

May 18, 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 except Board Members Hershey and Jones who arrived for the second half of the meeting. Dr. Diana Greene, Superintendent, and Ms. Rita Mairs, Office of General Counsel, were also present.

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

1. BOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Chair Andersen introduced the guest speakers for the Board Professional Development portion of the workshop. Following the presentation from the guest speakers, the Board will recess and go into its committee meeting and then come back for the second half of the workshop.

Drs. Chris Janson and Rudy Jamison of the UNF Center for Urban Education and Policy gave a PowerPoint presentation (see attached in agenda) on "Engaging Multiple Perspectives around Contentious Ideas and Topics." Following the presentation, discussion took place and topics discussed included:

- With community meetings already over, this presentation could be used as tools to use in the future as conversations about race and history need to continue to happen in our community. This presentation can be used as strategies and techniques for civil discourse.
- Chair Andersen invited Drs. Janson and Jamison because as the Board continues to move forward, in the conversations about name changes and beyond, these concepts in the presentation, specifically "inviting the stranger," are an opportunity to not only model and set an example but to help our community understand how to engage in these difficult conversations.
- Cross-generational conflict between alumni and current students and methods of achieving inter-generational experience.
- Board Members expressed their gratitude for Drs. Janson and Jamison presenting on their work and sharing their knowledge with the Board.

Dr. Alan Bliss, CEO of the Jacksonville Historical Society, provided his remarks on the uses of history in commemoration and the difference between memorializing people and/or events of the past versus interpreting the past. Topics discussed included:

- Dr. Bliss' credentials and background
 - Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD in History from University of Florida
 - Adjunct History professor at the University of North Florida
 - Subjects taught: US History Survey, American Presidential Biography, Public History Seminar, US Maritime History, History of American Civil Rights Movement
 - Joined the Board of Directors for the Jacksonville Historical Society in 2015 and was appointed CEO in 2018
- Nathan Bedford Forrest school renaming
- Confederate monuments history in Jacksonville
 - In archives, there is correspondence from the 1960s and 70s about the disposition of Jacksonville's confederate memorials
- What is history and what does it mean?
 - History is always changing and is continually being reborn. History is not what happened. The past is what happened. History is how we interpret and make sense of the people and the events that came before us.
 - When looking at the future, people often look at the past. The temptation is strong to selectively choose the evidence and facts of the past and tailor them into service of an argument about ideas in the present. As people strive to interpret and understand the past, they need to be attentive to representing it as fully and as fairly as possible. Keeping in mind that historical knowledge is constantly being revised by new research and historical comprehension is always being revised by new experiences.
- Following Dr. Bliss' presentation, discussion took place and topics discussed included:
 - The concept of duty of citizenship to shake up our understanding of history
 - Dr. Bliss: History is sometimes seen as an abstract field of study that may not be so relevant to the contemporary day-to-day lives of citizens. History has tangible value; the more one understands about the place they occupy, the more likely they are to become more invested in that place. Citizenship builds cultural capital. Good citizenship accounts for the economic strength and vitality of a place.
 - UNF Center for Urban Education and Policy currently has a grant proposal with Dr. Bliss that would bring in social studies educators from around the country to work with local history teachers to explore Jacksonville's civil rights history and to also explore the reasons why there is a reluctance to teach it.
 - How the conversations on local civil rights history could be introduced and discussed in certain grades and subjects, as well as outside the classroom with student organizations and extracurricular opportunities.
 - It is everyone's responsibility to be a truth seeker and these tough conversations should not be avoided.

The Board recessed at 10:15 a.m. and went into their Agenda Committee meeting.

2. INTERNAL BOARD AUDITOR EVALUATION

*The Board re-convened at 12:38 p.m.
All Board Members were present.*

The Board Members took turns discussing their Mid-Year Evaluation conversation with Internal Board Auditor Lenia Blades.

- Board Member Coker
 - Had the opportunity to do a mock coaching session with Ms. Blades before completing the mid-year evaluation since Ms. Blades has never been through this process. Commended Ms. Blades on having all her artifacts organized in place and ready to go through and show examples of everything. Took a lot of time talking about how this instrument is designed to show growth over time and discussed ways to show growth in certain areas. Discussed the report response template that Ms. Blades created. Overall, Board Member Coker was appreciative that Ms. Blades was well prepared, and her notebook was incredibly organized.
- Board Member Pearson
 - Never having done an evaluation before, Board Member Pearson was appreciative that Ms. Blades had an extensive notebook with documentation. Overall impression is that Ms. Blades was a good get for the District and her experience as an external auditor is valuable and shows in several pieces of her work. Moving forward, there are two items Board Member Pearson would like to discuss with Ms. Blades; 1. Professional development opportunities in public speaking, and 2. the possibility of hiring someone to assist Ms. Blades with internal auditing.
- Board Member Joyce
 - Agreed with previous Board Members, impressed with Ms. Blades' notebook and documentation. Shared with Ms. Blades that when she came on the Board, there was a certain expectation that the previous Board Auditor presented and felt like the Board has not been supported in that way. Not saying that it is Ms. Blades fault as she walked into a job and is trying to learn it. As a Board Member, there is a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers that really hinges on the budget and understanding expenditures. Board Member Joyce is looking forward to the creation of the Internal Board Auditor website.
- Board Member Jones
 - Complimented Ms. Blades on her preparation and her notebook. Board Member Jones noted that the Board has never had an internal board auditor evaluation and this past year was a tough one. With Ms. Blades doing a lot of work from home, the Board did not see all the work she did. An area that needed improvement included the timing of the agenda review which needs to be modified to give the Board ample time to look over.
- Board Member Hershey
 - Aligns closely to what Board Member Joyce said. Board Member Hershey explained that part of being pro-active and problem solving and building teamwork is building the relationships with the Board Members and knowing the budget so well that one can look at it and identify a problem sooner rather than later. In the past, that is one of the things that saved the Board. Board Member Hershey also discussed self-management and self-motivation to do things that are not listed in the job description. Overall, it was a good conversation and appreciated Ms. Blades' preparation and notebook.
- Vice Chair Willie
 - Vice Chair Willie felt the meeting reflected Ms. Blades' style - organized and detail-oriented.

Looking at Ms. Blades' job description, Vice Chair Willie appreciated the artifacts and believes she has done a fine job based on his interactions with her. He noted that the first part of the evaluation is hard to complete if you are not with that person all the time as it is more subjective. He is excited to get on a real cycle because believes the Board will see the real shift and move with the internal auditing process.

- Chair Andersen
 - Chair Andersen noted the positive highlights from Ms. Blades' work include her attention to detail and the policies and procedures that she has put in place for the position. Areas that have room for improvement include the pro-active piece, understanding the rhythm of this District, building relationships with Board Members, and self-management. Chair Andersen is looking forward to the website to come together and she appreciates Ms. Blades for her time and the work she has put in.

3. GOVERNANCE

There were no items for Governance.

Adjournment

1. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

KPG

Superintendent

Chairman