

Minutes

June 27, 2013

The Greene County Board of Education met in regular session Thursday, June 27, 2013 at 5:00 p.m., at the Greene Technology Center.

Board members present were: Chairman Roger Jones, Vice-Chairman Nathan Brown, Kathy Austin, Kathy Crawford, Tom Cobble, Rex Hopson, and Deborah Johnson. County Attorney, Roger Woolsey was also in attendance.

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order and welcomed the new administrative staff at the central office and thanked those going out for their years of dedication and service. Kathy Crawford led the pledge to the flag and Vice-Chairman Nathan Brown led the invocation.

On motion by Hopson; second by Cobble, the board approved the agenda including the consent agenda and addendum.

Mary Lou Woolsey gave a brief update on the budget. Sales tax has increased 0.6% and property taxes are up 29%. Electricity has decreased \$52,954, water is up due to leaks in the system and diesel is up 2% (9% over last year). Ms. Austin and Ms. Johnson both presented a series of questions regarding budget line items which Ms. Woolsey addressed for them.

Steve Tipton, Energy Education Specialist, gave a report on an Energy Savings Grant of \$30,532 that will bring basic guideline changes for the Energy Efficient School Initiative (EESI). This grant will allow us to utilize the funds for upgrading part of our thermostat control system to a web-based system. Mr. Tipton suggested that an energy policy would need to be discussed at a later time to meet energy standards.

Dr. Kirk introduced the new central office staff; Mr. Bill Ripley, Assistant Director of Academics and Human Resources; Mr. David McLain, Assistant Director of Operations and Student Services; Dr. Kristi Wallin, K-8 Curriculum Supervisor; Dr. Julia Lamons, K-8 Data Assessment and Evaluation Supervisor. Mr. Ripley gave out the personnel update to the Board and a report listing teachers, their license number, type of license, education level and endorsements. Upon questioning by Mrs. Austin, Dr. Kirk responded that policy and procedure had been followed with regard to assignment and hiring. Ms. Johnson requested to be able to view the online TELS surveys. Chairman Jones replied that that information is of public record through the state department and that Mr. Ripley would be able to assist her with access to that site. He further stated that hiring, firing and transfers were an administrative function and that the Board needed to trust the director to make those decisions.

Mr. Phillip Cutshaw, a teacher at South Greene High School, gave a brief report on cross curricular work he came up with for his engineering class using Curriculum in the Clouds. He feels this is great for building common core.

Mr. David McLain gave a report on the status of current capital projects.

- Chuckey-Roof 100% complete and striping parking lot 100% complete

- Chuckey-Doak High-Safety Entrance buzzer has been moved and we are waiting on new door, the window is out and cabinets have been reworked; Paving down to the Field house is 100% complete
- DeBusk-Re-keying and guttering are in process
- Glenwood-Roof 100% complete
- Chuckey-Doak Middle-striping parking lot 100% complete
- McDonald-Old exterior gym doors are out and waiting on new doors
- Mosheim-Roadway 100% complete, waiting on guardrail
- Nolachuckey-Striping parking lot 100% complete
- Ottway-Striping parking lot 100% complete
- South Greene High-Waiting on Safety Entrance doors; plumbing project 100% complete; Walkway to the football field is complete; waiting on stalls for bathrooms at football field/concession stand
- West Green High-All prep work has been completed for the safety door entrance; the office floor has been installed; front office countertop has been re-worked and waiting on doors; old HVAC units are out and the wiring and thermostats are 60 % complete and all block and brick work 100% complete; holes for HVAC units are being cut and are 50% complete; the new units will be delivered July 1st
- West Pines-Old gym doors have been removed and waiting on new doors; painting is complete

Ms. Johnson requested a copy of the exact figures of what the capital projects cost and Mr. McLain said that he would be sure the Board received a copy.

Director of Schools, Dr. Vicki Kirk, addressed the following items in her report:

School News

- All principal evaluations have been completed and uploaded to the state system. It is a very thorough process and allows me to get to know the principal very well and to see what is working and what is not working and what needs adjustments at their school.

Personnel

- We have had many administrative positions open at the central office this year and we have been moving through the process to get those filled by July 1st. If that creates more open positions at the schools then we will work to get those filled during the month of July.

TN Council of Career & Technical Education

- The Committee received a report from Danielle Mezera, Assistant Commissioner. The State is looking to improve equipment in secondary programs. There is a survey out now to CTE directors seeking input on what is needed and why.
- She introduced Pathways Tennessee, which target pathways from 7th grade to grade 14. This is working toward alignment of 7-12 programming with post-secondary programming and with industry needs. Their plan is very much like what we are doing in Greene County already.
- The State is supporting expansion of dual credit and AP.

- There is a bill that is being examined to provide an “occupational diploma”. This diploma has nothing to do with CTE; it would be provided for special education students who have prepared themselves for an occupation and would be in place of a regular diploma, but students receiving this diploma would still not count as completers.
- There was discussion of Career Ready Certificates. The TTC’s use Work Keys which is a test published by ACT and geared toward CTE graduates. We are currently piloting the Job Fit exam which is similar to Work Keys. We will need to watch the effort to have Tennessee become a career readiness state. This would take legislative action, but if it does pass, we would need to look at using Work Keys. We may need to examine this anyway since it is the exam the TTC’s use Career and Technical Education informative meeting showing that the state is looking to improve equipment in secondary education across the state. They are also looking to introduce Pathway TN which mirrors what we have already been doing.

Director’s Contract

- The legality of the following clause in my contract was questioned at the last Board Meeting:
- *The DIRECTOR may, however, undertake consulting work, speaking engagements, writing, lecturing, or other activities, which do not interfere with the discharge of the DIRECTOR’S duties and responsibilities thereunder. The determination of the BOARD of Education as to whether such other work interferes with the discharge of the DIRECTOR’S duties and responsibilities thereunder shall be conclusive.*
- The question of legality was related to TCA 49-2-301. This question was submitted to County Attorney, Roger Woolsey, and his reply is as follows:

In response to the question concerning T.C.A. 49-2-301, it would appear from the reading of the statute that as the Director of Schools you are employed full-time in that capacity and would not be at liberty to perform additional functions for the Board of Education outside of your duties as the Director of Schools for compensation. The literal reading of the statute states that it is a Class C Misdemeanor for the director to take any other contract “under the **Board of Education** or to perform any other services for additional compensation or for any director to act as a principal or teacher at any school or to become the owner of a school warrant other than that allowed for the director’s services as director”. Reading the statute in its entirety it appears obvious to me that the intent of the statute is that it is your responsibility to devote your full time attention, knowledge and skills solely and exclusively to the business and interest of the Board of Education in the Greene County School District. You are not to take on auxiliary jobs or perform additional contracts **for the Board of Education** or provide any other services to the **Board for additional compensation**. In other words you can’t wear two hats for the Board of Education.

- However, I have difficulty understanding how one could reasonably argue that there is anything in T.C.A. 49-2-301(c) that would prevent you from doing or performing any of those activities described in your contract as long as you are not doing these activities for the school district for which you receive compensation as the Director of Schools. Unless it can be shown that any of those activities would interfere with the discharge of your duties as the Director of Schools, I don't see any problems.
- I also asked Chuck Cagle about this as I was discussing another matter with him. He stated that Mr. Woolsey's interpretation is correct, that the intent of the law (and he was involved in drafting the bill) was to prevent Boards from paying the Director of Schools for more than one job within the school system.

Upcoming Reports

- Our Central Team will be planning an information session for the Board in August. We would like to bring information to you on Common Core, PARCC testing, Greene County's PD Program, Response to Intervention (RTI), High School Programming, Technology PARCC Readiness, Facilities Update and Energy Savings. This will set the tone for your annual retreat which we would like to plan for September.
- I have been pleased and proud to see our teachers attending professional development this summer – so many wonderful offerings! We have our own folks leading sessions at Common Core training, at the Niswonger Symposium and for those in our own district at our Central Office. It is indeed refreshing to see this leadership and the love for learning that all these participants exhibit. I am so proud of Greene County!

Ms. Austin stated that she would encourage the public and parents to attend the informational meetings about Common Core and PARCC readiness and felt it would be very helpful to them. She then asked the question of Dr. Kirk, if all schools were choosing the same option in the first article of the evaluations showing percentages of achievements. Dr. Kirk responded that it is a principal's choice and it is not intended to be a comparison but a benchmark for their needs and what they are trying to accomplish.

On motion by Brown; second by Crawford, the board approved a CDHS/NGSH Girls' Soccer Co-Op.

The Board, on motion by Crawford; second by Hopson, approved an IDEA Preschool Budget Amendment after Ms. Johnson asked Dr. Pruitt a question regarding the move of money for contracted services. Dr. Pruitt responded that we had contracted with a retired teacher for speech screenings and evaluations.

On motion by Brown; second by Hopson, the board approved an IDEA Part B discretionary Grant. Dr. Pruitt clarified the purpose of the grant, stating that it will be used to assist Special Education teachers in teaching Algebra I and English II.

On motion by Cobble; second by Hopson, the board approved an IDEA Part B Budget Amendment. Ms. Johnson posed the question to Dr. Pruitt what the money for other supplies were being used for. Dr. Pruitt responded that this was for medical supplies and supplies for the upcoming year.

The Board, on motion by Crawford; second by Cobble, approved the Race to the Top Budget Amendment. Dr. Kirk responded to questions about payments to Learning Leaders and Academic Coaches. She stated that Learning Leaders would only receive stipends as long as RTTT funds were available and that Academic Coaches were now funded from Title II. It had been the plan from the beginning to move Academic Coaches from RTTT to Federal.

The Board, on motion by Hopson; second by Johnson, approved a Budget Amendment for the Title Programs. Ms. Austin asked to see totals for the budgets for all of the programs. Ms. Woolsey responded that she would make that available.

The Board, on motion by Cobble; second by Hopson, approved the 2013-2014 Title and Carl Perkins Budget.

The Board, on motion by Brown; second by Hopson, approved the 2013-2014 General Purpose Budget Amendments. Ms. Austin asked about the line item 71100-429 amount of \$60,500 for instructional use to which Ms. Woolsey and Dr. Kirk confirmed that was for Benchmark testing and STAR Reading. Ms. Austin also asked about \$36,000 instructional equipment money to which they answered that it was for technology labs and her last question was regarding \$20,000 to Transportation and Dr. Kirk responded that it was for Bus Video cameras.

On motion by Cobble; second by Johnson, the Board approved the Budget for TN Lead Grant.

The Board, on motion by Crawford; second by Cobble, approved the IDEA/ESEA Consolidated Application and Budget. Ms. Johnson stated she was confused about the use of Title II money. Mrs. Phillips explained that it was for use in training teachers and professional development in core academics. It is also used for teachers to take the praxis test in other areas of core academics. Ms. Johnson asked about the reference of paying for substitute teachers' training to which Ms. Phillips responded that it was to pay a substitute while the teacher was away at a training or professional development.

On motion by Austin; second by Crawford, the Board approved the Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) Application.

On motion by Crawford; second by Hopson, the Board approved the 2013-2014 Annual Agenda. Ms. Austin asked the question about the Director's evaluation being moved to the fall in order to have the achievement data for the system. Dr. Kirk and Chairman Jones suggested to continue the discussion on doing that possibly at the next meeting or once they know when the data is coming in, maybe in October or November.

A discussion ensued regarding whether or not minutes should be taken at workshops. Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Austin expressed their belief that this was required and should be done. Mr. Jones responded that no law requires keeping minutes at a workshop. Mr. Jones called on County Attorney Roger Woolsey to address the issue. There was a discussion about the opinion expressed by Mr. Chuck Cagle, an attorney retained by the

board for certain legal work. It was concluded that Mr. Cagle recommended keeping minutes, but that it was not a law. There was discussion about the difference between workshops and committees, with general consensus that minutes should be kept at committee meetings, but no consensus was achieved around the issue of minutes of workshops. The discussion was concluded with the request that this issue be placed as an item on the next board agenda.

The Board, on motion by Brown; second by Cobble and with discussions on the Planning Grant Application for TAP from Ms. Johnson and Ms. Austin, approved the Planning Grant Application for TAP. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Austin both voted no. There was discussion regarding the relationship between TAP and merit pay. It was clarified that the district will develop a differentiated pay plan, but that TAP was separate from this. It was emphasized that this would be a planning year for TAP.

On motion by Austin; second by Cobble, the board approved the Continuation of the 2012-13 General Fund Budget until the adoption of the 2013-2014 Budget on or before September 1, 2013.

The board discussed changing the next regular board meeting from July 25th to the week of July 29 - 31st. No meeting could be decided on due to scheduling conflicts. A meeting will be called if needed and if a quorum was available. No action was taken.

The board on motion by Crawford; second by Cobble, approved the Technology Bids.

The Board discussed the possibility of Action on a Disciplinary Decision with a report being provided to the Board by Mrs. Phillips. There are three possible options being considered; either to uphold the decision, modify the decision or grant a hearing. On motion by Crawford to grant a hearing; second by Johnson, and a roll call vote of 4 no and 3 yes; the decision to grant a hearing failed to pass. On motion by Crawford to modify the decision; second by Johnson and a roll call vote of 5 no and 2 yes, the decision to modify the decision failed therefore the recommendation of the board is the uphold Disciplinary Decision.

Mr. Jones then announces that the Board Secretary, Melissa Batson has decided to resign after this meeting and thanked her for her years of service. Ms. Batson says that it has been an interesting job and she feels privileged to have done this for the past 10 years. Dr. Kirk also praised Ms. Batson for her professionalism and the work she has done.

Mrs. Austin and Mrs. Johnson expressed concern about organizations and activities Dr. Kirk participates in, particularly those associated with common core. Mr. Jones responded that Dr. Kirk will not forego her dedication to Greene County Schools and that it is an honor to have her participate in state level activities.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Thursday, August 22nd 2013 at the Central Office.

On motion by Hopson; second by Cobble, and with no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.