

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, JUNE 9, 2014

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Special Meeting at 4:45 p.m. (immediately following the 12:00 p.m. Special Workshop), in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mrs. Linda Moultrie Vice Chair: Mrs. Patricia Hightower

Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh
Mr. Gerald W. Boone
Mr. Bill Slayton

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on June 2, 2014 - Legal No. [1624679](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER/ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mrs. Moultrie called the Special Meeting to order at 4:45 p.m. The Superintendent advised that Item II.a., *Approval to Advertise Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to the School District of Escambia County, Florida Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*, had been amended as discussed during the preceding Special Workshop. Motion by Mrs. Hightower, seconded by Mr. Bergosh, to adopt the agenda (as amended), carried unanimously.

II. PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO SCHOOL DISTRICT RULES

(Supplementary Minute Book, Exhibit "A")

- a. Approval to Advertise Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to the School District of Escambia County, Florida Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook

Motion was made by Mr. Slayton, seconded by Mr. Boone to approve for advertising, Item II.a., *Approval to Advertise Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendments to the School District of Escambia County, Florida Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

Mrs. Hightower offered an amendment to the motion of the floor to insert "/expression" to each of the areas where "gender identity" was specified so that each occurrence would read "gender identity/expression." Mrs. Moultrie seconded Mrs. Hightower's amendment. She then called for discussion on that amendment. Mr. Bergosh said he would have liked for the members of the Rights & Responsibilities Handbook committee to have had an opportunity to review and consider the Mrs. Hightower's proposed amendment. In his research on this matter, Mr. Bergosh said he had discovered a number of school districts across the country that had encountered problems with the implementation of such a change. As he had mentioned during the preceding Special Workshop, Mr. Bergosh said he would prefer that the School Board adopt a comprehensive non-discrimination policy. Mr. Bergosh said he would not support Mrs. Hightower's amendment because of his concern that there would be "unintended

consequences” from not having an appropriate plan going forward. The amendment to the motion on the floor was approved 3to 2, with Mr. Bergosh and Mr. Slayton voting “No.”

Mrs. Moultrie called for discussion on the motion as amended. Mr. Boone noted that he had supported Mrs. Hightower’s amendment because he was willing to insert the language; however, he commented that “until the hearts of people change it would just be words added to the document.” Mrs. Moultrie commented that although much work on the Rights & Responsibilities Handbook had occurred during the preceding Special Workshop, additional work was necessary in order to resolve several outstanding matters. She was hopeful that the School Board, the Superintendent, and the Superintendent’s staff could work towards resolution of those matters in the coming year. Mr. Bergosh commented that he still had a number of “unsettled” issues with various areas of the Handbook. He hoped the Superintendent and his staff would understand that while he appreciated the “spirit of compromise” that had occurred during the preceding Special Workshop, he would not support the motion of the floor to advertise the Rights & Responsibilities Handbook. The Superintendent expressed some disappointment with Mr. Bergosh’s decision not to support the advertisement of the Handbook. He asked that Mr. Bergosh reconsider as he believed that enough compromising had occurred during the preceding Special Workshop to justify each School Board Member’s support. Mr. Slayton said he was not sure he could support it either. He had a great deal of concern with Mrs. Hightower’s amendment as he did not believe that staff was ready for such a change. When Mr. Slayton indicated that he would abstain from voting on this matter, Mrs. Waters advised him that he could only do so if he had a conflict of interest as defined by the statute. The motion as amended was approved 3 to 2, with Mr. Bergosh and Mr. Slayton voting “No.”

III. PURCHASING

(Supplementary Minute Book, Exhibit “B”)

ITEMS PREPARED BY FACILITIES PLANNING:

- a. Bid Award: Bellview Middle School Cafeteria Renovations

Motion was made by Mrs. Hightower and seconded by Mr. Bergosh, to approve Item III.a., *Bid Award: Bellview Middle School Cafeteria Renovations*. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. OPERATIONS

(Supplementary Minute Book, Exhibit “C”)

AMENDED

- a. Sales Agreement Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Body of Christ Ministries Worldwide, Inc.

Motion was made by Mrs. Hightower and seconded by Mr. Slayton, to approve Item IV.a., *Sales Agreement Between the School Board of Escambia County, Florida and Body of Christ Ministries Worldwide, Inc.* Motion carried unanimously.

V. PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs. Moultrie called for public forum; however, there were no speakers.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair