

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, NOVEMBER 12, 2015

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Special Workshop at 3:00 p.m., in Room 160, at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center, 30 East Texar Drive, Pensacola, Florida, with the following present:

Chair: Mrs. Patricia Hightower  
Vice Chair: Mr. Bill Slayton  
Board Members: Mr. Jeff Bergosh  
Mr. Gerald Boone  
Mrs. Linda Moultrie

School Board General Counsel: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Meeting was advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on November 2, 2015 - Legal No. 1649130

NOTE: The minutes from this session have been prepared according to *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*. The video from this session is available at <http://escambiacountysdfl.swagit.com/play/11122015-692>

[General discussion among School Board Members, the Superintendent, and staff occurred throughout this session.]

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hightower called the Special Workshop to order at 3:00 p.m. She welcomed everyone in attendance to the School Board's regular monthly workshop and thanked them for their interest in public education.

II. OPEN DISCUSSION

- West Florida High School EMT Academy – Superintendent

Instructor Terry Thomas and students enrolled in the West Florida High School Academy of Critical Care and Emergency Medicine addressed the School Board regarding this program which is designed to prepare students to evaluate medical emergencies in adults and children. *Additional skills learned are as follows: CPR with AED, first aid, spinal immobilization, and victim packaging. The fire fighter program content includes orientation to the fire service, fire behavior, emergency vehicles, apparatus and equipment. Students are encouraged to take the National Registry of First Responders exam and the EKG Technician exam to attain industry certifications.*

- Ferry Pass Middle School Game and App Development – Superintendent

Instructor Mark Lua and students enrolled in the Ferry Pass Middle School Game and Application Development Academy, addressed the School Board regarding this program that allows students to explore video game design, software development skills, and related career by engaging in learning activities involving video game and mobile application creation. *Academic learning is enhanced, including mathematics and writing, which are integral in the video game development process.*

- Calendar Review

There were no changes to the remaining schedule of School Board workshops/meetings for November:

- Regular Workshop, November 12<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:00 a.m.\*
- Organizational Meeting, November 17<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 5:30 p.m.\*
- Regular Meeting, November 17<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 5:35 p.m.\*

*\*To be held in Room 160 at the J.E. Hall Educational Services Center*

- George Stone – Facility Concerns – Slayton

Mr. Slayton asked that the Superintendent and his staff keep in mind during their planning for the next few years, that the George Stone facility, which he believed was built in the 1960's, was very much in need of aesthetic improvements.

- PowerPoint Presentation and Discussion on Proposed School Board Policy regarding Legal Office Memorandums, Creation and Dissemination - Bergosh

Mr. Bergosh briefly reviewed a PowerPoint® presentation related to this topic. His presentation contained the following disclaimer: *The discussion of this policy proposal focuses on a School Board process, not any specific individual, issue, or current agenda item. Discussion of this policy proposal will not veer into any specific item up for consideration currently by School Board. Discussion of this policy proposal is intended to address an area of continuing concern, in order to improve this deficient/unaddressed problem. Any hypotheticals presented for illustrative purposes are just this: hypothetical scenarios presented for illustrative purposes only.* Mr. Bergosh's presentation included a number of questions which he believed needed to be answered by the School Board regarding memorandums and opinions from the School Board Legal Office; his presentation also outlined a number of policy considerations to address those questions. Following his presentation, Mr. Bergosh asked his fellow School Board Members to respond to the questions he had posed and to the policy considerations that he had presented. Mrs. Hightower distributed a copy of School Board policy Section 1.20, *Standards for School Board Members' Conduct*. She believed that many of the questions that Mr. Bergosh posed were already answered in that section of policy. She referred specifically to 1.20(3) which read in part: *If a Board Member wishes to discuss a problem he or she has with regard to a particular person under the supervision of the Board or any District employee, the Board Member will contact the Superintendent and will not contact or address employees directly as that job is delegated by law to the administration.* Mrs. Hightower said she did not wish to "hamstring" the School Board's General Counsel; she appreciated that Mrs. Waters would let her know, without having to be asked, when she had "gotten close to, or stepped out of line." However, if her fellow School Board Members felt the need to specify certain ways that the General Counsel should perform her duties, then Mrs. Hightower believed it would be best to address those matters in the General Counsel's contract rather than in School Board policy. Mr. Slayton said he appreciated, though he did not always agree with the General Counsel's legal opinions and guidance. He had no issue with the current operation of the General Counsel's office and did not see a need for any policy regarding those operations. Mrs. Moultrie said she too was comfortable with the current operations of the General Counsel's office. She agreed with Mrs. Hightower, in that if there were specific ways that the School Board wished for the General Counsel to handle certain situations, then those matters should be addressed in the General Counsel's contract. Mr. Boone was also comfortable with the current operations of the General Counsel's office. He too agreed that if there were specific ways that the School Board wished for the General Counsel to handle certain situations, then those matters should be addressed in the General Counsel's contract, not in School Board policy.

Following further discussion, Mrs. Hightower suggested that the School Board should ask the Superintendent to sit as a mediator among Mr. Bergosh and Mrs. Waters for the purpose of Mr. Bergosh receiving answers to the questions he had posed in his presentation. The Superintendent said he would work with Mr. Bergosh and Mrs. Waters to coordinate such a meeting.

- School Calendar – *Superintendent*

Due to time constraints, discussion on this topic was postponed to the November 13<sup>th</sup> Regular Workshop.

- District Strategic Plan – *Superintendent*  
[Handout provided to School Board Members]

The chair from each Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the goals and strategies for their committee's specific pillar.

III. PUBLIC FORUM

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

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Workshop was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

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Superintendent

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Chair