

## SCHOOL BOARD FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD  
MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.  
QUINCY, FLORIDA

March 24, 2026

4:30 P.M.

The workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Ms. Cathy S. Johnson; Ms. Stacey S. Hannigon; Mr. Steve Scott, and Mr. Charlie D. Frost. Also present were Mr. Elijah Key, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board; Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others.

1. Call To Order

The workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 4:34 p.m.

2. Financial Information

Mrs. Bruner shared with the Board information on the FEMA reports from Rostan (Mr. Jeremy Landry and Mr. Joshua Bennett) about the gym and cafeteria of the new K-8sSchool. Ms. Johnson asked if the question was to go with the gym or the cafeteria. Mrs. Bruner stated that depending on what can be accomplished with the dollars available and the time line that we are under. She stated that it would be the funding or the timing. She stated that proposals will be sent out to make sure the dollar amount do not exceed the dollars available, and if the project can be done in a timely manner. She stated that if we can get these projects most of the way complete before the deadline, then we'll have a better chance of asking for an extension past June 30. She stated that the district has already been instructed by the Department of Emergency Management that we need to try and make sure all these projects or purchases can be handled by June 30 if possible.

Number 4 - Shanks Middle School Campus - Project 103021. Mrs. Bruner stated that this is where we would request the alternate project for these funds to be eligible for the gym. As you can see, the federal cost shares are good at \$1.3, and for us with the State would be \$218,469.43.

She stated that there was a little bit of more flexibility with the last project is the 77055, a 428 project, titled Chattahoochee Warehouse, and Greensboro Elementary School. She stated that the bulk of these funds were used for renovating the maintenance department building. She stated that we thought that it might be possible that the extra cost could be used to reimburse the district, or the Board can decide if they wanted to use it for equipment such as a generator. Mr. McMillan wanted to know if there were still a lot of repairs needed at Greensboro Elementary School. Mrs. Bruner responded yes, the buildings are listed. Mr. McMillan stated that a further breakdown of all of this is in the packet. He wanted to know about the supplemental information. Mrs. Bruner stated that was on the 428 projects, the Chattahoochee Warehouse and Greensboro Elementary School. She stated that the supplemental information were ideas for the Board if they wanted to move in a certain direction, these would be the dollar amounts. She stated that she was requesting a contract extension for Ms. Kathy Sned's consulting service. She stated that this is our contractor (Mrs. Kathy Sneads) that has been helping the district with all of our financial records, all of our reporting, helping the district get the AFR completed, answering the auditors. She stated that we are working on responses to the audit findings. She stated that Mrs. Sneads has exhausted her hours so we're requesting an extension of those hours from the present to the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2026. Mr. Frost stated that he would like to see the district's finance department get to the point where they don't need outside consulting. He stated that the finance department is fully staff. Mr. Scott wanted to know if we are looking to extend the contract past June, or is this it. Mrs. Bruner stated that we would have to re-evaluate at the end of the fiscal year on how much more time we would need to go forward to find what those items are.

Mr. Key stated that all departments within the district contract things out. He stated that there are things that we contract out that we just don't have the expertise on. He stated that it has been a year that we have not contracted

the AFR cost report and some other things. Mr. McMillian stated that he has been on the Board for 7 ½ years, and since he has been here there's been somebody contracted. He stated that when Mrs. Bonnie Wood was the finance director, she had contracts to help with work. He stated that the AFR is a time consuming document, and takes a lot of work and expertise to complete. Ms. Johnson wanted to know if there was a timeline on how long we would need the contractor. Mrs. Bruner stated that this was for research, completing the AFR and general assistance. She stated that there is a list of procedures and each fiscal year will be less hours needed. Mrs. Hannigon stated that she wanted to take the focus off that and put it back on us as a school district and the School Board. She stated that when we went into the contract, I don't know if this is before you got here or after, but what was the plan going in? She clearly stated that there was some unknown at play because if she as a business owner step out and enter a contract, normally before you enter a contract you have your deliverables and would have already assessed the situation you're dealing with. She stated that you would have figured out there's a need, an unmet need. She stated that then she would reach outside to an external source to meet that need. She stated that from her standpoint, we did not, maybe we did not do enough homework on our side and maybe it's just the unknown. She stated that we thought that a year would be sufficient, but the deeper we dug, we realized a year is not enough because of all the discoveries that were made. Mrs. Bruner stated that the contract started in late 2024, because she came on in July 2024. Mrs. Bruner explained why the help is needed in the finance department was due to the lack of experience and job filling. She stated that she doesn't have the exact timing for the need and would like to take it every few months. Ms. Hannigon stated that maybe what would help us, if only on the deliverables we add to this contract that the vendor to do an assessment of our finance department, so that we can pinpoint truly where the gaps are, what the needs are, and to truly get a realistic timeline. She stated that she understands the frustrations expressed by some of the board members because it keeps coming back and we keep hearing about catch up. She stated that next week we're going into budget workshops which would be an opportunity to have this kind of conversation regarding what the finance department needs are.

Ms. Kathy Sneads stated that there will not be any additional fees. She stated that the fee would be consumed in hours because we've moved out of this point in time. She stated that she thought that the Superintendent and Mrs. Bruner's desire for me initially was to be able to come in and train staff on the day-to-day operations, and get staff up to speed. She stated that is what stopped it, having to train staff who did not return and starting that process over again slowed it down more. She stated that she has been assessing all the time. She stated that she can do the assessment in a written format. She stated that it's not about the people, it's about the day-to-day operations, the procedures that should be followed that still are unknown to the department, the daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually things, because there are still so many things Mrs. Bruner has still not even seen yet. Ms. Hannigon requested that the Board add an assessment to the proposed contract. Mr. McMillian stated that what the Board must understand is that's going to consume hours that's needed to try and get training and other things done that Mrs. Bruner needs to have done by the contractor. He stated that he was not sure that it's wise for us to and an assessment on this particular contract extension. He stated that in the event that she needs more time and the following fiscal year maybe that's something the Board might want to address. He stated that to the Board, let's not consume hours on something else, when we need to deal with issues that we already have.

Mrs. Bruner stated that the State did not settle their budget, so we don't have that 1 calculation is not in yet. She wanted to know if at the budget workshop, whether the Board wanted to discuss a recap of the current year and where the district currently stands. She asked if the Board wanted to move the budget workshop out a week or two in hopes that the State might have a count 1 soon. She stated that the first numbers of the budget are provided, and the governor adopts the budget. She stated that will be the starting place to begin developing the budget. She stated that adjustments to the budget can be made throughout the year with different calculations. She stated that those are the numbers that we use for the tentative budget. Mr. McMillian stated that the workshop did not need postponing. He stated that he wants to keep the workshop as scheduled because the Board needed to get familiar with the development of the budget process.

### 3. Facilities Update

Mr. Hudson stated that B&T fencing was an item on the agenda to provide and restore safety in the boundaries of Carter Parramore Academy and Gadsden Central Academy. He stated that another item on the agenda is for threshold inspection for the new K8 school. Mr. McMillian requested and explanation of the threshold inspections. Mr. Hudson stated that the buildings must be inspected for safety. He stated that the building must meet certain criteria, which would be over three stories high and can hold over 500 people with the structure of the building. He stated that these are some things that the contractors could not place inside of the contracts due to not knowing

certain things. He stated that these are paid for or done as time goes on. Mr. Key stated that the GMP (Guaranteed Maximum Price) have some items that are not included in the contracts that the School Board is responsible for. He stated that the monies will be returned to the district. He stated that the fencing is needed when students are occupying the buildings. He stated that we are preparing for the next school year when extra students are housed on these campuses while the new K-8 school is being built. He stated that this is a requirement from Safe Schools and the Health Department.

Mr. Hudson stated that resurfacing of the track at the high school has begun. He shared some photographs where they took up all the old asphalt and are getting ready to start laying the new asphalt. He stated that the second phase will include laying the rubber on the track. He also shared with the Board a picture of a commercial refrigerator at the high school. He stated that the refrigerator is probably low on Freon because all the lines are freezing up. He stated that Allstate Construction will share with the Board an update on the new K8 school.

Mr. Andrew Wellman, Mr. Steven Wood and Mr. Chris Marshall (Allstate Construction) shared with the Board a schedule and progress summary of the new K-8 school. Mr. Wellman (Vice President for Operations) stated that Mr. Chris Marshall is the Senior Project Manager and Mr. Steven Wood is the Project Superintendent who can be seen at the site daily. He stated that things are really coming along nicely. He stated that a weekly report is presented to the district team. He stated that Mr. Hudson and the Superintendent are very involved with what we're doing out there day-to-day as well as meeting frequently. He stated that some site clearing and mass grading is near completion. He stated that work is still being done for mass grading and finalizing how the site is going to be balanced, and also doing storm water infrastructure. He stated that there is already a new pond down at the lower end of the western side of the site. He stated that all of the piping and the structures that carry storm water are right from the new school and being installed so that everything can be channeled to that pond. He stated that the utility piping, such as domestic water, chilled water, heating water, those are all being installed right now. He stated that the fire sprinkler or fire hydrants, and all the piping is currently under underway. He stated that the site plan for the new bus loop goes around the central utility plant. He stated that the main building of the school with the cafeteria which will be a hurricane shelter building. He stated that that the flow of work will continue to the new classroom building, and the administration building.

Mr. Marshall shared with the Board progress photos of the new K-8 school. He stated that in June 2026 you will be able to see a huge difference with the remaining buildings being demolished. He stated that we're all working well with one another to make sure that this new school is built. He stated that plans are to have the new K-8 school built in time for the 2027 – 2028 school year.

4. Educational Items by the Superintendent

None

5. School Board Requests and Concerns

None

6. The workshop adjourned at 5:53 p.m.