

SCHOOL BOARD WORKSHOP

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

November 6, 2023

5:00 P.M.

The workshop was open to the public and electronically recorded.

The following Board members were present: Mr. Leroy McMillan, Chairman; Mrs. Karema D. Dudley; 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 workshop was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Leroy McMillan, at 5:03 p.m.

2. Opening Prayer

The opening prayer was led by Mr. Leroy McMillan.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Recited in unison.

4. Discussion on Pool Acquisition from the City of Quincy

Mr. Key stated that he was attending a workshop tomorrow (November 7th) with the City of Quincy Commission regarding the pool property. He stated that he needed some guidance from the Board.

Mr. Frost stated that he received a call from Dr. Sylvia Jackson regarding another site location for the new school. He stated that she stated that if the Board was not able to obtain the pool property, the district would move to plan "B". He stated that he was not aware of a plan "B". He reminded the Board that they donated the track field located on Martin Luther King Blvd to the city. He stated that the Board may lose funding if the site location changed. He stated that Mr. Key could see what the city's request was for the pool property.

Mrs. Dudley stated that she thought something was already in place regarding the pool property. She stated that she needed more information on what the city had to offer. She stated that she still has concerns about whether the best decision was made regarding the site location to build the new school. She stated that Mr. Key could move forward with addressing the City Commission regarding the pool property.

Mr. Scott reminded the Board that members have changed since voting to build the new school on the Shanks property. He stated that funds have already been approved to build the new school. He stated that he was afraid that the Board may lose funding if the site location is changed. He stated that if the new school is built on the Shanks property, it would be beneficial to both the School Board and the City of Quincy. He stated that if the Board changes the site location to build the new school, funding might not be received.

Mrs. Dudley stated that moving forward, she wanted to make sure that there was communication with the community and governmental municipalities. She stated that she wanted to make sure everyone was a part of the process. She stated that she wants to make sure the students and community are considered. She stated that the district needed to plan for growth. She stated that Mr. Key should continue to speak with the City. She stated that the district would not lose funding, but asked about how moving the location would change the timeline.

Mr. McMillan stated that he was guilty and accused of looking for a different site to build the new school. He stated that he doesn't think Shanks is the best location. He stated that the new school design is too small and there is no room for expansion. He stated that he had met with Senator Corey Simon, invited Representative Gallop Franklin, and County officials to discuss how they are willing to help with the new school. He stated that the county stated that they would love to see the school built south of Interstate 10. He stated that the property is owned by IFAS and they are willing to give up that property. He stated that the frontage is owned by individuals and the county has stated that they will buy the property and give the district access. He stated that the other piece of property is the old Maxwell Farm on Martin Luther King Blvd. He stated that the county stated that they would buy 96 acres and give to the district in exchange for Shanks campus with the promise not to tear down the gym. He stated that Senator Simon agreed with this site. He stated that Senator Simon stated that the Commissioner of Education had no problem with the Board relocating and that the district would not lose funding. He stated that the Board needed to come up with a site plan and send to him to review for funding to help the district. He stated that a decision has to be made if the Board is moving forward.

Mr. Frost stated that there is no expansion room for the new school to be built on the Shanks property. He stated that the Board has options for building the new school. He stated that he wants to know what it would take to get the pool property. He stated that a plan was needed to present to DOE if the site location changed from Shanks.

Ms. Johnson stated that a plan should have already been in place. She stated that we failed to have communication with the county, city and community resulting in the district's position in this situation. She stated that we are here because we didn't secure the pool.

Mr. Key stated that a joint meeting was held with the City and County Commissioners regarding the new school. He stated that the majority of the city commissioners are on board with the pool property. He stated that because the Board has presented new information, he questioned whether he needed to attend the workshop with the City Commissioners. He stated that two plans were given, one with the pool property and the other included the football field. He stated that he is currently reviewing the contract for the new school to be built on the Shanks property. He stated that time is of the essence. Mr. Frost asked Mr. Key to meet with the City Commissioners and bring information back to the Board. Mr. Scott stated that after months of going back and forth with the City, he was skeptical if the City would come through. Ms. Johnson stated that this workshop is being held because the pool property was not secured. She stated that the Board need to move forward. Mr. Key stated that conversations has been with the City Manager. He stated that he has spoken with the City Commissioners to get the item placed on their agenda. Mr. Frost thanked Mr. Key for dealing with this matter.

Mrs. Dudley stated that not everyone is going to be pleased with the decision made. She stated that decisions need to be made in the best interest of the students. She stated that a plan was needed for growth in the county. Mr. Key stated that growth is going south of Pat Thomas Parkway. He stated that work has to be done across the county. Mr. McMillan stated that he would get something in writing or make a formal request to DOE to start the process over for selecting a new site location. Mrs. Dudley stated that she wanted to know what the city was interested in from the district. She stated that intergovernmental relationships needed to be built. Mr. Scott stated that the funding came from the legislature. Mr. McMillan stated that some things will be put in writing and that Ward's Lot is an offer for the City. Dr. Sylvia Jackson stated that it is important to look at enrollment when considering funding. She stated that student enrollment has declined since the

district received funding. She stated that if the location is changed it could affect the number of student stations. Mr. McMillan stated that he was told that the district will receive funding if the site location changed. He stated that he would get something in writing from the County and the State to present to the Board at the next meeting.

5. Educational Items by the Superintendent

None.

6. School Board Requests and Concerns

Ms. Johnson stated that a lot of focus was needed on foreign language for the students. She stated that the district needed to come up with creative ways to get foreign language for all students.

Mr. Scott requested a workshop to discuss the teacher evaluation model.

7. The workshop adjourned at 6:00 p.m.