

**COVINGTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Minutes**  
**February 10, 2020**

The Covington City School Board held its regular meeting in the Board conference room on Monday, February 10, 2020, at 5:45 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

Tamala Preston, Chair  
Jonathan Arritt  
Bert Baker  
Erika Hunter  
Tonya Jones

Superintendent Melinda Snead-Johnson was present as were Cynthia Morgan, Principal of EPS; .and Rebecca Irvine, Clerk.

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

**PUBLIC HEARING PROPOSED FY 2020 – 2021 BUDGET**

Mrs. Preston opened the public hearing on the FY 2020 – 2021 Budget proposal.

Ms. Irvine presented a brief summary of a preliminary budget totaling \$12,294,736 - \$11,701,625 for General Operations; \$519,613 for the Cafeteria Fund; and \$73,498 for Textbooks. State Revenues are based on Governor Northam's 2020 – 2022 biennial budget released on December 19, 2019. Projecting an Average Daily Membership (ADM) of 965, state funds increased by 3.5%. Federal funds decreased with a reduction (\$16,000) in Title II funds. All other funds remain level for the upcoming year. The City appropriation remains at \$3,377,635. The Cafeteria Fund will require a transfer from Operations of \$144,736 based on increased health care costs. Total expenditures increased by 2.3%. This includes a step increase for all eligible employees using the current salary scales. The part-time guidance position has been increased to full-time. A 10% increase is budgeted for health care costs to be shared between the employer and the employee. New Local Choice rates should be available by March, 2020.

Kevin Hanna, representing the Covington Education Association (CEA), presented the following budget requests: get School Board to pay for classes for professional development; increase the number of personal days from 3 to 5 and accumulate 3 each year; work for the state requested 3% raise; attain more educational staff; if funds available, pick up any increase in health insurance.

Sara Zeek, an English teacher at CHS and a member of the CEA budget committee, addressed the School Board. Mrs. Zeek noted that, given limited resources, the School Board should embrace radical thinking in regards to budgeting. City Council members have indicated that there are no local fund increases for schools projected for the next six years. Mrs. Zeek suggested that the Board use this time to develop more creative ways to operate the school division. She expressed disappointment that school board members chose not meet with staff individually, since she feels employees have great ideas for budget savings.

## **MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2020**

### **RECOGNITIONS/DELEGATIONS**

Mrs. Preston declared the budget public hearing closed.

### **RECOGNITIONS/DELEGATIONS**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson read a proclamation designating February 2020 as School Board appreciation month and presented certificates of appreciation to all Board members. EPS and CHS staff also presented gifts to School Board members.

Mrs. Preston noted that February 17 – 21, 2020, is designated as School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, and presented certificates of appreciation to Ms. Irvine and Mrs. Lambert.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that February 3 – 7, 2020, is designated as School Counseling Week, and presented certificates of appreciation to all school counselors: Ms. Dooley and Ms. Brickey at CHS; and Mr. Staunton at JWIS.

Mrs. Preston recognized LeeAnn Gray and Michelle Reid as VFW Citizenship Educators of the Year. The School Board congratulated these teachers on this achievement.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson introduced Jordan Arnold, Virginia College Advisory Corp Counselor at CHS. Ms. Arnold works in the CHS guidance office to address barriers and support students with wishing to pursue their education after high school.

Steve Dressler, teacher at CHS, addressed the School Board and presented a list of concerns regarding possible consolidation. Mr. Dressler noted that, based on current enrollment, state support for teachers and school administrators would decrease in a consolidated school system. This would result in a loss of jobs in the area and an increase in the student/teacher ratio. Mr. Dressler asked the School Board to vote to end discussions on a joint school system.

Mr. Baker thanked Mr. Dressler for his comments, but asked for more time to address these issues and concerns.

Eddy Clemons addressed the Board to clarify that any figures he quoted at the last Joint Services Committee were taken directly from the fiscal analysis presented to the committee. He encouraged everyone to read the fiscal study and contact him if they had concerns about his comments.

## **MINUTES**

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mrs. Jones, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of January 13, 2020.

## **MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2020**

### **FINANCE**

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Arritt, the Board unanimously approved invoices totaling \$937,825.47.

The Board reviewed expenditure allocations from CHS, JWIS, and EPS and the division-wide budget analysis through January, 2020.

Ms. Irvine noted that state revenue shortfalls due to a reduced ADM for the current year will be covered through the vacant speech/language pathologist position at CHS and less employee health care participation.

The Board scheduled a budget work session for Tuesday, February 25, at 6:00 p.m.

### **SMART GOALS UPDATE/STRATEGIC PLAN**

There have been no updates to the Strategic Plan.

### **CHS WRESTLING TEAM TRIP TO GRAYSON COUNTY**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson requested Board approval for an overnight field trip for the CHS Wrestling Team February 7 – 8, February 14 – 15, and February 20 – 22, 2020.

Upon a motion by Ms. Jones, seconded by Mr. Arritt, the Board unanimously approved these overnight trips for the Wrestling Team.

### **2019 – 2024 LOCAL GIFTED PLAN**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson requested Board approval of the Local Gifted Education Plan. This plan needed approval every five years. A peer review of this plan was conducted in November, 2019. The Board agreed by consensus to review the Local Gifted Plan and take action at the next meeting. Dr. Fuhrman will provide copies of the entire plan electronically.

### **COMMITTEE & JOINT BOARD REPORTS**

Mr. Arritt noted that the five subcommittees that have been designated by the Committee on Joint services are: Facilities, Transportation, Finance, Governance, and Instruction.

The JRTC Joint Board of Control will meet on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at noon.

The Governor's School Board will meet in April, 2020.

### **SUPERINTENDENTS REPORTS**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson encouraged Board members to review the artwork on the bulletin board by students in grades K – 5.

## **MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2020**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that current enrollment is 961.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that staff continue to address chronic absenteeism with the attendance matters push but the monthly meeting scheduled for last week with families was cancelled because schools were closed. Mrs. Snead-Johnson hopes to share with the Board those students who have had perfect attendance.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted security doors for the Central Office have been installed and are fully functional.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the CHS Student Leadership Team has 12 members and will attend the March School Board meeting to share ideas.

March, 2020 is designated as Equity in Education Month.

February is designated as Black History, and principals will share activities from their schools next month.

Lee Ann Gray and Linda Powell presented Critical Decision Points Training in January. This training was well attended by families and other community stakeholders.

Parent/Teacher conference day scheduled for February 17<sup>th</sup> from 12 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson continues to explore the use of Board Docs.

Governor Northam's budget proposal includes new funding to increase educational access for three and four-year-old children who are economically disadvantaged or have identified disabilities through the expansion of the Virginia Preschool Initiative. Mrs. Snead-Johnson and Mrs. Morgan are exploring the cost of expanding preschool opportunities.

Mrs. Morgan, Mr. Cantrell, and Mr. Jones attended a recruitment fair in January and Mrs. Snead-Johnson shared the recruitment packet with Board members.

Mrs. Snead-Johnson reminded the Board that the April Board meeting has been rescheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup> due to Spring Break.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mr. Arritt, the Board unanimously approved an executive session at 8:15 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 9:40 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.

**MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2020**

**PERSONNEL**

Upon a motion by Ms. Jones, seconded by Mrs. Hunter, the Board unanimously approved the following personnel appointments:

**Resignations:**

Cline, Kaitlyn	Effective 02-05-2020
Moore, Gregory P. (Sr.)	Effective 02-17-2020

**Appointments:**

Nickle, Kimberly	Personal Care/Transportation Aide (Temporary) Effective 02-10-2020
Warlitner, Hollee	Volunteer – Girls Softball
Hepler, Rachel	Volunteer – Girls Softball
Withrow, William R.	Bus Driver, Effective 02-11-2020

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Board adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

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Tamala Preston, Chair

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Rebecca Irvine, Clerk

