

COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JOINT MEETING with
Southeastern Community College Board of Trustees
Whiteville City Schools Board of Education; and
Columbus County Schools Board of Education
Tuesday, March 18, 2014
6:00 P.M.

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time, at Southeastern Community College, Room T-120/122, 4564 Chadbourn Highway, Whiteville, North Carolina, for the purpose of holding a **Joint Meeting** with Southeastern Community College Board of Trustees, Whiteville City Schools Board of Education and Columbus County Schools Board of Education.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

P. Edwin Russ, **Chairman**
Trent Burroughs, **Vice Chairman**
Amon E. McKenzie
James E. Prevatte
Ricky Bullard

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

William S. Clark, **County Manager**
Mike Stephens, **County Attorney**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Director**

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Giles E. Byrd
Charles T. McDowell

COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

DISTRICT	NAME
1	Norris Ebron
2	Barbara Yates
3	Monte L. Herring
4	Worley T. Edwards, Chairman
5	Junior Dew, Vice Chairperson - - Absent -

Superintendent; Alan Faulk
Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Jonathan Williams

WHITEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

DISTRICT	NAME
1	Carlton Prince - Absent -
2	David Flowers
3	Kandle Rogers, Chairperson
4	Greg Merritt
At Large	James DiMuzio, Vice Chairman

Superintendent; Dr. Charles Thomas Hager
Assistant Superintendent: Anthony Martin

SOUTHEASTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

DISTRICT	NAME	DISTRICT	NAME
County BOE	Spruell R. Britt, Chairman	Governor	Doris Dees, Vice Chairperson
III	Theresa J. Blanks	IV	Harry Foley
VII	Robert Ezzell	V	Dr. Maudie Davis
County BOE	Henry Edmund	Governor	Charles Lytle
City BOE	Jack Hooks	Governor	Joey Ray
Governor	Terray Suggs - Absent -	City BOE	Joe Hooks

Dr. Kathy Matlock, President, SCC Betty Jo Ramsey, Vice President of Operations and Finance

Agenda Items #1 and #2: JOINT MEETING OPENED:

At 6:07 P.M., Chairman P. Edwin Russ opened the Joint Meeting. The invocation was delivered by Commissioner James E. Prevatte.

Agenda Item #3: INTRODUCTION of ATTENDEES:

The attendees were introduced from each group by one of their members.

Agenda Item #4: PURPOSE of JOINT MEETING:

Chairman Russ stated the purpose of this Joint Meeting is to listen to each of the three (3) school systems' needs.

Agenda Item #5: DISCUSSION:**Group 1: Southeastern Community College Board of Trustees:**

Dr. Kathy Matlock, President, Southeastern Community College, stated the following:

- We have our budget ready to submit to you; **and**
- Chairman Britt, would you like to make some opening remarks?

Chairman Britt: stated the following:

- We are glad everyone is here tonight;
- We think getting together like this has been a positive thing for the whole County;
- It is vital that every entity in the County work together on all levels to accomplish the greatest benefit for the citizens;
- Betty Joe Ramsey will address the Board to inform you of where our needs are;
- Every year we turn in a list of where our needs are;
- Each year we turn in Capital Outlay Requests and there are three (3) areas, maybe four (4) areas that we know we will have increases in; **and**
- One of these areas is utilities, we have some handicap issues that we are going to have to deal with that are not optional, and we will need some financing to deal with that.

Dr. Kathy Matlock: stated the following:

- We had a monitoring visit by EEOC in reference to our ADA compliance, it was very thorough for two (2) days, and there were four (4) people;
- They just left, so we do not have the report back;
- We do know there are areas that we are going to have to change on this campus with our doorways, ramps, parking spaces, and Betty Joe will go over that; **and**
- What you will receive just basically has an asterisk, but we will present this report when we receive it, and it will probably be 30-60 days before we do receive the report.

Betty Jo Ramsey, Vice President of Operations and Finance: stated the following:

- I will give you an overview of our requests, breaking it down between Current Operating Expense and Capital Outlay needs;
- Our requests this year that was just approved by our Board in the previous meeting is for \$1,350,661 for Current Operating Expenses, which is an increase of about \$108,000 over what we were appropriated last year;
- Over \$32,000 is for a request for one (1) additional maintenance staff person;
- We have very limited staff, we have a lot a square footage to cover and we have a lot of grounds to cover;
- The remaining additional costs is for rising cost in utilities, medical insurance, retirement contributions and fuel costs, propane has skyrocketed due to the costly winter we have experienced;
- The Capital Outlay needs are \$1,627,000, excluding the ADA compliance issues;
- Most of our parking lots are out of compliance;
- There has to be one (1) handicap parking space for every eight (8) parking spaces in each parking lot;
- Several of our ramps are non-compliant;
- We do not have the proper signage
- A lot of the restrooms need to be ADA compliant;
- Each citation will state you shall do this;
- We all know that the funds for the facilities come from local funding;
- In addition, we have carried forward many of our Capital Outlay requests from last year;
- The one item that was taken off the list was our outside audible speakers in case of an emergency;
- With the extra \$50,000 that was granted to us for security infrastructure, and the majority of our additional requested Capital Outlay, we should be able to accomplish that in this year;
- We have prioritized our needs into security, safety and ADA Compliance, repairs, infrastructure,

energy efficient improvements; **and**
 -We are trying to meet our safety needs.

Discussion:

Commissioner McKenzie: What does the \$108,000 consist of?

Betty Joe Ramsey: Last year, we requested \$1,307,000.00, and was only appropriated \$1,242.00. The \$108,000 is for the shortage of funds from last year. We are in a deficit of \$36,000 as of February 28, 2014.

Commissioner Prevatte: stated the following;

-I hear what you are saying with the utility costs, and we are all going through that;

-We have heard your needs, and are sympathetic to that; **and**

-We will look at that and look at your budget by line item and be sure that we meet every possible thing that the state requires of us in your budget.

Commissioner Bullard: I appreciate what you do for the college.

Group 2: Whiteville City Schools Board of Education:

Dr. Thomas Hager, Superintendent of Whiteville City Schools, stated the following:

1. We have broken our needs out into two (2) areas, capital outlay and security;
2. We have spent a lot of time over the last few years repairing our buildings;
3. Luckily for us, natural gas came our way and that has saved on utilities;
4. One area that we have not done much to and that is Legion Field which is a major facility that is heavily used by the school;
5. The parking is a major problem;
6. The field houses need some updates;
7. We need to relocate some activities out there;
8. That is an area we would like to concentrate on;
9. The tennis courts are in terrible shape and the community uses the tennis courts a lot;
10. We need to bring the tennis courts up to speed and we are looking at approximately \$200,000.00;
11. Another area we would like to delve into is looking at the architectural design for Whiteville High School, and hiring an architectural firm to come in and look at what we can do to bring the school up to date over the next decade, and the cost will be from \$25,000 to \$30,000;
12. The other area is security;
13. With the money we received for security, we purchased new radios for one of our schools and one of the major things we did was we purchased some high definition cameras and panic buttons, which do a really good job, which required us to upgrade the servers; **and**
14. One thing that I am working on is a phone system that will connect everyone at one time and the announcement is made only once.

Group III: Columbus County Schools Board of Education:

Alan Faulk, Superintendent, stated the following:

1. I would like to thank the County Commissioners, thank Southeastern Community College for having us, and it is good to be with the Whiteville City Schools;
2. I think we have a good working relationship with the County Commissioners;
3. Times have changed, and over the last ten (10) years, our school population has dropped from 7,200 kids to 6,200 kids, they have a lot of options out there;
4. We still have plenty of school buildings, a bus garage and a plant operations building that we have to maintain.
5. We have 538 Certified Staff members and about 363 Non-Certified Staff members;
6. The following is requests:

Personnel (Instructional/Support):

15 Teaching positions -

Elementary Art Teachers

Elementary Physical Education Teachers

Career-Technical Education Teachers

Core Area Teachers

10 Custodian Positions

Salary Supplement Increase:

- Certified Staff - from 3.5% to 5%
- Non-Certified Staff - from 1.5% to 2.5%

Local Supplements:

	Certified	Non-Certified
Brunswick	\$2,400 or 8%	\$100 or 2%
Scotland	\$1,600 or 5%	---
Whiteville City	5%	2.5%
Robeson County	5%	1%
New Hanover	5%	---
Bladen	4%	---
Columbus	3.5%	1.5%

Columbus County Schools Facility Needs:

1. Parking solution - Acme Delco Elementary School
2. Gym floors (replacement or repair) - Acme Delco Middle School, Cerro Gordo Elementary School, Chadbourn Middle School, Nakina Middle School, Tabor City Middle School, Evergreen Elementary School
3. Roofing replacements - Cerro Gordo Elementary School, Acme Delco Middle School
4. Security upgrades for all schools including surveillance cameras, buzz-in systems for middle/high schools
5. Auditorium stage curtain replacement

Roofing Needs:

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Acme Delco Middle School Cafeteria | -\$75,000 - \$80,000 repair |
| 2. | Cerro Gordo Elementary School | -\$350,000 |
| 3. | School Bus Garage | -\$2.5 million to replace, excluding land |
| 4. | CCCA Cafeteria | \$50,000 |

Chillers at East Columbus High School and South Columbus High School - \$200,00 Each

Resurface Tennis Courts

Progress Made:

- Cerro Gordo Elementary School - 10 Classroom addition and an Open House in early May, 2014
- Replacement of windows at Acme Delco Elementary School and Williams Township Elementary School, completed February , 2014
- Stucco repairs at East Columbus High School and South Columbus High School, completed March, 2014
- Keyless entry security devices at all elementary schools (received \$150,000 last year from the County Commissioners for security)
- Home-side bleachers at West Columbus High School
- Athletic lighting upgrades at all high schools

Safety Upgrades:

- Panic alarm systems in all schools
- Addition of five (5) school resource officers

Future:

1. We need to start looking at some future plans for our schools;
2. SLA Architects have been in and presented the following options (Williams Township and the high schools are not included in these options):

Option 1	\$430,380,484	Keep all thirteen (13) schools open and try to keep them going
Option 2	(\$33,933,463)	Close thirteen (13) of the schools and build new Pre-K through 8 schools
Option 2A	(\$179,773,397)	Close thirteen (13) of the schools and

		build three (3) new Pre-K through 8 schools (Showing staff reductions)
Option 3	\$63,835.761	Close all thirteen (13) schools and build four (4) Pre-K through 8 schools
Option 3A	\$246,228,450	Close all thirteen (13) schools and build four (4) Pre-K through 8 schools

Discussion:

Commissioner Bullard: The fifteen (15) teaching positions, are they currently at the school now, or are they positions that you want to add?

Dr. Allen Faulk: These are positions that we want to add.

Commissioner Bullard: What will it cost to add 1.5% to these supplements for the County schools?

Dr. Allen Faulk: To increase the supplement from 3.5% to 5% will cost about \$306,515, and to increase the non-certified from 1.5% to 2.5% will be about \$80,496. The fifteen (15) additional positions will cost about \$703,000.00. The custodians will cost about \$292,000.

Commissioner McKenzie: Would you go over the options that you presented earlier?

Dr. Alan Faulk: Option 1 is to leave the schools as they are now, Option 2 is to close thirteen (13) schools and build new Pre-K through 8 schools, Option 2A is showing staff reductions, Option 3 is to close thirteen (1) schools and having four (4) Pre-K through 8 schools. The fewer the number of schools that you have, the larger the population will be. The largest population that you would have would be around 1,250, as it stands now.

Commissioner McKenzie: What is the average class size?

Dr. Alan Faulk: I would say somewhere around twenty-one (21). The high schools are a little bit larger.

Chairman Russ: stated the following:

1. I don't look at myself as being the boss;
2. We all work as a team, and if we all work together, we can accomplish a lot;
3. I think it is great getting the input from the schools about the financial needs; **and**
4. I would like to thank you for tonight.

Commissioner McKenzie: stated the following:

1. Each one of you gave a good report;
2. It is good that we come together as a team, because that is what we are;
3. I want you to know that we are concerned about your needs;
4. By meeting like this, it gives us an opportunity to meet all the board members, we hear your ideas and you know we will discover what we can do, as a board;
5. We know the age of the buildings;
6. We are all in the middle of this;
7. Our young people are our future; **and**
8. We will do what we can, but we are not ready to increase the tax levy.

Chairman Russ: Dr. Hagar, I understand that you have some lighting problems on the Optimist Field, and I am working on that.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:27 P.M., Chairman Russ stated the Joint Meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

P. EDWIN RUSS, Chairman