

BRISTOL VIRGINIA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
January 11, 2016

The Bristol Virginia School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, January 11, 2016, in the Bristol Virginia Public Schools Administration Office, 220 Lee Street, Bristol, Virginia. A quorum was present with the following Board members in attendance:

Mr. Randy Alvis, Chair
Mr. Randy White

Mr. Ronald Cameron
Mr. Steve Fletcher

Absent:

Mr. Tyrone Foster, Vice Chair

Also present were:

Mr. Rex Gearheart, Superintendent
Mr. Gary Ritchie, Assistant Superintendent
Mrs. Stephanie Austin, Deputy Clerk

Mrs. Tammy Jones, Clerk

Student Board Representatives:

Laruen Brooks
Berkeley Richard

Among those in the audience for the Regular Session were:

Ms. Jennifer Hurt
Ms. Melissa Warren
Mrs. Patty Bowers
Ms. Sarah Kate Tallman

Ms. Catherine Brillhart
Mr. Ronnie Collins
Mr. Steve Booney

Dr. Linda Brittle
Ms. Faith Mabe
Ms. Kathy Musick

Others were present, but failed to sign in.

Mr. Randy Alvis, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. He welcomed all in attendance, including Ms. Catherine Brillhart, Vice Mayor Bill Hartley, and guests from Stonewall Jackson Elementary and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Alvis asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Ronald Cameron so moved. Mr. Randy White seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. White so moved. Mr. Cameron seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Approval of Minutes – Re-Organizational Meeting – November 2, 2015
- B. Approval of Payment of Bills
- C. Approval of Letter of Resignation from Head Boys' Tennis Coach
- D. Approval of Letter of Resignation from Meghan Groves, Teacher at Highland View Elementary

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(Copies of the minutes and letters of Resignation, are included with these minutes.)

Mr. Gearheart presented the Superintendent's Report which included the following:

- He highlighted that we now have SRO's in every school. He thanked City Council and Chief John Austin for their part in securing the SRO's. He added his enthusiasm and excitement to have their presence in the building.
- He noted that our Scholastic Bowl was off to a wonderful start. He added that they had beaten John S. Battle, Richlands, and Abingdon.
- He highlighted Virginia High's Swim and Wrestling teams. He noted that both had a meet this past weekend and were doing well.
- He noted the hope was to have the spring Bearcat Bandwagon Family Day again this year as part of Special Education Awareness month. He added that Ms. Patty Bowers has done such a great job with this in the past.
- Mr. Gearheart noted that he is in the process of wrapping up Mid-Year meetings with principals. He noted that he was very pleased in the direction we were headed and noted he was very proud.
- He noted that tomorrow would start facility walk troughs with Mr. Bill Buckles. He added that would they would be thoroughly checking all buildings and addressing any concerns.
- He also highlighted Chief Nurse Darlene Becker. He added that she had received a grant to attend the National Conference. He noted that Ms. Becker does many great things and provides excellent service to our students.
- He noted that B180 was a huge success over Christmas break. He noted that 50-80 students attended and received great instruction.
- He highlighted the Hour of Code. He noted what great exposure it was for our students.
- He noted that Highland View had been featured in the VML December issue as a Challenge School. He added that this is distributed across the state.
- He noted that hundreds of families received supplies, gifts, and dinners before the Christmas break. He noted that we strive to make times better for our families during this time of the year.
- He noted that Mr. Gary Ritchie is currently working with principals to obtain of list of students who participate in the back pack program. He added that in case of inclement weather, we would have this list available to deliver to the homes.
- He highlighted the fall Sol's scores at Virginia High. He added the scores were great.
- He noted that we will be hosting The CEP Regional Meeting on Tuesday, January 19. He noted that 17,000 additional meals have been served from this time last year.
- He highlighted the Legislative event that was held at the Higher Education Center last week. He noted that Mr. Alvis, Mr. Fletcher, and he attended the event. He added that there was a great discussion about education and also the SOQ funding position raise. He added that he is trying to provide everyone with a raise.
- He noted that the Chamber of Commerce Awards Luncheon will be held Thursday and our band will be featured.
- He noted there will be a Public Hearing on February 1 with the Regular Session Board Meeting to immediately follow.

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- He added that he along with board members will be attending the VSBA Capital Conference in Richmond, VA, on February 10.
- He noted that reservations have been secured for the upcoming VSBA Annual Convention to be held in November.

Mr. Alvis thanked Mr. Gearheart for a great report.

Mr. Randy White noted he had the pleasure of visiting three (3) schools and was pleased to see the SRO's in our schools. He encouraged everyone to stop and welcome them, or to send a card of appreciation.

Mr. Ronald Cameron added that he was so proud of our City and Community for finding a way to put SRO's in our schools. He noted this has been a work in progress for a long time and he felt this was the biggest accomplishment in his 12 years on the board.

Mr. Randy Alvis added his thanks to City Council and the Police Department for their part in securing the SRO's. He noted there was a noticeable difference in our buildings with the presence of the SRO. He also noted he felt the Hour of Code was really fun for the students and thanked everyone who had a part in it as well.

Mr. Alvis moved to Item 3(B) School Presentation Stonewall Jackson Elementary. Dr. Linda Brittle, Stonewall Jackson Principal, introduced the faculty and staff from Stonewall Jackson and noted there would be students from various grade levels to read. She added this would show the different levels the students were working on. Dr. Brittle presented a slideshow and students from various grade levels read a short story. Mr. Gearheart and board members thanked the students, families, and Stonewall Jackson faculty and staff for a great presentation.

Mr. Alvis moved to Item 3(C) Recognition of Virginia High Band. Mr. Gearheart recognized Mr. Gary Skeen and the Virginia High Band for their numerous accolades and great marching season. Mr. Gearheart and board members recognized drum majors, section leaders and first chairs with a certificate.

The Student Board Representatives' Report included the following:

- Lauren Brooks and Berkeley Richard presented the idea of putting a suggestion box at Virginia High. They noted that this would give students and teachers the ability to make suggestions and ask questions. They added that if given the permission and it went well, they would like to also put boxes at Virginia Middle and also in the elementary schools.

Mr. Gearheart and board members approved the suggestion box. Mr. Gearheart thanked Lauren and Berkeley for their report and noted he looked forward to the questions/suggestions.

Ms. Kathy Musick, Virginia Professional Educators Association addressed the Board during the Public Comment portion of the meeting. She noted the many things that the association is doing in support of education.

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Mr. Rex Gearheart, addressed Item 4(A) Approval of Adoption of VSBA Code of Conduct. Mr. Ronald Cameron moved approval. Mr. Steve Fletcher seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of Adoption of VSBA Code of Conduct is included with these minutes)

Mr. Rex Gearheart addressed Item 4(B) Approval of Adoption of Charter School Constitutional Amendment Resolution. Mr. White moved approval. Mr. Cameron seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of Adoption of Charter School Constitutional Amendment Resolution is included with these minutes.)

Mr. Gearheart addressed Item 4(C) Discussion and Approval of Addition of Honors Classes. Mr. Cameron moved approval. Mr. Fletcher seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of Addition of Honors Classes is included with these minutes.)

Mr. Gearheart addressed Item 5(A) Report on School Improvement. Mr. Gary Ritchie, Assistant Superintendent, noted that Washington Lee is currently in year 3 of School Improvement. He noted along with Ms. Mabe, Washington Lee Principal, they had attended monthly meetings and worked specifically on forming assessments. He added that Virginia Middle was in the first year of School Improvement. He noted that the School Improvement Team is currently working on several things, including lesson plans and curriculum alignment.

Mr. Gearheart addressed Item 5(B) Discussion of Service Learning. Mr. Gary Ritchie, Assistant Superintendent noted the program was rolled out last year and had been successful. He added that great ideas had been shared during the Principals Meeting. He also noted his hope was to partner with non-profit agencies and also with middle and elementary schools. He noted 7-8 students had participated in the first year and had worked at Virginia High and Virginia Middle. He added his hope was to extend this program to the Reading Buddies program, a project the principal may have, helping in the gym, and helping to keep students on task. He also noted that the giving back aspect was wonderful for our students. He noted this would be paired with the revisions to the Golden “V”. He noted that the more we are able to offer the better opportunities our students have.

Mr. Gearheart addressed Item 5(C) Discussion of Student Disciplinary Hearing Process. Mr. Gearheart presented a slideshow showing the current process of Student Disciplinary Hearings, who is involved, and the steps taken. He also showed numerous examples of how neighboring districts handle their process and offered a suggestion as to how ours could be changed. After discussion from board members, the decision was made to add as a Discussion Item on February’s agenda.

Mr. Gearheart addressed Item 5(D) Discussion of Tennis Courts. Mr. Gearheart noted the shape the tennis courts are in at Van Pelt Elementary. He also noted that we had reached out to Bristol Tennessee City Schools and are waiting to hear from them in regards to utilizing their facilities. Mr. Steve Fletcher noted that Sullins Academy and Bristol Country Club may be options that need to be explored as well. After discussion from board members, the decision was made to add as a Discussion Item on February’s agenda.

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Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia, Mr. White moved that the Board convene a Closed Meeting for the purpose of discussing the following specific matters as authorized by Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) per the Code of Virginia, Specifically,

- A. Discussion of Certain Personnel
- B. Approval of Revocation of Teaching License
- C. Approval of Additions to Substitute Teacher List
- D. Approval of Payment for Additional Class
- E. Approval of Employment of Highland View Elementary Teacher
- F. Approval of Employment of Virginia Middle School English Teacher

Mr. Cameron seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board went into Closed Session at 8:20 p.m.

Back in Public Session at 8:56 p.m., Ms. White moved Certification of Closed Meeting as such: the Bristol Virginia School Board certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting and only such public matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were considered. Mr. Cameron seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. White moved Approval of Revocation of Teaching License as recommended. Mr. Fletcher seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of the Approval of Revocation of Teaching License is included with these minutes.)

Mr. Cameron moved Approval of Additions to Substitute Teacher List. Mr. White seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of the Approval of Additions to Substitute Teacher List is included with these minutes.)

Mr. Cameron moved Approval of Payment for Additional Class. Mr. Fletcher seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of the Approval of Payment for Additional Class is included with these minutes.)

Mr. Fletcher moved Approval of Employment of Highland View Elementary Teacher. Mr. White seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of the Approval of Employment of Highland View Elementary Teacher is included with these minutes.)

Mr. Cameron moved Approval of Employment of Virginia Middle School English Teacher. Mr. Fletcher seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. (A copy of the Approval of Employment of Virginia Middle School English Teacher is included with these minutes.)

No items were discussed during the Old and New Business portion of the meeting.

Mr. Alvis adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

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Stephanie R. Austin, Deputy Clerk

Randy Alvis, Chairman