March 16, 2021, Board Workshop

Ms. Elizabeth Andersen, Chairman
Mr. Darryl Willie, Vice-Chairman
Dr. Kelly Coker
Ms. Lori Hershey
Mr. Warren A. Jones
Ms. Charlotte D. Joyce
Ms. Cindy Pearson
Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: All Board Members were present. Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent, and Ms. Karen Chastain, Office of General Counsel, were also present.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

1. SCHOOL RENAMING COSTS

(*The audio was not working well so the recording is not very good.*)

School Renaming Costs was discussed first because Chairwoman Elizabeth Andersen had invited Counsel of Great City Schools Consultant AJ Crabill to join the Board Workshop. Mr. Crabill shared his experience and knowledge with regards to school name changes. Due to Mr. Crabill's availability, he joined the meeting via telephone which, due to technological issues, was inaudible for most of the meeting.

Mr. Crabill commenced to speak (*inaudible*). Chairwoman Andersen informed Mr. Crabill that the technical problems were making it difficult to hear him.

Board Member Lori Hershey presented the following situations to Mr. Crabill:

- tackling multiple schools at one time
- importance of having a uniform process when people are casting their vote
    - Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) President recommended uniformity in the approach so it would be equitable for students

Mr. Crabill responded (*inaudible*). Chairwoman Andersen repeated to the best of her ability what she heard Mr. Crabill say:

- having as much uniformity as possible from the beginning of the process
- caution against changing the processing once the process has begun
- caution about being too involved as a Board in how the processes are handled
- stay out of the day-to-day implementation and outsourcing that as much as possible to the District or other community groups
- having the Board serve in an advisory position to the process of how this works is called messy

Board Member Warren A. Jones also mentioned about dealing with multiple schools. He wanted to know if the process should be the same regardless of grade level. Mr. Crabill responded (*inaudible*).

Board Member Charlotte Joyce presented the following situations to Mr. Crabill:

- question about the process
    - renaming of three high schools
    - School Advisory Committee (SAC) is overseeing the process
    - high school that is least controversial, has the most voting hours on a Saturday after work
    - high school that is most controversial, has the largest alumni participation, has the most restrictive hours on a school day for voting
    - concern about there being potential for litigation due to the voting hours

Mr. Crabill responded (*inaudible*). Chairwoman Andersen repeated what she heard Mr. Crabill say:

- inquiry about the authority being given for the local voting in the process
- what stakeholder groups are allowed to weigh in

Chairwoman Andersen referred to Office of General Counsel Karen Chastain to respond. Ms. Chastain referred to Board Policy 8.59 for the renaming of schools and read the names of the groups involved.

Mr. Crabill continued speaking (*inaudible*).

Superintendent Dr. Diana Greene provided a brief explanation regarding how the School Advisory Committee (SAC) is handling the process. She also mentioned that the constituents that Ms. Chastain mentioned are the individuals who are allowed to vote.

Mr. Crabill continued speaking (*inaudible*).

Ms. Joyce mentioned the following:
- voting process has not opened for high school yet
- time of voting is not conducive as compared to the other schools

Mr. Crabill continued speaking (*inaudible*).

Ms. Hershey mentioned the following:
- a desire by the majority of the Board to have a conversation to hammer out some clarity for the public:
  - misinformation through social media, public speakers, issues continue to arise
  - uniformity
  - transparency
  - guardrails and guidance
  - funding sources
- night before the Board Member Meeting, clarification was received by the Superintendent

Chairwoman Andersen inquired why Ms. Hershey felt there was a delay. Ms. Hershey mentioned the following:
- since the Summer, Board Member Joyce had asked questions
- an email in the Fall from Board Member Pearson requesting conversation
- if the Board had had the conversation before now, for the record, wants to make sure the District is not blamed with regards to providing answers

Chairwoman Andersen response included:
- acknowledged the email receive from Ms. Pearson requesting a workshop on the finances
- multiple conversations were had in governance
- conversation is happening today
- barely been into a month with the process
- the process is one that the District should determine how it operates
- policies are in place and things should be turned over to the District
- for the record, this is not a delay on the part of the District

Board Member Dr. Kelly Coker mentioned that:
- as the process arises, questions start to be asked
- ask questions to get a response
- perception that the Board Members are jumping in when they are just asking questions to get answers for constituents in an accurate manner

Chairwoman Andersen inquired if Dr. Coker had gone through the Constituent Service for the constituent or reached out to the superintendent. Dr. Coker mentioned about the conversations taking place in the market. Mr. Crabill interjected into the conversation before Dr. Coker could provide additional response to the Chair's questions (*inaudible*). The Chair requested for Mr. Crabill to speak up, but to no avail (*inaudible*).

Ms. Pearson:

- requested guidance and understanding
- dealing with tension that is high in the community especially at the meetings regarding one particular high school
- wanted to know what her role is as an elected official to help ensure the process is equitable and transparent as possible
- nine schools recommended for name change
- people with strong views on both sides of the issue; some, if not all will be disappointed at the outcome of the votes

Mr. Crabill responded (*inaudible*).

Mr. Jones stated for the record:

- purpose of the letter in July 2020
- growing up in Jacksonville, has seen changes that have taken place
- did not expect name change process to be simple
- May 2020, delegated officials walked the streets of Jacksonville because of witnessing the murder of George Floyd
- cannot deny we are dealing with racism
- would change the names of schools right now
- anyone who graduated prior to 1973 would not be allowed to vote because they graduated prior to Robert E. Lee High School being integrated
- students need to have a choice/voice to be heard on what they see in their schools now
- the history as to why those schools were given Confederate names
    - people of color were not a part of the process to name the schools
    - number of public hearings that took place
- the past process that existed to create what is being dealt with now, did not include people of color
- the existing process is better than the process for when the schools were named
- provided a summary about the process regarding the name change for Nathan B. Forrest High School

Mr. Crabill provided final comment (*inaudible*).

Vice Chairman Willie spoke about:

- confusion about the process
- do not pinpoint so much on one part of the process when there are two other major pieces to

the process

- School Advisory Committee piece
    - how much control do we want to give?
    - do we micromanage
- what are the guardrails for the Board Members?
- for the timeline that we are in now; the input that can be given; could it get to the SAC; and how much control are we willing to give
- gathering information

Ms. Young to provide an update pertaining to the voting situation:

- changes made to the polling procedures
- collaboration with the Supervisor of Elections
    - consistency with times
- each SAC had set their own times
- concern about consistency and access outside of the regular school hours
- procedures have been updated showing the consistent time of 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Ribault High School and Ribault Middle School
    - originally included their specific voting times in the SAC minutes
    - because they voted on their times, they have to re-vote; Principal and SAC Chair are aware that they need to address the date
- updates put on the tracker in the administrative procedures
- Mr. Crabill's comment about not making changes to procedures during the process was not possible, as there had been an additional change prior to spring break - ballot security
- maintain the ballot each evening of the process
- provide additional support

Ms. Joyce requested clarification of voting on Saturday. Ms. Young stated that SAC would be voting to approve voting on Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. to be consistent with all other schools.

Mr. Hershey inquired if there had been a decision made with regards to making the ballot simplified to assist with the confusion. Dr. Greene stated that there was much conversation with the Supervisor of Elections and shared the information regarding the ballot. She also requested if Mr. Hogan could come to the next Workshop to explain the process.

Ms. Young expounded on what Dr. Greene had mentioned:

- the details on the ballot would allow the gathering of data in many ways as possible
- the way in which data will come back is determined by how the ballot is constructed
- name of the individual school on the ballot was requested

Ms. Hershey inquired that when Dr. Greene presents the recommendation to the Board, would it include the cost of the name change and the funding source(s) for the name change? Dr. Greene confirmed the information would be available.

Vice Chairman Willie mentioned about procedures changing and wanted to know when does procedure change to policy? Ms. Chastain stated that there would be policy changes until all things are closed out and completed. This is consistent with Mr. Crabill's counsel; always been counsel; consistent with 2008 when Nathan B. Forest High School was not renewed. Ms. Chastain spoke about Board Policy 2.15 - Constituents Services Policy that says regardless of which Board Member is submitting a question, that person can copy the other Board Members so that information is shared.

Chairwoman Andersen inquired about the possibility of making the current policy in place more robust. Ms. Chastain suggested that if the Board is interested, they could revisit Board Policy 8.59 when everything was completed.

The meeting next was focused on The Cost of School Renaming (Westside High School & Northwest Legends Elementary School).

Dr. Greene spoke about an email that went out from the former Superintendent in 2017 that the cost associated with renaming Westside High School was around $517,500. Information was provided to the Board regarding the renaming of Westside High School in 2014 with a cost of around $197.000. Dr. Greene had no explanation for the purpose of the big difference in cost but could only assume what the reason could have been.

Through a PowerPoint presentation, Chief of Operations Paul Soares and Chief Financial Officer Michelle Begley explained 'The Cost of School Renaming.' (see attached in agenda)

- Mr. Soares explained the history of school renaming cost with regards to Westside High School and Northwestern Legends Elementary School
- Dr. Greene made a comment about the mascot with regards to cost and whether it would need to change or not
- Ms. Begley explained the funding source for various items in the name change of Westside High School and Northwestern Legends Elementary School
- Board Member Cindy Pearson made inquiry about the special account
    - where does the money come from that goes into the account?
    - how does it relate to items that would not have been on the budget cycle for each of the schools?
    - what is not happening because of the money not going in the special account, what is it taking away from?
    - if built into the schools' budget, would it be above what the schools' budget would normally be or losing something because of the money going into their budget? Ms. Begley stated that regarding next year's budget, it would be an additional amount attached to a school (*inaudible*). Does not anticipate on taking anything away that has been allocated to the school. Ms. Begley responded (*inaudible*).

- Ms. Hershey mentioned the concern about using the sales tax for renaming of schools. Ms. Begley responded (*inaudible*).
- Mr. Jones inquired if someone wanted to donate money for the renaming process and the Board opts not to rename, would the person be entitled to a refund or what happens to the dollars that have been donated though none of the schools have been changed? Ms. Begley responded that if the purpose for which the funds were donated does not occur, they reach out to the donor and request what the donor wants the District to do with the donation. Mr. Jones then mentioned about tax dollars being used for Jefferson Davis Middle School changing into an elementary school. Dr. Greene stated that Jefferson Davis Middle School is the only school in process of changing to an elementary school and that operating dollars were being used not sales tax dollars.
- Vice Chairman Willie would like to make it more public that the sales tax dollars are not being used for school renaming process. He mentioned about the possibility of having the 'Funding Types' page of the slide presentation put on the website because it shows a big 'X' covering Surtax Dollars.
- Chairwoman Andersen stated that the red 'X' image might be useful and give clarification, especially with regards to Jefferson Davis Middle School. She wanted to know Vice Chairman Willie's thoughts. Vice Chair Willie responded (*inaudible*).
- Mr. Jones commented about the local station doing a 'fact/not fact' show
- Ms. Joyce inquired about the cost of JROTC on the 'Actual Cost of Name Change' page and not seeing it on the 'Variables Impacting Cost' page. Ms. Begley stated that the cost was not noted because she does not know if every secondary school has a JROTC program. She mentioned an estimate between $13,000 or $14,000, it just depends on what is needed to change the program.

Dr. Greene went over the Next Steps of the PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Pearson thanked everyone for the information.

2. BUDGET

Through a PowerPoint presentation, Ms. Begley explained the 2020-21 Budget Overview (*inaudible*). (see attached in agenda)

Discussion involved:

- Ms. Pearson inquired as to what DJJ stood for. Duval Juvenile Justice
- Vice Chairman Willie inquired about an estimate as to when the conference report would come. Ms. Begley stated that it depends on how the discussion goes at the legislative session.
- Ms. Hershey inquired about the dollars for the CARES Act. Dr. Greene provided information regarding the CARES Act dollars which the District has not received.
- Mr. Jones inquired about food/laptop/instructional materials delivery. Ms. Begley explained that the amount relates to the bus contractors to deliver those items.

- Chairwoman Andersen inquired if the potential impact through the legislation was being seen here. Ms. Begley stated that the information was not here because the other scholarship programs don't get that information (*remainder of comment was inaudible*). Chairwoman Andersen mentioned about the increase of the Empowerment Scholarship and wondered about an estimate as to how much it is going to cost the District. Ms. Pearson mentioned that new populations that were not eligible before will now be eligible depending on the House votes. Vice Chairman Willie commented (*inaudible*).
- Dr. Coker inquired about strategic abandonment and the alignment to the strategic plan:
    - Deputy Superintendent Dr. Dana Kriznar's group goes through strategic abandonment every time they go through the budget and they look specifically at the categorical.
    - Alignment to the new strategic plan
        - Dr. Greene must develop the strategies that will go into that strategic plan
        - Some strategies will have funding needs (paid from other sources)
        - Some strategies will not have funding and will need to be brought before the Board

Chairwoman Andersen requested a recess at 11:33 a.m.

3. RELOCATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Meeting resumed at 11:48 a.m.

Through a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Soares provided an update regarding the relocation of the administration building. (see attached in agenda)

Ms. Pearson inquired if someone is interested in purchasing 1701 Prudential Dr., who that person would contact. Mr. Soares stated that it would be him.

Ms. Joyce inquired about the projection of moving into a new space. Mr. Soares mentioned that it depends on what the District does:

- find an existing building ready to move in
- build a new facility, you need design and construction
- need to look at value of this building and what the District has and concur to the value of what the District needs will potentially have a difference

Ms. Hershey expressed her thoughts about the District being in the driver's seat due to owning the land.

Mr. Jones briefly touched on different businesses that are moving and building in downtown Jacksonville, agreed with the things Ms. Hershey mentioned, thanked Mr. Soares for the presentation.

Vice Chairman Willie inquired about how the consultant would provide information. Dr. Greene responded (*first part of answer was inaudible*). The second way information could be provided is at a workshop (r*emainder of response was inaudible*).

4. INTERNAL AUDITOR EVALUATION TOOL

Ms. Joyce explained the timeline for the Internal Board Auditor Evaluation (IBA). (see attached in agenda)

Dr. Coker explained the conference process and the evaluation tool for the IBA.

Ms. Pearson inquired if IBA Lenia Blades was being evaluated twice: develop the instrument and to use the instrument? Dr. Coker stated that the first is about setting up the instrument and the second is establishing the baseline.

Vice Chairman Willie inquired if the Board would be meeting to determine the evaluation or if there are just options? Dr. Coker explained that if Ms. Blades comes to a consensus with the targets and signs the agreement form, then the Board would do the mid-year and end-of-year evaluation piece like what was done with Dr. Greene. Ms. Chastain stated that if there were a gap, it would require the Board to come back for another workshop.

Chairwoman Andersen inquired about the proposed date of meeting together. She was concerned about being able to complete the requirements on the timeline that had been laid out on the timeline.

Ms. Joyce and Dr. Coker briefly touched on what the conversation would be at the Sub Committee Meeting.

Vice Chairman Willie expressed his concern as to whether Ms. Blades would have time to look over the evaluation tool.

Chairwoman Andersen wants to make sure that fairness is provided to Ms. Blades with regards to viewing her evaluation tool. Dr. Coker responded to the concerns.

Vice Chairman Willie inquired if Ms. Blades would be providing a data notebook. Ms. Chastain noted that the IBA evaluation is different from the Superintendent's evaluation.

Dr. Coker also responded (*inaudible*).

Ms. Joyce summarized the evaluation tool:

- 1st part is based on the administrative tool that the district uses
- 2nd part focused on the state statute since Ms. Blades' position is based on the state statute

- 3rd part is based on Ms. Blades' projects

Ms. Chastain explained that part two and three is tailored to the employee's work.

Dr. Coker mentioned about all the research Ms. Joyce completed to work on the Board Auditor evaluation tool. Ms. Joyce mentioned about the parts that Dr. Coker and Ms. Chastain played in getting the evaluation tool together.

Ms. Hershey inquired about how this process will work. Ms. Chastain explained the process. Dr. Coker added to the explanation.

Vice Chairman Willie inquired how the evaluation is administered.

Chairwoman Andersen requested for Assistant Superintendent Victoria Schultz to be available if needed for Board Members to get a better understanding of the process.

Ms. Schultz explained:

- additional tools
- option to put online
- only one person could access the online tool

Ms. Chastain mentioned that she would send Ms. Schultz the draft. Chairwoman Andersen had inquired about the Board Members wanting to consider doing the evaluation online. Ms. Chastain advised the Board Members of the need to be cautious because circulating a document around outside of the Sunshine Law can be construed as a conversation outside of the Sunshine Law.

5. GOVERNANCE

Vice Chair Willie inquired about the someone coming in to provide historical information to the board members (*inaudible*).

Chairwoman Andersen responded:

- get recommendations from the Superintendent
- have professional development or board workshop
- good to have historical information
- invite the Supervisor of Elections come to a Board Workshop

Ms. Joyce mentioned about being able to send additional questions to the Supervisor of Elections so that the voting process can be explained.

Discussion about whether to have another public conversation instead of having answers provided via email:

- Ms. Joyce preferred a conversation because if one person has a question, then all the Board Members should hear and discuss it
- Chairwoman Andersen stated that after the agenda meeting, they would add an item and go over the renaming process
- Mr. Jones thinks the discussion would be helpful for the public to get information
- Ms. Pearson agreed to conversation
- Dr. Coker agreed to conversation
- Ms. Hershey agreed to conversation
- Vice Chairman Willie agreed to conversation
- Mr. Jones suggested having a frequently asked questions put on the website
- Chairwoman Andersen stated that with what has been published on the tracker, the handbook, and a FAQ should hopefully be able to get things cleared up for the community. She also reiterated that the Board Members to be cautious about what parts of the process they want to own, and allowing the District, administration, and schools to own their piece of the puzzle.

Ms. Hershey mentioned about how conversation brings clarity. For example, when Stanton became a college prep, people wanted to know what happened to the trophies, etc. When schools became magnet schools in the past, the history prior to being magnet schools gets erased. Ms. Hershey also mentioned that conversation brings clarity, guardrails, and framework, not to micromanage. To be able to ask questions on the front-end and get responses on the back end is smart leadership. She spoke about there being social media where everybody's opinion is the right opinion, and some of it is fake or even wrong. She agrees with Mr. Jones about having conversation that is clearer because it helps all stakeholders feeling that their voice was heard.

Ms. Pearson stated that, "We own this." She mentioned that the reason for having conversation and trying to waive any bad thoughts or community questions on the front-end and serves the process well. Board Members are not trying to usurp, just help and advise.

Vice Chair Willie agrees with “We own this.” He just does not want it to look as if the Board is manipulating the process. (*inaudible*) He also wants this to be an equitable process (*inaudible*).

Adjournment

1. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m.

GC

Superintendent

Chairman