

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Barnwell School District 45 Board of Trustees

TIME: 6:00 p.m., Thursday, October 14, 2021

PLACE: Barnwell Schools Administration Building, 770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812 for Board Members;
virtual for the public

PRESENT:

Board of Trustees: Rosey Anderson, Chair; (attended virtually) Felicia Devore, Vice-chair; SGM Abraham Sexton, Clerk; Becky Huggins, Member;
Dr. Rhett Richardson, Member

District Office: Crissie Stapleton, Superintendent; Rachel Wall, Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum Director; Tina Smith, Administrative Assistant; Holly Hutto, Chief Financial Officer; Mike Beasley, Barnwell High School Assistant Principal

Other: Jonathan Vickery, Barnwell People Sentinel

The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

OPENING BUSINESS

1. Felicia Devore, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order. SGM Abraham Sexton, Clerk, delivered the reflection. Becky Huggins led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Superintendent Stapleton announced that local media had received notice of the meeting as required by the Freedom of Information Act.
2. The Board unanimously approved the agenda. Motion was made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
3. The Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda. Motion was made by Becky Huggins and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson.
4. There was no hearing of the public.

Vice-Chair Felicia Devore announced that this has been a very difficult week for the Warhorse Family. Sadly, Jaime Corley, who ran the virtual lab at Barnwell High School, passed away this past Friday. She had worked in Barnwell School District 45 for almost 7 years. She began working at Barnwell Primary School and transferred to Barnwell High School a few years ago. Her husband Heath is a teacher and coach at Barnwell High School, and her son Griffin is a graduate of the high school. Her daughters are currently attending the high school and middle school. Please keep Jaime's family and friends in your prayers. Also, Etta Holland Mixon passed away this past Sunday. She was a retired educator with 35 years of experience in Barnwell School District 45, twice being named Teacher of the Year. She was also Valedictorian of Barnwell High School in 1957. Please keep the families of these lost loved ones in your prayers.

ACCOUNTABILITY

A. Recognition

1. Mike Beasley, Assistant Principal at Barnwell High School discussed the Energy Conservation Program. In the last 3 years, a tremendous amount of money has been saved. From 2018-2021, Barnwell Primary School has saved a total of \$126,711.00, Barnwell Elementary has saved \$128,692.00, Guinyard-Butler Middle School has saved \$85,470.00, and Barnwell High School has saved \$305,883.00. The percentage of savings for the district for 2019 was 28.1%, year 2020 was 37.4%, and 2021 was 38.6%. Beasley expressed thanks to Superintendent Stapleton for this opportunity. He shared that the real heroes are the people in the schools. There are audit results that are communicated with the school administrators, and they correct the problems.

B. Information

1. Superintendent Stapleton presented the financial overview:
 - a. The district balanced budgets were approved for FY17, FY18, FY19, FY20, FY21, as current year FY22 without needing to borrow from the General Fund Reserve (GFR). The Fund balance has increased \$2,500,448.00 since 2017.
 - b. Budget planning each school year, beginning in January and coinciding with strategic planning, utilizes a collaborative budget planning process to prepare for the next fiscal year. Stapleton said the ability of the district

to maintain a positive fiscal forecast is in large part due to the collaborative budgeting process. Each year beginning in January, BSD45 Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Superintendent meet with every director and principal individually to review each department and/or school's budget for the next year, as well as analyze the current fiscal year to determine if any modifications are needed. The CFO and Superintendent utilize budget planning to work with other district leaders to calculate costs and work collaboratively with local, state, and federal funding opportunities by allocating funding for any identified resource or district need determined during the strategic planning process.

- c. Superintendent expressed how having the school board's support has allowed the district to increase programs and it shows their shared vision for the success of the children.
- d. Currently the capital reserve (Capital Improvement Bonds), the district has \$4,779,522.71. This money includes the portion of the match for the FEMA grant, which will be utilized to build a new Countywide Safe House that will serve a dual purpose as a BHS gym. We are awaiting approval for Phase 2 on the FEMA project.
- e. The priority of the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent was to reduce administrative costs by attrition, cutting positions, and reviewing office accounts and purchased services. This resulted in more than a \$780,000.00 decrease in district overhead costs.
- f. Stapleton gave an overview of innovative funding opportunities to include the 1:1 initiative, local business partnerships (Warhorse debit card, Spirit pump), Van Robotics, USC-Aiken, SRNS Loaned Executive, TetraTech, and several other grants.
- g. Thank you to the board members for helping us get where we are and where will continue to go.

2. Superintendent Stapleton presented District Updates:

- a. We are continuing with the Cognia accreditation process. The district and its schools uploaded all evidence and narratives for the self-assessments by October 1st. We are currently in the process of forming our Stakeholder teams for the interviews. Dr. Rachel Wall is leading the Cognia process. Our new vision and mission signs are being replaced around the district.
- b. Thank you to all our alumni for your donations. Tracy Hallingquest recently donated volleyball jerseys, visors, and masks to the JV Volleyball team. He also hosted a dinner for the JV and Varsity teams.
- c. The Barnwell County Rotary Club held its second annual Scarecrow Contest Fundraiser. Barnwell School District 45 has four scarecrows representing the district in downtown Barnwell.
- d. The Welcome Back Newsletters for the 1st quarter of the 2021-2022 school year were recently distributed to local business and schools. Shontavian Drake, Communications Coordinator, delivered the newsletters locally.

3. Superintendent Stapleton presented COVID-19 Updates:

The SCDHEC has updated its COVID-19 guidance for schools as well as its school and childcare exclusion list. The guidance and exclusion criteria provide that students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student and were wearing a face covering during the exposure time are excluded from the definition of a close contact (and therefore do not have to quarantine) regardless of whether or not the infected student was wearing a face covering. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

ADVOCACY

BASIC STRUCTURE

A. Actions

1. Approval of the YMCA Pool Partnership

Superintendent Stapleton explained this would be an investment into a future swim team, because we would not have the funding to build a regulation swimming pool within our district. The school board agreed to do a 2 year donation where \$100,000 would be broken into payments over a two year period. With this agreement there would be contingencies put into place which would include:

- The swimming pool will be built to meet regulations for holding swim meets and having swimming competitions.
- The donation only goes to the building/installation of the regulation pool.

Motion to approve the YMCA Pool Investment made by SGM Abraham sexton and seconded by Becky Huggins.

- Motion for the approval of \$100,000 made by SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Becky Huggins.
2. Student A Transfer request to Barnwell- This action was postponed until after Executive Session.
 3. Motion made for the approval for the final reading of Revisions of Policy EBCB Safety Drills. Policy. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
 4. Motion made for the approval for the final reading of Revisions of Policy IHAC Social Studies Education. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
 5. Motion made for the approval and final reading of Revisions to Policy GBGA Staff Health. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
 6. Motion made for the first reading of Policy JLDBB Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention. Motion made by Becky Huggins and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
 7. Motion made for first reading of Policy GBEE Internet and Electronic Communication. Motion made by Becky Huggins and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Richardson— The budget information we received during this meeting was the most impressive information this year. Thank you to Mike Beasley for your hard work. I see you early mornings and late afternoons. You are very valuable and it's amazing how you are able to do what you do. Prayers to the Corley family. Happy that we are able to increase the quality of education with increasing the fund balance.

Huggins- Thank you to Mr. Beasley for your hard work. Thanks to everyone in this room and the district leadership's drive and how they help the kids. I love the community donations, and my heart goes out to the Corley family. Thank you for all your hard work.

Sexton- All hats off to all of you. Thank you to Vice-Chair Felicia Devore and thank you for the Energy Conservation Program. Prayers for the families in distress. Thank you Superintendent and staff. Thank you for all you do.

Devore- Thank you to Mike Beasley for this amazing energy program, and I also see you all over. Thank you for your dedication. Thank you to each of you for your support. Heart and prayers to the Corey Family. Thanks to everybody in the district. The fund balance speaks of the right people with the right knowledge.

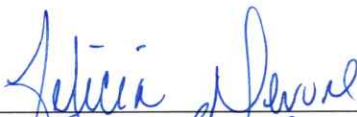
Motion made at 6:50 p.m. to go into Executive Session after 5 minute break. Motion approved by Becky Huggins and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Vice-Chair Felicia Devore to go into Executive Session to discuss the transfer request for Student A. Out of Executive Session at 7:52 p.m.

Motion to approve transfer of Student A. Motion for approval made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.

Board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting. The motion was made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton at 7:53 p.m.

Vice-Chair 

Clerk 