

A JOINT WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND THE SCHOOL BOARD WAS HELD ON THE 27<sup>th</sup> OF FEBRUARY IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWO OF OUR LORD IN THE COURTROOM IN THE OLD COURTHOUSE AT 6:00 P.M.

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IN RE: ROLL CALL

Julian T. Lipscomb	Present
Rebecca M. Ringley	Present
James H. Burrell	Present
Dean E. Raynes	Absent
W. R. "Ray" Davis Jr.	Present

The School Board members were all present: Van N. McPherson, Terry Lawler, Cynthia Gaines, Lisa Gill, and Patricia Lange.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order and turned the meeting over to the School Board.

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IN RE: BUDGET PRESENTATION

Ed Smith, Budget and Finance Director of the School Board, reviewed the Vision Statement of the Board, which is the same as last year, but has changed some in its focus. He reviewed the Budget Goals for FY 2002-2003 which include enhancing staff compensation, maintaining safe school environments, improving student achievement, increasing the technology skills of students and staff, and meeting the projected cost increase of key budget items. He pointed out some of the key additional costs in the FY 2002-2003 Budget as they pertain to personnel, including a 6% salary increase, an estimated 15% increase in health insurance, Technology in the primary and elementary schools, as well as the addition of a new high school band teacher, high school math teacher, 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and CSA/Vision teacher. Non-personnel items include new English textbooks (in all but 5<sup>th</sup> grade), one trailer for use at the high school, technology replacement, new copier contracts, liability/group life insurance, as well as materials/supplies and capital outlay increases.

Mr. Smith reviewed the revenue projections, which include state funds of \$8,810,431 (increase of 3.45%, based on projected increase in student number), federal funds of \$622,600 (grant ending, decrease of 13.06%), other funds (appropriation for insurance claims, decrease of 11.34%), county funds \$7,256,549 (increase of 1.26%), and additional local request \$251,963 (increase of 4.78%). He hopes to have final figures from the General Assembly next week.

Mr. Smith also reviewed several of the items that had been removed from the proposed budget, which included replacement of 4 buses, an additional 1% salary increase, as well as addition of a director of personnel, high school consumer ed teacher, high school art teacher, elementary school technology teacher, and a new service vehicle/car replacement. The School Board hopes to cover one or more of these under this year's capital account or end of year funds.

Mr. Smith also reviewed some items that could impact the final budget, which included removal of the Retiree Health Credit (currently paid by the state) in the sum of \$30,000, additional health insurance increase (which may increase by 25% rather than 15%) of \$35,000, and the addition of a longevity step for teachers with more than 30 years service of \$20,000. These figures are worst case scenarios.

The School Board indicated that it would use any left over funds from this year, for school bus purchases and technology replacement. It was further indicated that if actual costs are more than anticipated, it would become a management or cut issue.

There was a general discussion about the salary increase, and how it would bring New Kent to the median range in relation to other localities. Other localities are giving smaller increases this year, which will help New Kent to catch up.

Mr. Lipscomb inquired about ways to decrease the debt service. He also inquired about the increase in costs related to Richmond Tech. Dr. Geiger responded that increase was a direct result of tuition increase by Richmond Tech, as the number of tech students remains the same.

There was a general discussion about school buses, including replacement costs, safety improvements and the decreased operational costs of new buses.

Mr. Davis inquired about leasing trailers rather than purchasing. There was a general discussion of the pros and cons of using trailers as classrooms. One of the advantages is that a trailer can be moved from school to school, depending on where the need is. The School Board reported that it costs more, over the long run, to lease than to purchase. The trailer included in the proposed budget will be the first one to be used at the high school.

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IN RE: PLAN FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES

Chairman Gaines presented the New Kent School Board's Plan for School Facilities. She indicated that the Board had worked long and hard to identify the needs, based on capacity of existing schools and projected enrollment, and then developed a plan to meet those needs. She also reviewed the anticipated cost to build a new high school in the sum of \$25,632,000, as well as to convert the existing high school to a middle school in the sum of \$379,500, upgrade the elementary school in the sum of \$2,380,500, and building an addition (indoor activity room and 3 classrooms) to the primary school in the sum of \$1,493,964, for a total cost of \$29,885,964.

Ms. Gaines indicated that the new high school would be built on a 70+ acre site owned by the County and to the rear of and adjacent to the existing high school. This would allow the use of the existing outside athletic facilities for the new high school.

She also reviewed the rationale behind the plan. She indicated that the School Board supports this plan, introduced it to the public at its last meeting, have adopted it, and is asking for the support of the Board of Supervisors in moving forward with a bond referendum in November.

Mr. Lipscomb expressed his concern that, from looking at the projected enrollment figures, the elementary school will be at capacity by the time the work is done. A general discussion was held about projected enrollments and the available facilities. Dr. Geiger and Mr. McPherson indicated that if the primary and elementary Schools (K - 5) are considered together, as well as the back-up use of the newer part of the current middle school, then there should sufficient room without having to increase administrative staff. Discussion was also held about the future need of a third primary/elementary school, near the new developments.

Mr. Burrell indicated that when new schools are built, population increases more rapidly.

Mr. Lipscomb expressed his dissatisfaction with the use of trailers, and feels that any construction that is done should be sufficient so that trailers do not need to be used. There was another general discussion about the use and conception of trailers. Mr. Burrell responded that if he had to make a choice, he would prefer to increase teacher salaries and fund technology and use trailers, rather than build new schools.

Ms. Gill indicated that unfortunately, the cost to install adequate technology into the trailers at the Middle School is prohibitive.

Ms. Gill also indicated that the Plan addresses the schools' needs now. The middle school is more than 60 years old and needs to be replaced. The remainder of the Plan addresses growth.

Mr. McPherson related to the Board of Supervisors what steps went into the Plan. All of the input came from the parents, teachers and the 6-year Plan Committee.

Ms. Ringley expressed her support of the use of trailers. She indicated that she would have difficulty justifying to taxpayers building the schools and having empty classrooms.

There was discussion on how the existing athletic facilities will be affected by the middle school sports program, and the School Board is confident that there are plenty of facilities for all school athletic programs.

A discussion was held as to the changes that have been made since the last referendum. Mr. Lipscomb indicated that it might be difficult to sell the referendum if the buildings will be at capacity when they are built. Ms. Lawler indicated she felt there would be citizen "sticker shock" if the proposed referendum figure was increased. Dr. Geiger reported on the costs of building new schools in other localities, which are much greater than the current proposal. Ms. Ringley asked if the School Board was comfortable with the proposed figure to build the new high school, as she was concerned about cost over-runs. There was some discussion on how the figure was arrived at (per student cost), and also about possible ways to save money on the architect fee

Mr. Burrell and Mr. Lipscomb asked what effect a year's delay would have on the Plan, as the County does anticipate an increase in its business tax revenue from industrial development in the Talleville area and the Route 33 corridor.

It was the School Board's opinion that waiting would only increase the cost. Ms. Gaines asked if the Board of Supervisors was indicating that if they put off the referendum issue for a year, would the County commit these anticipated revenues to the cost of the proposed school facilities.

The School Board anticipates that if the bond referendum passes in November, the earliest that bonds could be issued would be the Spring of 2003. Mr. Ellyson reported that after a referendum, the Board would have up to 8 years to have bonds issued, and can even have that period extended 2 years with the permission of the Circuit Court. Additionally, it will take at least 8 - 9 months to get plans and architectural prints in order get prices. It is estimated that it will take 3 years to build the high school.

Mr. Davis suggested that the School Board only include the cost of the new high school in its referendum, and try to complete the remaining work with out-of-pocket funds or creative financing. The School Board agreed with that suggestion.

The School Board also agreed to attempt to obtain a basic no-frill plan and confirm a final figure for the cost of the new high school. Mr. Ellyson reminded the School Board that for the last referendum that passed to build the current high school, there were floor plans and artists renditions which he believes would help. The School Board does not want to risk defeat of the proposed referendum because there are no clear answers. Voters are looking at unified Boards for answers to their questions.

Ms. Ringley suggested that the County gather all information, including potential business tax revenues as well as cost for the necessary infrastructure, before making a final decision.

Ms. Lawler reported that there needs to be a time -line as the School Board did not want to wait too late to get the process started. Ms. Ringley asked that all information be provided by late March for consideration by the Board.

Ms. Lawler reminded that a favorable vote on the referendum did not obligate the Board of Supervisors in any manner. If the project is delayed, it may be that the current members may not even be on the Boards when the building is completed. Ms. Ringley agreed that a time -line would need to be agreed upon by both Boards in order for the work to move forward as planned.

Ms. Lange reported that the cost of the architect was not included in the School Board's budget. Dr. Geiger agreed to contact the architect immediately to get furt her information, which he did not think would be too costly. Ms. Ringley suggested that the School Board advise the architect of the price that can be paid, and find out what can be built for that price.

Mr. Davis asked that the School Board agree to the sum of \$25,632,000 for the bond referendum, in order for the Board of Supervisors to move forward towards its decision.

There was some discussion about the Field House that has been requested by Coach Allen. Ms. Gill expressed her appreciation of the Board of Supervisor's concern, but reminded them that issue was separate and apart from the Plan currently under consideration. Ms. Lawler expressed

her concern that building a Field House before the referendum would confuse the issue for voters in November.

Chairman Davis continued the meeting of the Board of Supervisors to March 5, 2002, at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was suspended at 7:59 p.m.