hold until more money is available, possibly through a statewide public school bond issue now being considered at the state level. These state funds may be available by 2007-2008. He said if these projects are put on hold, it might be possible through COPS to fund construction of a high school in the northeastern part of the county (\$27 million) and a second high school in Trinity (\$21 million). With the estimated cost of these projects totaling \$48 million (\$4 million more than the maximum of the borrowing capacity of \$44 million for school capital projects next year) some concessions would have to be made like not building all new athletic facilities at the new schools, some sharing of these facilities would have to be done temporarily. Another possibility might be to proceed only with the construction of the northeastern high school and wait to see if these state funds come through since it will be close to two years before construction of a high school in the Trinity area could begin (land would have to be located and purchase negotiated, architects employed and plans developed, etc.).

Superintendent Bob McRae asked that the Commissioners make a decision as soon as possible.

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Adjournment

On motion of Phil Kemp and second by Robby Davis the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 6 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary