

Bamberg County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Bamberg County School District Office
May 29, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Members present: Board Chair Janeth Walker, Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte, Secretary Naomi Eckels, Trustee Gwendolyn D. Bamberg, Trustee Tonie A. Holman, Trustee Cynthia “Cindy” F. Hurst (via Google Meet), and Trustee Blossom Thompson

Absent: Trustee Harrier Coker and Trustee John L. Hiers

1. **Call meeting to order:** Board Chair Janeth Walker called the meeting to order.

Notice to Media: In accordance with the S. C. Code of Laws of 1976, as amended, Section 30-4-80(E), The Times and Democrat Newspaper, The Bamberg County Leader, WIIZ 97.9 FM, WBSC-LP 102.3 FM, and the Bamberg County School District website have been notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Blossom Thompson seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed 7-0.

4. **Discussion: 2024-2025 Budget**

Handout: 2024-2025 Budget

During a budget work session of the 2024-2025 budget prepared by Chief Financial Officer Devon Furr, it was noted that the 2024-2025 budget being presented is based off of the House version of the budget, which has not been passed. Ms. Furr requested that a continuing resolution be passed at the next scheduled board meeting to continue operating under the current budget since the 2024-2025 budget would not be in place by June 30, 2024.

Ms. Furr advised the employer portion of insurance is going up 11.8% for the new fiscal year. Ms. Furr further advised she had to increase the district’s teacher salary scale from 23 years to 28 years and some cells increased \$2,000.00-\$4,000.00. Ms. Furr indicated this was the most significant increase in the 2024-2025 budget. At the end of 2022-2023, Bamberg County School District’s unassigned fund balance was \$8,934,246.00 which is a hefty fund balance for the district. Ms. Furr indicated the district only needed approximately \$3,000,000.00 to meet the required three month operating expenditures.

Ms. Furr informed the board that the legislators were cracking down on district’s fund balances due to the fact that many districts fund balances were well above what is required. The required amount is 15% or three months of a district’s operating budget. Ms. Furr advised that districts were going to have to start reporting their fund balances monthly.

Ms. Furr presented district salary scales for the occupational therapists and school psychologists which were compiled based off of neighboring districts in an effort to be competitive. Ms. Furr also presented two classified scales for the boards review. The original scale went out to 17 years and Ms. Furr added 6 more years to the scale, which extended the sale out to 23 years, which would benefit the employees who are paid off of this scale. Ms. Furr presented the second option which started classified employees off at \$15.00 an hour to be more in line with other local businesses and the long-term substitute rate established last year.

Ms. Furr further presented an optional formula to calculate administrative salaries, which would be calculated using the new teacher salary scale.

Ms. Furr advised the budget was not balanced and in order to have a balanced budget, she would need \$1,000,000.00 from the fund balance. Ms. Furr reminded the board that the SC Department of Revenue is in charge of Bamberg County School District's millage rate until 2027 and CPI plus growth could possibly be an option.

Discussion of the 2024-2025 budget concluded by the board directing Ms. Furr to see how increasing the classified salary scale would affect the overall budget and if it was something the district could sustain.

Trustee Cynthia Hurst ended her Google Meet attendance and exited the meeting.

5. **Executive Session**

Board Chair Janeth Walker called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Blossom Thompson seconded to enter Executive Session. The motion carried 6-0.

- a. Board Chair Janeth Walker noted that the Board would be moving into Executive Session to discuss Personnel – Budget 2024-2025.

Open session: Trustee Naomi Eckels moved and Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte seconded for the Board to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular session of the meeting. The motion carried 6-0.

6. **Action on Executive Session Items**

There was no action taken on Agenda Item 5 (a) Personnel – Budget 2024-2025 as there were no recommendations at this time.

7. **Adjourn**

Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Naomi Eckels seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

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Minutes approved:

Janeth Walker, Board Chair

Naomi Eckels, Secretary