

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

The School Board of Escambia County, Florida, convened in Special Meeting at 5:30 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 (District IV)
Vice Chair: Mr. Bill Slayton (District V)
Board Members: Mr. Kevin L. Adams (District I)
Mr. Paul Fetsko (District II)
Dr. Laura Dortch Edler (District III)

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Malcolm Thomas

Not present: Mrs. Donna Sessions Waters, School Board General Counsel

Also present: Mr. Joseph L. Hammons, Esquire - Hammons Law Firm

Meeting advertised in the *Pensacola News Journal* on August 17, 2020 – Legal No. [4331327](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hightower called the Special Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Hightower led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

b. Adoption of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Slayton, seconded by Mr. Adams, to adopt the agenda, carried unanimously.

II. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

1. Discussion of Appointed Superintendent Finalists

The following individual registered to address the School Board regarding this matter:

Jennifer Grove.

Mrs. Hightower advised that finalist Keith Rittel had withdrawn himself from consideration for the position. Throughout this session, School Board Members engaged in discussion regarding each of the remaining finalists: Dr. Earl Johnson, Dr. Timothy Smith, and Keith Leonard.

2. Selection of Appointed Superintendent

Motion made by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Fetsko, to offer the position of Superintendent to Keith Leonard, and authorize the Chair and Counsel to begin contract negotiations, failed 3 to 2, with Mr. Slayton, Mrs. Hightower, and Dr. Edler voting “No.”

Motion made by Mr. Slayton and seconded by Mrs. Hightower, to offer the position of Superintendent to Dr. Timothy Smith, carried 3 to 2, with Mr. Adams and Dr. Edler voting “No.”

There was a brief recess during which Mrs. Hightower contacted Dr. Smith to confirm his acceptance of the School Board’s offer. Motion was then made by Mr. Slayton and seconded by Mr. Fetsko, to authorize the Chair and Counsel to begin contract negotiations. Motion carried 4 to 1, with Dr. Edler voting “No.”

III. PUBLIC FORUM

-No registration forms submitted

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Meeting adjourned 6:54 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Superintendent

Chair

PENDING BOARD APPROVAL