

January 10, 2013  
6:00 p.m.

The Fannin County Board of Education met in regular session with the following members present: Sandra Mercier, Chair; Steve Stanley, Vice-Chair; Bobby Bearden; Terry Bramlett; and Lewis DeWeese. All members present.

Sandra Mercier, Chair, relinquished the Chair to Mark Henson, Superintendent, for reorganization of the Board.

Mark Henson, Superintendent, called for nominations for Chair for the 2013 calendar year.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to nominate Sandra Mercier as Chair for the 2013 calendar year. Bobby Bearden, Terry Bramlett, Lewis DeWeese, and Steve Stanley voted in favor of Sandra Mercier as Chair. Sandra Mercier abstained. Motion carried.

Mark Henson, Superintendent, turned the meeting over to the newly elected 2013 Chair, Sandra Mercier.

Sandra Mercier, Chair, called for nominations for Vice-Chair for the 2013 calendar year.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to nominate Steve Stanley as Vice-Chair for the 2013 calendar year. Bobby Bearden, Terry Bramlett, Lewis DeWeese, and Sandra Mercier voted in favor of Steve Stanley as Vice-Chair. Steve Stanley abstained. Motion carried.

Mrs. Mercier announced that Steve Stanley would be the Vice-Chair for the 2013 calendar year.

Upon the recommendation of Mark Henson, Superintendent, a motion was made by Steve Stanley, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to set the regular monthly Board of Education meetings for the 2013 calendar year on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m., and the Board's work sessions for noon on the Tuesday preceding the regular monthly meeting. Both meetings are to be held at the Board of Education office. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

By motion from Terry Bramlett, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve the following items on the consent agenda. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Approve the meeting minutes from December 13, 2012 and January 8, 2013.

Approve the following facility use requests:

Fannin County School System ALPHA students – Use of Blue Ridge Elementary School PE Facility on January 11 – 12, 2013; and

Fannin County High School Soccer Booster Club – Use of Fannin County High School Stadium Concession Stand during Fannin County High School Soccer games on February 12 – April 19, 2013.

Approve the following field trip requests:

East Fannin Elementary School Fifth Grade – Tennessee Aquarium and IMAX Theater in Chattanooga, TN, on March 15, 2013;

West Fannin Elementary School Kindergarten Class – Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta, GA, on February 22, 2013;

Fannin County High School Chorus – Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta, GA, on January 14, 2013; and

Fannin County High School/Emmie Allmon’s Class – University of Georgia College of Education, on February 13, 2013.

Approve the following fundraiser requests:

Fannin County School System ALPHA Students – Raffle chance on a Valentine’s basket – January 25 – February 11, 2013;

West Fannin Elementary Fifth Grade – Sale of Krispy Kreme Donuts – February 14 – March 1, 2013;

Fannin County Middle School Golf – Sale of T-shirts – February 1 – May 24, 2013; and

Fannin County High School Wrestling – Sale of chicken dinners – April 1 – June 1, 2013.

Art Hubbard, Assistant Superintendent, and Benny Long, Director of Transportation & Safety, shared with the Board an advisory from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for school systems concerning the installation and maintenance of carbon monoxide detectors in educational facilities.

Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Long also shared with the Board suggested actions the school system could take to improve security at each of the schools. These included changes in the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), installation of additional cameras and digital video recorders, installation of locked entry doors, and the proposal to limit stadium/track access.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to give Superintendent Henson permission to pursue the safety elements presented by Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Long. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Public Comment:

Bill Simonds, Chairman of the Fannin County Board of Commissioners, stated he had a meeting with Mr. Henson earlier in the day, and they did not agree on putting a school resource officer funded by the City of Blue Ridge in the schools. Commissioner Simonds stated all of the

officers in the schools should fall under the Fannin County Sheriff's Department so there could be uniformity.

Donna Whitener, Mayor of the City of Blue Ridge, stated she did not realize the Fannin County Board of Commissioners wanted to take care of the resource officer. Mayor Whitener stated the Blue Ridge City Council had voted to provide an officer at Blue Ridge Elementary, as it is inside the city limits, if the school system is interested; however, if the school system is not interested, there would be no hurt feelings.

Fannin County School Resource Officer Lt. Darwin Couch stated School Resource Officer Cindy George would be working with the CHAMPS program, and that there was actually a need for three additional officers.

After public comment, Mr. Henson explained the school system currently has three resource officers – the county funds one and the school system funds two. Mr. Henson stated that on December 26, Sheriff Dane Kirby contacted him and recommended the school system increase the number of officers from three to five in order to have an officer in each school. Mr. Henson stated he explained to Sheriff Kirby that the school system could pick up the expense of one additional officer, and he asked if the county could pick up the cost of an additional one. Mr. Henson said he explained to Sheriff Kirby that the school system needed to look for additional sources of funding.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to give the Superintendent permission to seek funding for two additional school resource officers. To accept the City of Blue Ridge's offer of an additional officer and to accept the Fannin County Board of Commissioners' offer of an additional officer. If the offer from the Board of Commissioners does not work out, the Fannin County Board of Education agrees to fund an additional resource officer. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden to approve the financial report for the month ending November 30, 2012. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Mr. Henson stated the SPLOST check received in December for the month of October was \$307,864.63.

Cynthia Panter, Associate Superintendent, asked the Board if the response for each item marked "needs improvement" or "do not know" on their annual Self-Assessment Results for December 1, 2011, was sufficient, or if members wanted to set up a strategic planning session to review the policies. The Board expressed a desire to set up a strategic planning session. It was agreed that a strategic planning session would be set up to review policies.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve revised policy GBKA – Professional Personnel Lay-Off Reduction in Force (see attached). All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Steve Stanley, to approve Sharon Griffith as a 49% teacher for the remainder of the 2012 – 2013 school year. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Steve Stanley, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Jerry Pack as a substitute bus driver. All members voted yes; motion carried.

#### Superintendent's Comments:

Mr. Henson stated he was grateful to the community for their passion and support of the school system. Mr. Henson stated he did not want to step on anyone's toes. He wanted to coexist and work with both the Board of Commissioners and the City of Blue Ridge to make the Fannin County School System a better place. Mr. Henson stated he thought all parties involved had good intentions, and he wanted to cooperate and work with each agency.

Mr. Henson stated Sheriff Kirby had been very supportive of the school system, and he considered him a friend.

Mr. Henson thanked the Georgia State Patrol, Fannin County Sheriff's Department, and the City of Blue Ridge for their support in safely transporting students for the White Christmas programs.

Mr. Henson stated three members of the Board were starting new terms, and he wanted each to know how much he appreciated them – Bobby Bearden, Lewis DeWeese, and Sandra Mercier.

#### Board Members' Comments:

Bobby Bearden stated he was in agreement with Mr. Henson's comments on the resource officers. Mr. Bearden thanked Art Hubbard and Benny Long for the time they had spent on the improvements in safety. Mr. Bearden thanked the Fannin County Board of Commissioners for their offer of an additional resource officer. Mr. Bearden also thanked the City of Blue Ridge Mayor and Council for their offer of a resource officer. Mr. Bearden stated the children are number one in decisions made by the Board. Mr. Bearden thanked Mr. Henson for the job he does as Superintendent of Fannin County Schools, and he added that he was glad to be at the meeting.

Terry Bramlett stated safety is always the first concern of Board members. Mr. Bramlett thanked the local law enforcement agencies which have stepped up patrols at the schools and events. Mr. Bramlett thanked Sheriff Dane Kirby for the excellent job he does. Mr. Bramlett thanked Art Hubbard, Benny Long, and Michael Gwatney for their work with school safety and school system safety plans. Mr. Bramlett thanked Mayor Whitener and the City of Blue Ridge Council for their generous offer, and he thanked Chairman Simonds and Commissioner Larry Joe Sosebee for their offer. Mr. Bramlett stated Mr. Henson had done a fantastic job being proactive about security for Fannin County Schools, and he added that there were no losers here tonight.

Lewis DeWeese stated kids should always come first as Board members made decisions.

Steve Stanley stated he was in a unique position since he worked with Chairman Simonds and Commissioner Larry Joe Sosebee. Mr. Stanley stated he could assure everyone they were always out front.

Sandra Mercier stated she too was appreciative of the offers extended by the Board of Commissioners and Mayor. She said it was a pleasure to serve on the Board of Education and stated the goals and initiatives of the Board should be kids first. Mrs. Mercier stated she appreciated her fellow Board members and also appreciated the job Mr. Henson and his group did.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion was made by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Steve Stanley, to adjourn subject to being called into special session by the Chair when deemed necessary. All members voted yes; motion carried.

---

Sandra Mercier, Chairperson

---

Mark Henson, Superintendent

slj