

MINUTES  
Murfreesboro City School Board  
6 p.m., Tuesday, November 18, 2014  
Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE

School Board: Chair Butch Campbell, Vice Chair Nancy Rainier, Dr. Andy Brown, Jared Barrett, Phil King, Collier Smith, Nancy Phillips

Staff: Dr. Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Karen Hawkins, Lisa Trail, Caresa Brooks, Kim Frank, Tammy Garrett, Lee Wilkerson, Tammy Garrett, Sheri Arnette, Shavon Davis-Louis, and Kim Fowler

Staff Attorney Kelley Baker

Others: Beth Duffield

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Campbell called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Hobgood Students Katie Beth Hoover, Kristen Morgan, Delaney Reynolds, and Jia Yue Ou Yang, and Principal Tammy Garrett led the Pledge of Allegiance. A Moment of Silence followed the Pledge.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr. Brown moved to approve the agenda. Mr. King seconded the motion. All approved.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Gilbert introduced Vice President of Workforce Development at the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce to speak on workforce development and career paths. Ms. Duffield gave a brief presentation about how the Chamber presents information to children in the schools. Each month has a different focus and this month's focus was on hospitality and tourism. This introduces children to different career path ideas at an early age.

Dr. Gilbert read the following communications.

- The Community Outreach Department would like to extend a special thanks to North Boulevard Church of Christ and Bethel United Methodist Church for their additional outreach partnerships with MCS last weekend.
- The Community Outreach Department would like to thank Stephanie Bush and her MTSU students enrolled in the Family Centered Community Building II

(Spring 2014) class for raising \$300 for our Backpack Program. This project is part of their War on Hunger Initiative.

- Hobgood Elementary wishes to acknowledge Olive Branch Church and First Baptist Church on Castle for the Thanksgiving meal they served to the school's families last night.
- This week is American Education Week.
- The Excellence in Education Gala is February 6, 2015 honoring Mitchell-Neilson School and Tommy and Jeanne Bragg.
- The MTSU Basketball Game is Wednesday, December 3 at 11 a.m.

Mr. King announced that on Thursday, December 18, the Chamber of Commerce is hosting Business Before Hours from 7:30 a.m. until 9 a.m. at Wilson Bank & Trust on Memorial Boulevard and that the Bradley Elementary Choir will be there to sing Christmas songs. He said that you do not have to be a member of the Chamber to attend this function and encouraged everyone to see the students in action.

#### IV. CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes: October 28, 2014 Meeting, April 14, 2014 Budget Meeting

Approval of School Fees

Policy Revision: IS 5 Instructional Resources

*Second Reading*

2014 LEA Compliance Report

Dr. Brown moved to approve the Consent Items, and Mr. King seconded the motion. Ms. Smith said she thought April's budget minutes were already done. Ms. Price stated this was the final set of minutes remaining. Chair Campbell asked for a motion. Mr. Barrett moved to approve and Dr. Brown seconded. All approved.

#### V. ACTION ITEMS

Board Policy BO 43: Travel Expense Policy

*For Discussion*

Board Policy BO 44: Reimbursement of Expenses Policy

*For Discussion*

Chair Campbell said he asked for Board Policy BO 43 and BO 44 to be added to the agenda for discussion because the policies called for Dr. Gilbert to approve the Board's travel. He said he did not think that was appropriate because it put her in the position of having to approve something for her employer. He stated the Board needs to look at these policies before the March conference and the National School Board meeting. Chair Campbell opened the item for discussion.

Ms. Rainier said she was under the impression that if a meeting was less than 50 miles away and the person chose to stay, they paid their own way. Ms. Rainier said she thinks they need to go to a 60-mile limit and put that in the policy and take the director out of it.

Ms. Smith said she has not studied this line by line but it does not seem that it was that long ago that this policy was reviewed. She said she hopes that there is some flexibility in this policy for consideration of health concerns and/or age.

Dr. Brown said he did not remember discussing this policy and asked Ms. Baker when it was last reviewed. Ms. Baker responded 2011. Dr. Brown asked what Chair Campbell discovered from other districts. Chair Campbell said the ones he looked at had the finance director or the Board Chair make the decision. Specifically, Metro Davidson County and Shelby County have Board travel approved by the Board Chair.

Ms. Rainier said part of the general approving in advance of the travel was for the Director to know how many employees will be gone for training so staffing concerns will not occur. Ms. Rainier noted that the school board attends the national and state conventions each year and in 2015, the national meeting is in Nashville and it would behoove the Board to attend.

Ms. Phillips had copies of minutes from 2010 and 2011 when BO 43 and 44 were last revised regarding reimbursement for lodging. She read from the minutes that Ms. Wade emphasized that before the Board decides they consider the whole situation. Ms. Wade was not comfortable walking into dark parking lots. Ms. Phillips said, per the minutes, that Mr. Campbell said he did not see a need to change the policies. Ms. Phillips said it has more to do with the time of the meeting than the miles. If teachers are being honored to speak at places, they should not have to walk into dark parking lots. Ms. Phillips stated that the policy needed to be flexible for situations when a meeting goes late into the evening and then starts again early in the morning.

Mr. King said he echoes some of Ms. Phillips' comments about flexibility. He said there is nothing about lodging in Board Policy BO 44, and recommended that lodging be specifically addressed in BO 44.

Chair Campbell noted BO 44 references BO 43 for determining how a Board member is reimbursed for lodging. Chair Campbell stated his major concern is that approval is on the shoulders of the director, and he does not think she needs to be the one to approve her bosses' travel. He added that it should be given to finance or someone else. Chair Campbell noted that he valet parked at Opryland Hotel and was able to validate parking at one of the restaurants free of charge. Mr. Campbell said his main concern is getting the decision making out of the Director of School's hands.

Mr. Barrett said that since the Board is talking about expenses and the district pocket book, he agrees with putting it on the finance department as a neutral party.

Ms. Phillips said she thought the decision was for both Dr. Gilbert and Mr. Anderson. Ms. Baker confirmed that was how the policy was written when last reviewed. Dr. Gilbert said it was a very uncomfortable position for her and for the finance director to be in.

Ms. Smith stated that the Board approves field trips for the schools each month and recommended that the Board approve the School Board's travel in a similar manner.

Dr. Brown said he thinks as Board members they are responsible for their own actions, and as custodian of dollars for the City's education, those dollars should be a matter of public record and approve travel ahead of time. He added a spreadsheet should be created to itemize expenses just like the field trip form. Dr. Brown noted that there may be circumstances where a Board member needs to attend a meeting and there is not sufficient time for approval by the entire Board. In such a situation, the Board member could seek Board approval for reimbursement at a later date.

Chair Campbell asked what the difference is in the Board attending the TSBA convention in Nashville or NSBA in Nashville and the TSBA trainings they attend. He said the Board goes to trainings at the TSBA headquarters in Nashville all through the year, and do not get reimbursements for that.

Ms. Rainier said the Board needs some guidelines.

Ms. Phillips said she did not like the idea of the Board approving the meetings. She said she would rather the decision belong to a neutral position such as the Finance Director. She said if the decision was in the Board's hands, it could be political. Ms. Phillips said that in Williamson County and Rutherford County systems, their finance delegate handles it. She said she knows Mr. Anderson would be fair and equitable to all, and that way it is not all political.

Chair Campbell stated he believes the Board is congenial and looking out for the best interest of the district.

Ms. Rainier said she would like to make a motion to make amendments to policy BO 43 or BO 44; a motion that all go to the NSBA Conference in March, and after that rotate two board members every year to go to other places, and have a 50-mile limit for lodging, all to be approved in advance by Mr. Anderson.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

Chair Campbell said he did not bring the policies up for a decision but for discussion.

Ms. Rainier said she moves that all seven Board members and Mr. Washington go to the NSBA conference held in March 21-23, 2015. Ms. Smith seconded the motion.

Dr. Brown said he has reservations about spending money.

Ms. Phillips said she appreciates Dr. Brown's attention to the budget, but that there is real value in professional development. She stated that it is vitally important to a healthy system, and that they all have to grow. Ms. Phillips said that if we are going to tell teachers it is important, we have to say it to our School Board. She said there is value in the innovative ideas like the geothermal that came from a convention.

Chair Campbell stated that he agrees, but when members sign up to attend meetings, we need to attend the sessions and do not need to miss them. Mr. Campbell said there is a motion on the floor and a second.

Ms. Rainier said she amends her motion to note that this is a separate motion from policies BO 43 and BO 44 to encourage all members to attend the NSBA conference in March in Nashville, and this is a motion within the meeting -- no policy. Ms. Smith said she still seconds. Dr. Brown said he does not think we should vote. Ms. Rainier asked if a retreat is needed to work on these policies. Chair Campbell said he thinks we need to remove the part of the policy where the director approves. Dr. Brown said it has been 2011 since this policy has been revised and both policies need to be reviewed. Dr. Brown said specifically there was language regarding rental car insurance on the policy that needs to be revised. He said he would prefer to defer and discuss it some more. Chair Campbell called for the vote:

Mr. Barrett: Yes.      Dr. Brown: Pass.      Chair Campbell: No.      Mr. King: No.  
Ms. Phillips: Yes.      Ms. Rainier: Yes.      Ms. Smith: Yes.

The motion passed with four yes votes, two no votes, and one abstention.

#### Approval of Textbook Adoption Committee Members

Dr. Gilbert stated the Textbook Adoption Committee is before the Board for approval. Ms. Rainier asked why there were more sixth grade teachers on the committee. Ms. Hawkins explained that sixth grade has their own book so a good representation was needed. Mr. Barrett asked how the parent was selected for the committee. Ms. Hawkins said she called John Pittard for a recommendation since it is the largest school in the district. Dr. Brown asked if more than one parent is needed. Ms. Hawkins said one parent was selected as a result of the state law, which now requires a parent be included on the committee. She said more than one parent could be included if that were the Board's pleasure, but we do meet the requirement by having one parent.

Dr. Brown moved to approve this committee with the understanding that textbook information will be on the website. Ms. Hawkins stated that all of the textbook presentations will be online with a link to our website. Ms. Hawkins said the Board had previously asked about additional books being placed in the buildings for teachers to review. She said she was able to get additional sets, and they will be available to parents to review at Central Office. Mr. Barrett then seconded Dr. Brown's motion to approve the committee. Chair Campbell asked for the vote.

Dr. Brown: Yes.      Chair Campbell: Yes.      Mr. King: Yes.      Ms. Phillips: Yes.  
Ms. Rainier: Yes.      Mr. Smith: Yes.      Mr. Barrett: Yes.

The motion passed unanimously.

#### Approval of Technology Infrastructure Upgrade for Hobgood and Bradley

Mr. Anderson explained there is an item in the capital outlay budget for eRate funds from the federal government, however the federal government changed the rules, and no school received eRate money. He said that since the district did not upgrade Hobgood and Bradley based on expectation of eRate money, the district would like to spend the matching \$250,000 money in the line item to upgrade their infrastructures. He said these schools are at one-tenth the speed of other schools, and these schools need to be made whole. Mr. Anderson explained that the district was required to set aside \$250,000 as a commitment to receive eRate funds, and the money was already approved, but Board approval is needed to spend it on just these two schools. Mr. Anderson said there is one bid, but since this is a major purchase, more bids are needed. Mr. Anderson asked the Board to approve the purchase based on a bid not to exceed \$250,000. He explained it is important to get the upgrades during winter break. Dr. Gilbert reminded the Board that students will have online writing tests in February and will need the upgraded Internet speed. Ms. Rainier moved to approve the upgrade not to exceed \$250,000. Ms. Smith seconded the motion, and all approved.

#### Approval of 2015-2016 School Calendar

Dr. Gilbert said the 2015-2016 academic calendar is before the Board. She said we tried to follow Rutherford County's calendar with one exception; MCS will start two days earlier than RCS because our students do not attend on parent/teacher conference days. Dr. Gilbert said this calendar reflects 180 days of instruction and 200 teacher-days. Chair Campbell asked about the schools being closed for the presidential primary election on March 1, 2015. Ms. Rainier said that if schools are closed for the March primary, she would rather see the calendar end one day later than begin one day sooner, noting that would coincide with the county's end date.

After discussion, Dr. Gilbert suggested the item be deferred until January, assuming that both the Spring and Fall breaks would remain the same, to allow time to talk to Mr. Odom and bring information back to the January meeting. Ms. Collier asked Dr. Gilbert to speak to the county again about moving the PLC days from Thursday to Friday.

Dr. Brown moved to approve the item as proposed by Dr. Gilbert. Mr. Barrett seconded the motion. Chair Campbell asked for those to approve with aye, and those who do not with no. Mr. Barrett voted no; all others voted with aye.

## VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

### TSBA Leadership Conference and Annual Convention

Ms. Rainier said she has spoken with Dr. Gilbert about the closing speaker at the convention and getting information about food sources so that extra food can be given to those who are hungry.

Ms. Phillips said she was impressed by speaker Yung Zao who discussed educational differences between the United States and Asia and India. She said he was very knowledgeable about testing and applying testing information. She noted that the speaker said American children score lower in science and reading; however, the Asian and Indian students are not going on to become scientists and readers, or create things and become entrepreneurs. Ms. Phillips said we are

creating the best scientists, writers, and STEM leaders in the world, and not to let test scores be intimidating.

Ms. Smith said she enjoyed the legislative session at the convention. She commended Chair Campbell on the joint session organized last week with the legislators and the two school boards.

#### Inclement Weather/School Closing Procedure

Dr. Gilbert gave a brief review of the inclement weather policy. She advised that the Communications Department will post school schedules on the website and twitter, and to local news and radio as well as contact transportation and ESP. Dr. Gilbert emphasized the primary concern is safety of children, so we will talk to police and transportation.

#### Personnel Update

#### Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report

Mr. Anderson advised the Board this is the normal trend until sales taxes from holidays and property taxes start coming in. He said the district is at 33% of the year. Directing the Board to line number two (2), local option sales tax, he said the district is up this year and ahead of projection. Mr. Anderson reminded everyone to please do your holiday shopping in Murfreesboro to continue the sales tax revenue trend. He said the district is on target at 24.3%. Referencing expenditures, Mr. Anderson said the district is right in line with where it should be for this year in comparison to last year. Mr. Anderson said he expects to hear about growth money in January to see if the district will gain from that pool, especially since extra teachers had to be hired to cover the growth.

#### Attendance Report

Mr. Anderson stated that numbers for Special Education will increase as years go on. The October report shows the district at 19.47 for grades K-3, 20.89 for grades 4-6, and a 19.97 overall average. He said attendance went from 98% to 97% in October. Ms. Phillips asked if new students are pretty evenly spread throughout system. Mr. Anderson said John Pittard continues to grow as well as Black Fox, Mitchell-Neilson, and Northfield. He said Overall Creek is growing a little bit but expects another influx of students after the first of year.

### VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Gilbert reminded the Board of the 500 new students, particularly Kindergarten, which presents additional challenges. She said there is some Special Education carryover money, and she would like to add a behavior assistant who would work with Kim Frank and Stephanie Stavinoga. She said the position would not exceed \$30,000 annually, begin in January and run through May. She said that would give the district another set of hands and eyes. Dr. Brown moved to approve the position, and Mr. King seconded. All approved less Mr. Barrett's vote because he exited the meeting prior to the vote.

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair Campbell reminded the Board they would not meet in December, and would be back in January. Mr. King moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Smith. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:47 p.m.

---

Director of Schools