

COVINGTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD
Minutes
May 11, 2020

The Covington City School Board held its regular meeting in the Board conference room on Monday, May 11, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

Tamala Preston, Chair
Bert Baker, Vice-Chair
Jonathan Arritt
Erika Hunter
Tonya Jones (Per Conference Call)

Superintendent Melinda Snead-Johnson was present as was Rebecca Irvine, Clerk, per conference call. Dr. Shannon Fuhrman, Director of Education and Instruction, joined the meeting remotely.

Mrs. Preston called the meeting to order and requested a moment of silence. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the public notice of the meeting stated that attendance in the Board room would be limited to ten individuals. The public was invited to submit questions or participate remotely, but no requests were received.

MINUTES

Upon a motion by Ms. Jones, seconded by Mrs. Hunter, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of April 6 and May 4, 2020.

FINANCE

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Arritt, the Board unanimously approved invoices totaling \$845,171.96.

The Board reviewed expenditure allocations from CHS, JWIS, and EPS through April, 2020.

Ms. Irvine noted she continues to monitor expenses due to a lower ADM for the current year, which will result in a state revenue shortfall of approximately \$275,000. Since this shortfall was predicted in the Fall, reduced expenditures were necessary to manage this revenue reduction.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the revised FY 21 budget approved by the School Board on May 4, 2020, had been submitted to the City Manager. This revision reduced the budget by \$287,766 to accommodate the General Assembly state fund adjustments due to COVID-19. In her budget recommendation to City Council, the City Manager has recommended an additional local fund reduction of \$332,764. Mrs. Snead-Johnson is meeting with staff to discuss these additional budget reductions. Mrs. Snead-Johnson will also request a meeting with City Council to discuss budget needs for the school division. The Board scheduled work sessions for May 14 and May 18 at 5:00 p.m. to review FY 21 budget recommendations.

MINUTES – MAY 11, 2020

SMART GOALS UPDATE/STRATEGIC PLAN

Mrs. Jones noted that the Virginia State Reading Association offered online training opportunities for very reasonable rates.

There have been no updates to the Strategic Plan.

AUTHORIZATION OF SIGNATURE IN ABSENCE OF DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT

Upon a motion by Mr. Arritt, seconded by Ms. Jones, the Board unanimously approved and authorized Shannon Fuhrman and Rebecca Irvine to sign all Virginia Department of Education reports, documents, requisitions, and other official correspondence in the absence of the Division Superintendent.

CTE PERKINS PLAN APPLICATION FOR 2020 - 2021

Mrs. Snead-Johnson requested Board approval of the CTE/Perkins Plan Application for FY 21 totaling \$17,703.41. These funds are used to provide vocational education and training opportunities for CHS students.

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Arritt, the Board unanimously approved this application as presented.

DISCUSSION/OTHER NEW BUSINESS – SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Mrs. Hunter asked for clarification of CARES funding. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The CARES Act includes a \$30.75 billion education stabilization fund with three components: an Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund; a Governor's Emergency Relief Fund; and a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund. The Virginia Department of Education expects to receive approximately \$238.6 million through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund. Ninety percent of this award will be distributed to local educational agencies (LEAs) based on each LEA's relative share of Title I, Part A Federal Fiscal Year 2019 funds.

The allocation for Covington City Schools is \$209,881.54. Applications are due on August 1, 2020, and the period of performance is March 13, 2020 through September 30, 2022. CARES Act funds may be used to support school divisions in a wide variety of ways to improve preparedness and response efforts as a result of the coronavirus.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that staff are strategizing how to best utilize these funds to provide for remote learning during long-term closures. It has not yet been included in the budget for next year, thus a budget revision will be necessary once an application has been finalized. Funds will need to be expended and reimbursed through OMEGA, as with other Federal Grant programs.

MINUTES – MAY 11, 2020

COMMITTEE & JOINT BOARD REPORTS

Mr. Arritt noted that the Committee on Joint Services has met once, primarily to pay bills, and another Zoom meeting is scheduled for May 14th at 1:00 p.m.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that RRMM has been awarded the contract to review facilities, and this work has begun.

The JRTC Joint Board of Control will meet on Tuesday, May 12th at noon.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORTS

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the final March 31st ADM was 952.5 which was 32.5 students less than the budget of 985. Expenditures reductions are in place to manage this state fund decrease.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that although the Board has approved a calendar for the 20-21 school year, a revised calendar may be needed if the opening of schools is delayed due to COVID-19. Several scenarios are being discussed as the state continues to address the pandemic impact.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the emergency feeding (COVID-19) session will end on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. This would have been the last day of the school year, prior to COVID-19. This program served 2,082 meals in March and 4,028 meals in April.

The regular summer feeding program is scheduled to start on Monday, June 1, 2020, with grab-n-go bagged meals with milk, but only at the CHS teacher parking lot. This program will feed four days a week (Monday thru Thursday). Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the regular summer feeding normally program does not have many participants and will be monitored to see if it is sustainable. The Department of Education and the Department of Social Services will also be issuing debit cards to all student families for approximately \$375.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted Frequently Asked Questions regarding COVID-19 are posted on the division website.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that several activities are planned to honor the graduating class of 2020. During the week of May 18th pictures of all graduating senior will be placed on the lawn of CHS, and an actual graduation is planned for July 31st, if such an event is permissible at that time.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson also discussed planned school closure activities for each school. Plans are evolving continuously about how education will begin in the Fall. A survey of students is being conducted to determine which students have Wi-Fi capabilities if remote instruction is required.

MINUTES – MAY 11, 2020

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Arritt, the Board unanimously approved an executive session at 7:17 p.m. to discuss matters in relation to the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) Personnel.

Upon a return to open session at 7:43 p.m., the Board agreed to certify the closed session under the Code of Virginia, Section 2.1-3711 (A) (1) Personnel with a roll call vote.

No action was taken after the executive session.

Ms. Irvine reviewed the division-wide budget analysis through April, 2020, and noted that she is confident expenditures reductions will be sufficient to meet the state fund decrease due to the lower ADM.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Tamala Preston, Chair

Rebecca Irvine, Clerk

