



Master Facility Plan Implementation

Tracking the impact of the voter approved half-penny sales surtax

February 19, 2025, Sales Surtax Oversight Committee Meeting

Committee Members Present

Lawrence Dennis, Dan Janson, Cynthia Brown, Wanda Ford, Heather Guzzino, Kay Hawkins, Amy Henderson, Mike Hightower, Erdine Johnson, Ryan Murphy, Stephanie Schaap, Ramon Day, Marion Tischler, and Anita Vining.

Ex-Officio, Non-Voting Members Present

Cameron Marshall

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman, Lawrence Dennis called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM and gave a welcome message with a quote. He announced there is a Quorum to conduct meeting business.

Approval of the February 19, 2025, Agenda

Chair Dennis made the following recommendation to the committee:

Motion:

That the Sales Surtax Oversight Committee Approve the February 19, 2025, Meeting Agenda as submitted:

Vote Results: 12-0

Motion: Dan Janson

Second: Wanda Ford

Vote: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes:

Marion Tischler brought to the Chairman's attention a line on page 4 that stated city tax regarding the sales-surtax, and recommended it be changed to local tax before the committee approves the draft minutes.

Motion:

Marion Tischler made a motion to change the language on page 4 from city tax to local tax.

Vote Results: 12-0

Motion: Ramon Day

Second: Amy Henderson

Vote: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Dennis asked if there were any additional comments on the draft minutes and then made the following recommendation to the committee:

Motion:

That the Sales Surtax Oversight Committee approves the December 18, 2024, Meeting Minutes as submitted with the approved edits.

Vote Results: 12-0

Motion: Dan Janson

Second: Kay Hawkins

Vote: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Comment

Susan Aertker gave public comments regarding the sales-surtax revenue, charter school concerns regarding the use of sales-surtax funds, and referenced a Times Union article, HB 757, and the oversight committee's role.

Chair Dennis thanked Ms. Aertker for taking the time to address the committee and for the committee's attention to this portion of the meeting.

Ryan Murphy arrived at 10:27 a.m.

Items to be Discussed

2024 Annual Report

The Chairman reviewed the steps the committee needs to take to finalize the 2024 Annual Report and opened the floor for discussion:

- Kay Hawkins, Dan Janson, Mike Hightower, Erdine Johnson, Ramon Day, Amy Henderson, Stephanie Schaap, and Ramon Day participated in discussions around the scope of the committee, concerns about additional time to read through the draft report, and the opportunity to develop recommendations.
- Mike Hightower addressed the committee regarding the status of the Oversight Committee and understanding his role as a committee member.
- Dan Janson made a motion to table the approval of the 2024 Draft Annual Report until the interim Meeting on April 16, 2025.

Discussion continued regarding the committee's role, understanding what items are in the 2024 Draft Annual Report, and creating the 2024 Recommendations:

- Erdine Johnson asked whether the committee is independent. Chief Legal Counsel, Ray Poole, addressed the question and explained that committee operations are independent, but beyond the scope of that, the committee is answerable to the Duval County School Board as a committee of the Board. The authority of the committee is derivative of the School Board and the Duval County School Board Policy.
- Chair Dennis also clarified that the committee has been informed since its inception that the Sales Surtax Oversight Committee cannot make directives, mandates, or demands, but the Committee can make recommendations. There were additional discussions regarding the 2023 recommendations.
- Mike Hightower, Marion Tischler, and Stephanie Schaap held additional conversations regarding the following:
 - Two of the 2023 Annual Report Recommendations seemed out of the committee's scope
 - Distinguishing the term Dashboard because there are two dashboards accessible to the public: District Schools and Charter Schools
 - Understanding where the district is currently at with projects and are they on target for completion and on budget.
 - The scope of the committee and the conversations over the last year between district staff and the committee regarding their role and expectations.

Motion:

The Oversight Committee unanimously made a motion to meet on April 16, 2025, to reconvene.

Chair Dennis made a motion to utilize the Interim Meeting date of April 16, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., to continue the work on finalizing the 2024 Annual Report.

Vote Results: 12-0

Motion: Kay Hawkins

Second: Dan Janson

Vote: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Operations Update

Chair Dennis welcomed and introduced Executive Director, Byron Page, and Assistant Superintendent of Operations, Erika Harding.

Mr. Page provided a District Dashboard Overview of the data in the dashboard along with the features and filters. Ramon Day, Dan Janson, Heather Guzzino, Wanda Ford, and Mike Hightower, held discussions regarding the dashboard that included:

- Navigating the dashboard features
- The quarterly reporting discrepancy that Mr. Page discussed at the December 18th meeting.
- Mr. Page announced that if a member notices a discrepancy or has a question about the features, please reach out to him.
- Where the district is with projects, what are the exceptions, and where are any areas of concern. They referenced Anita Vining's comment about the reporting back to her organization.
- Request from Mr. Hightower for an executive summary – Mr. Page explained that the dashboard is a product of the last three years of the committee's feedback to provide more detailed information of high level overviews to individual projects funded by the sales-surtax.
- Cameron Marshall spoke in support of comments provided by Anita Vining and Mike Hightower.

Mr. Page gave a PowerPoint presentation: Sales Surtax Oversight Committee: February 19, 2025, that included the following topics:

- Funding Metrics
- Progress Reporting
- Program Updates – Planning, Procurement, Design and Upcoming Consolidations and Swings
- Warranty Management
- Completed New/ Replacement – Rutledge Pearson, Chaffee Trail Middle School, Highlands Estates Academy (Pine Estates)
- Completed Addition/ Deferred Maintenance – Fort Caroline Middle School, Northshore Elementary School, Westside Middle School
- Project Updates by School – Jean Ribault, Mandarin, Southside Estates, Duncan U. Fletcher, Sandalwood, and R.L. Brown Gifted and Talented

Ramon Day, Marion Tischler, and Mike Hightower asked questions regarding the presentation. Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Ron Fagan, joined Mr. Page to clarify and explain the meaning of COPS (Certificate of Participation) regarding the district's use of bonds.

Finance Update

Chair Dennis welcomed and introduced Chief Financial Officer, Ron Fagan, who presented a PowerPoint presentation: Sales Surtax Oversight Committee – Financial Services and Charter Schools.

Mr. Dennis paused Mr. Fagan's presentation to make the following recommendation to extend the meeting.

Motion:

Chair Dennis made the following motion to the committee regarding the meeting time limit.

Chair Dennis made a motion that the Committee vote to extend the meeting to 12:15 p.m.

Vote Results: 12-0

Motion: Kay Hawkins

Second: Ramon Day

Vote: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Fagan continued with the Finance Presentation:

- Sales-Surtax Fiscal Year Collections
- Sales- Surtax Funding Overview 2024
- Sales- Surtax Funding Overview School Year 2024/2025
- 3rd Quarter 2024 – Review Observations
- Sales-Surtax Revenue and Expenditures

Ramon Day, Dan Janson, and Mike Hightower asked questions about how the report is calculated and future projections of available funds. Mr. Fagan provided detailed responses regarding each line of the report and how the district monitors these funds.

Governance:

Chair Dennis advised the committee on the following:

- Between now and the April 16th interim meeting, that the Committee please review the Draft 2024 Annual Report and have recommendations and edits prepared so the report can be finalized and published.

Next Meeting Date:

Chair Dennis advised the next meeting date for the Sales Surtax oversight Committee will be on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, for the approved interim meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Dennis made the following motion to the committee:

Motion:

To adjourn the Sales Surtax Oversight Committee Meeting.

Motion: Ramon Day

Second: Anita Vining

Vote: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Minutes were taken by Megan Mihalik, Coordinator to the Chief of Staff.

These minutes were approved at the April 16, 2025, Sales Surtax Oversight Committee Interim Meeting.

***** In order to comply with the Americans with Disability Act, some attachments are not viewable here. To receive any attachments or presentations, please email Megan Mihalik, Coordinator to the Chief of Staff, at mihalikm@duvalschools.org*****