

FINAL BUDGET HEARING

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

September 8, 2020

6:00 P.M.

This meeting was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis, Chairwoman; Mr. Leroy McMillan; and Mr. Steve Scott. Mr. Charlie D. Frost and Mr. Tyrone D. Smith via telephone conference. Mr. Roger P. Milton, Superintendent and Secretary to the Board. Mrs. Deborah Minnis, Attorney for the Board; and others were present via telephone conference.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The final budget hearing was called to order by the Chairwoman, Mrs. Audrey D. Lewis, at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Milton acknowledged and welcomed Mr. Mays' sister and her son to the meeting. He also acknowledged Master Sergeant Charles Roberts, Athletic Director.

Master Sergeant Roberts shared with the Board and update on the safety guidelines for football and other sports. He stated that there was a plethora of data on safety concerns. He stated the football players have their own towels, water bottles, face masks and face shields. He stated that social distance will be adhered to as much as possible with the players. He stated that the Gadsden County High School Jaguar Football Team have two home games and four away games scheduled. He stated that the concession stand will not sell any hot foods and will be open only during half time. He stated that the Health Department will test each student before the game. He stated that testing results have a 24 hour turnaround.

Following Board members issues and concerns, Mr. Milton stated that due to COVID-19 the county has safety guidelines to ensure that sports are aligned with their ordinance. He thanked Master Sergeant Roberts for his time and stated that although there are some reservations, he and the Board will support the Jaguar Football Team.

The Board gave consensus for Ms. Frederica Young with Ajax Building Corporation to serve as the Board's representative on the Value Adjustment Board.

2. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NUMBER 20-01 (reaffirmed at final budget hearing) and FDOE form ESE 524

Fund Source: General Fund and Capital Project

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

Following Mr. Mays' reading of Resolution Number 20-01, Mr. Leroy McMillan made a motion to adopt the Required Local Effort including Prior Period Funding Adjustment Tentative Millage Levy of 3.6750 the proposed amount to be raised of \$5,970,852. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

Following Mr. Mays reading of the Florida Department of Education Resolution determining the revenues and millages to be levied and the district school tax (nonvoted levy) the district school tax discretionary millage (nonvoted levy), and the district school tax additional millage (voted levy), district local capital improvement tax (nonvoted levy), and the district debt service tax (voted levy); the total millage rate to be levied was less than the rolled back rate computed pursuant to Section 200.065(1), F.S. by 2.28 percent; Mr. Leroy McMillan made a motion to adopt the district school tax (nonvoted levy) – certified taxable value of \$1,692,418,238 Required Local Effort Prior-Period Funding Adjustment Millage amount to be raised of \$5,970,852, and millage levy of 3.6750 mills; district school tax discretionary millage (nonvoted levy) – certified taxable value of \$1,692,418,238, discretionary operating amount to be raised of \$1,215,292, and millage levy of 0.7480 mills; district school tax additional millage (voted levy) of 0.00; district local capital improvement tax (nonvoted levy) – certified taxable value of \$1,692,418,238, local capital improvement amount to be raised \$2,437,083, and millage levy of 1.5000 mills; district debt service tax (voted levy) of 0.00; and the total millage rate to be levied was less than the rolled back rate computed pursuant to Section 200.065(1), F.S., by 2.28 percent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

3. APPROVAL OF THE 2020 - 2021 FINAL BUDGET – RESOLUTION 20-02

Fund Source: All Funds Budget
Amount: Refer to final budget

Following Mrs. Lewis' reading of Resolution Number 20-02 (final budget), Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to adopt the 2020 – 2021 final budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

4. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 20-03 – BOARD'S INTENTION ON USE OF GENERAL FUNDS

Fund Source: General Funds
Amount: N/A

Mr. Mays stated that Resolution Number 20-03 Board's Intention on Use of General Funds was identified in the previously adopted budget by Resolutions 20-01 and 20-02 as well as any subsequent budget amendments presented to the Board for approval, and are the only services that the district would provide in the absence of Federal funds.

Following discussion, Mr. Leroy McMillan made a motion to adopt Resolution Number 20-03 Board's Intention on Use of General Funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Steve Scott and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

5. APPROVAL OF THE 2019 – 2020 SUPERINTENDENT’S ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Fund Source: All Funds

Amount: Total Expenditures for 2019 – 2020

Mrs. Wood stated that she will share with the Board a detailed review of the 2019 – 2020 Superintendent’s Annual Financial Report at the next Board’s workshop.

Mrs. Lewis stated that she appreciated the Superintendent’s leadership. She thanked Mrs. Wood and the finance team for their hard work.

Mr. Milton thanked finance and the EMT team for their hard work. He stated that the district is continuing to recover from Hurricane Michael. He stated that along with staff turnover there have been tense moments. He stated that everyone has been able to work through issues together. He thanked everyone for their patience. He stated that the district has been able to manage its funds.

Following discussion of the 2019 -2020 Superintendent’s Annual Financial Report, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to approve the 2019 – 2020 Superintendent’s Annual Financial Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

6. PERSONNEL MATTERS (resignations, retirements, recommendations, leaves of absence, terminations of services, volunteers, and job descriptions)

a. Personnel 2020 – 2021

Following discussion, Mr. Steve Scott made a motion to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation to approve agenda item #6a. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leroy McMillan and carried unanimously.

ACTION REQUESTED: The Superintendent recommended approval.

7. EDUCATIONAL ITEMS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Milton stated that he was very proud of everyone during the 1st week of school. He stated that it was a challenge. He stated that overall it was a successful week although there were some technical issues with logins and passwords. He stated that he was proud of the teachers with the use of google classroom. He stated that there are still some concerns with staff regarding the virus. He stated that the Health Department provided a team to work with staff and their concerns. He stated that some PPE’s did not come in. He stated that the district is working to resolve all issues. He stated that some parents who chose virtual want to return to brick and mortar. He stated that he will have the parents work with principals and directors. He stated that schools are not overcrowded. He stated that he did not want to crowd the classrooms too quickly. He stated that the district will work with parents on individual cases.

8. SCHOOL BOARD REQUESTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Smith thanked everyone for their part in making Gadsden County great.

Mr. Scott stated that he was concerned about parents bringing students back to brick and mortar, although there are a number of reasons why students need to return to school. He stated that the district needed to do what they can to accommodate parents and students. He stated that he was concerned about the class size restrictions and whether there would be limitations to accommodate students.

Mr. Milton stated that if the parent makes a request with the principal, the principal will work with them. He stated that safety was first. He stated that he will not allow classes to be overcrowded. He stated that the district and schools will work with the parents. He stated that there is social distance on the school buses. He stated that the district will ensure the safety of everyone. He stated that the district is committed to bring all students back to brick and mortar.

Mr. Frost stated that he want the Board and staff to be on the same page when returning all students back to brick and mortar.

Mr. McMillan thanked the Superintendent for a well thought out plan to accommodate parents and students. He stated that the administrators are doing a great job to keep students safe. He stated that he was concerned about when the teacher classroom supply funds would be given to teachers.

Mrs. Wood stated that the teacher classroom supply funds are a high priority. She stated that there are 340 eligible employees who will receive \$248.00. She stated that the goal is for the employees to receive teacher classroom supply funds by Friday, September 11th.

Mr. McMillan stated that expectations are for every employee to do their job. He stated that he was concerned about professional learning. He stated that teachers need assistance in getting certified. He requested an update on the professional learning position and its job description. He stated that he was concerned about starting meetings without praying or reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. He stated that he want to have prayer and recite the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of every meeting.

Mr. Milton stated that he will consult with Attorney Minnis regarding the prayer and pledge at every meeting.

Mr. McMillan stated that something has to be done about the district's facilities. He stated that some of the building are old and dilapidated. He stated that the Board needed to start thinking about a new K-8 school in the city. He stated that he want to hire a consultant or lobbyist to help find funding to build the new school.

Mr. Milton stated that he will have dialogue with the finance director and Mr. McMillan to discuss finding a consultant or lobbyist to assist with finding funding for a new K-8 school.

Mrs. Lewis stated that her vision is to have a K-8 school in Quincy and a state of the art new high school. She stated that there are many variables with the conditions of the schools. She stated that many of the schools are near cemeteries. She stated that these are different times and children deserve better. She stated that the district needs a lobbyist. She stated that she was also concerned about the upkeep of the grounds. She recognized Gadsden Technical Institute's carpentry students for building a shed. She stated that local businesses donated materials for the shed. She stated that she believes in career education.

Mr. Milton stated that he will meet with Mr. McMillan to address his concerns. He stated that he was proud to hear the Board's advocacy for a K-8 school. He stated that four years ago he advocated for a K-8 school and school consolidation. He stated that it feels his heart with joy to hear the urgency to have a K-8 school.

Mrs. Judith Mandela, President GCCTA, acknowledged the teachers for their hard work and for shifting to online learning. She stated that she has been advocating for professional development for the teachers. She stated that she was glad to hear of the innovative things from teachers. She thanked the teachers and administrators for their hard work. She stated that she was impressed with student online learning. She stated that high quality salaries for teachers must be a part of the district's vision. She stated that it would be to have the teacher supply money to employees by Friday, September 11th. She stated that some safety issues are not in place at the schools. She stated that safety is a big issue for everyone. She requested that all safety measures be put in place quickly.

Mrs. Lewis stated that she spoke with Mr. Hunter and he will work on getting all the PPE's in place. She stated that the hand sanitizer was on back order. She stated that safety is first. She stated that Mr. Hunter assured her that the safety issues will be corrected.

Mr. Frost stated that administrators should be aware of any issues or concerns on their campus. He stated that over the years teachers have received salary increases or bonuses.

Mr. Milton stated that for the past four years teachers have received a salary increase or bonus. He stated that he will continue to work hard for teachers. He stated that the finance department is working very hard. He stated that the district will work to get teacher supply money out quickly.

9. The final budget hearing adjourned at 7:36 p.m.