

TENTATIVE BUDGET HEARING

GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
 MAX D. WALKER ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
 35 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
 QUINCY, FLORIDA 32351

July 30, 2024

6:00 P.M.

This tentative budget hearing was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, Chairwoman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, Ms. Cathy S. Johnson, 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 tentative budget hearing was called to order by the Chairwoman, Mrs. Karema D. Dudley, at 6:00 p.m.

2. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was led by Mr. Leroy McMillan.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited in unison.

4. PUBLIC HEARING – Tentative Budget and Millage Rate

- a. Approval of Resolution Number 2024-01 for the Tentative Millage Rates for the 2024 – 2025 fiscal year

Fund Source: General Fund and Capital Project

Amount: Refer to millage rates and amounts stated on the Resolution

Mrs. Dudley welcomed everyone to the Gadsden County School Board's Public Hearing on the Tentative Millage to be Levied and the Tentative Budget for 2024 – 2025. She stated that the State law rolled back rate is 2.9549 mills. She stated that the local Board rolled back rate is 2.0061 mills. She stated that the following proposed total millage is 7.29% more than the rolled back rate. She stated that the millage rates to be levied are as follows: the required local effort is 3.139 mills, the basic discretionary is .748 mills, the district local capital improvement funds is 1.5000 mills, and the total proposed levy is 5.3870 mills. She offered the general public an opportunity to speak and ask questions on the millage levies, the increase over the rolled back rate, and the budget.

Following Mrs. Bruner's reading of Resolution Number 2024-01, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 01 for the Tentative Millage Rates for the 2024 – 2025 fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Approval of Resolution Number 2024-02 for the Tentative Budget for fiscal year 2024 – 2025

Fund Source: All Funds Budget

Amount: Refer to tentative budget

Following Mrs. Bruner's reading of Resolution Number 2024-02, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 02 for the Tentative Budget for the 2024 – 2025 fiscal year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

Mrs. Dudley entertained a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Charlie D. Frost, seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

5. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS

b. 2024 – 2025 Contracts for PAEC Central Services

Fund Source: General Fund

Amount: \$120,862.52

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

c. Contractual Agreement for Inter-County Transfer of Exceptional Students and the School Board of Gadsden County

Fund Source: FEFP

Amount: N/A

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

d. Contractual Agreement between Independent Contractor Leslie Peterson, MS CCC SLP and the School Board of Gadsden County

Fund Source: FEFP Dollars

Amount: \$60.00 per hour

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

e. Contractual Agreement between More Ability Therapy Services, LLC and the School Board of Gadsden County

Fund Source: FEFP

Amount: \$60.00 per hour (for actual hours worked) Occupational Therapy
\$45.00 per hour (for actual hours worked) Occupational Therapy Assistant

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

f. Memorandum of Understanding between Healing Hearts Music Therapy and the School Board of Gadsden County

Fund Source: IDEA Grant

Amount: \$20,000 (not to exceed)

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

g. Contractual Agreement between Speech and Dysphagia Consulting Group, LLC and the School Board of Gadsden County

Fund Source: FEFP Dollars

Amount: \$60.00 per hour (for actual hours worked) Speech Language Pathologist
\$40.00 per hour (for actual hours worked) Speech Language Pathologist Assistant

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- h. Contractual Services with Aubrey’s Heart Therapy Services and the School Board of Gadsden County
 Fund Source: FEFP dollars
 Amount: \$60.00 per hour (for actual hours worked) Speech Language Pathologist
 \$40.00 per hour (for actual hours worked) Speech Language Pathologist Assistant
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- i. Gadsden Mental Health Application: Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan
 Fund Source: N/A
 Amount: N/A
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- j. Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (P & P)
 Fund Source: N/A
 Amount: N/A
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.
- k. Edgenuity
 Fund Source: Title I
 Amount: \$78,745.00
 ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Items preceded by an (*) asterisk were removed from the CONSENT agenda at the beginning of the meeting and moved to the DISCUSSION portion of the agenda.

***5. AGREEMENT/CONTRACT/PROJECT APPLICATIONS**

- a. 2024 – 2025 School Resource Deputy Program Agreement

Fund Source: General Fund
 Amount: To Be Determined Based on \$45.00/hour Rate

In response to Mr. Scott’s concern regarding School Resource Deputies not being employees of the district, and the district being held harmless for any damages, Mrs. Buckhalt stated that the agreement is a shared responsibility between the school district and the sheriff’s department. She stated that the agreement will be operated the same as previous year. Mrs. Minnis stated that Florida Statute 768.28 waives the sovereign immunity for liability for both parties.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve agenda item #5a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

6. EDUCATIONAL ISSUE

- a. Advocacy Committee Representative and Advocacy Committee Alternate

Board members appointed Ms. Cathy S. Johnson to serve as Advocacy Committee Representative and Mr. Leroy McMillan to serve as the Advocacy Committee Alternate.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

- b. Health Insurance Proposal and Rate Increase for the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year

Mr. McMillan stated that he was concerned about not having a meeting with the insurance committee. He wanted to know what was the Board’s request regarding the health insurance increase. Mr. Key

stated that the request is for the Board to not absorb any cost of the insurance increase at this time in order for open enrollment to continue. He stated that open enrollment begin Monday, August 5th. He stated that the insurance matter could be revisited when the insurance committee convenes. He stated that a more in depth analysis could be done to ensure that absorbing some or all of the increase can be fiscally sustained. Mrs. Bruner stated that employee's September paycheck will show the insurance rate increase.

Mr. John Pat Thomas, Pat Thomas Insurance & Associates, addressed the Board and stated that he met with the Superintendent and Mrs. Bruner on July 8th regarding the rate increase for health insurance. He stated that he did not receive the information until the last week of June. He stated that teachers return to school next week and open enrollment starts Monday, August 5th until September 3rd. He stated that everything is tied to the payroll period. He stated that the Board needed to give approval on the health insurance rate increase.

Mrs. Dudley stated that she was concerned about the cost to the employees. She stated that until a decision is made, the employees would absorb the cost of the health insurance.

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation on agenda item #6b for the Board to absorb the health insurance rate increase. The motion was seconded by Mr. Charlie D. Frost and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Key acknowledged each school principal and their school grades. Ms. Allysun Davis, Principal – Gadsden Elementary Magnet School – letter grade “A”; Mrs. Germaine Kirkland, Principal, Ms. Denesha Kitchen, Assistant Principal, Ms. Sonja Wilson-Lewis, Assistant Principal - George W. Munroe Elementary, – letter grade “B”; Ms. Tiresia Galloway, Principal – Crossroad Academy – letter grade “B”; Mr. Stephen Pitts, Principal, Mr. James Mills, Assistant Principal – Greensboro Elementary School – letter grade B”; Ms. Pamela Jones, Principal, Mr. Christopher Germany, Assistant Principal – Stewart Street Elementary School – letter grade “C”; Ms. Thelma Hickman, Principal, Ms. Sandra Riggins, Assistant Principal, Ms. Deborah Shaffer Dickey, Assistant Principal – letter grade “C”; Mrs. Chelsea Franklin, former Principal, Mr. O'Hara Black, Assistant Principal, Ms. Cleanita Wiggins, Assistant Principal – letter grade “C”; Ms. Camry Floyd, Principal, James A. Shanks Middle School – letter grade “D”; Ms. Zola Akins, Principal – Chattahoochee Elementary School – letter grade “D”; and Ms. Kimberly Cummings, Principal, Ms. Shannon Williams, Assistant Principal – West Gadsden Middle School – letter grade “D”. He stated that he would give Board members a call regarding the new principal for Gadsden County High School.

8. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Ms. Johnson invited everyone to the Second Harvest Food Drive on August 2nd at the Havana Community Development Center beginning at 10:00 a.m. She also invited everyone to One Gadsden Foundation in Partnership with MLK Foundation of Florida 13th Annual Community Resource Fair on August 11th at the old Havana Northside High School from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mr. McMillan stated that teachers and administrators should dress like professionals when working.

Mr. Frost thanked staff for attending the Board meeting. He stated that he loved visiting the schools and helping students. He stated that the Board should look into an ownership representative for the new school building project.

In response to Mrs. Dudley's concern regarding the teacher supply money, Mrs. Bruner stated that the union agreed not to use Classroom Wallet for distribution of the teacher supply money. Mrs. Bruner stated that the teacher supply money will be distributed to teachers very soon. Mrs. Dudley acknowledged all of the schools for a job well done. She appreciated all the teachers for their hard work. She declared and decreed that the district would have a great school year. She stated that as a team we will work together.

9. The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.