

Minutes
Anson County Board of Education
Special Meeting
Thursday, May 28, 2020, 1:30 p.m.
Anson County Schools' Board Room
Virtual Go To Meeting

The Anson County Board of Education met in regular session on Thursday, May 28, 2020. Members present via Virtual Go To Meeting were Marilynn Bennett, Lisa Davis, Frank Liles, Bobbie Little and George Truman. Board members present were Carol Gibson, Gay Lookabill Beulah Pratt and Mike Turner. Others in attendance were Michael Freeman (Superintendent), Howard McLean (Associate Superintendent), Marty Godwin (Assistant Superintendent - virtual), Holly Berry (Finance Officer), Mike Flake (Board Attorney), Anne Hyatt (Board Clerk) and Pete Swails (Administrator: Technology).

I. Call to Order

Dr. George Truman opened the meeting at 1:48 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

II. Invocation

George Truman gave the Invocation.

III. Conflict of Interest Statement

In compliance with the requirements of Chapter 138A-15(e) of the State Government Ethics Act, Chair George Truman reminded Board Members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts of interest under Chapter 138A. There were no conflicts of interest communicated by the members. Chair Truman then requested that if, during the course of the meeting, members became aware of an actual or apparent conflict of interest that they bring the matter to his attention. He further explained it would then be the member's duty to abstain from participating in discussion and from voting on the matter.

IV. Adopt Agenda

Frank Liles made a motion to approve the agenda. Gay Lookbaill seconded the agenda it was unanimously adopted by the Board. Motion carried.

V. Approve Minutes

(Regular Meeting 05/19/20)

(Special Meetings 05/18/20 and 05/19/20)

Carol Gibson said the spelling of the word "statutes" should be corrected in both special meeting minutes. A motion was made by Carol Gibson to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 19, 2020 and the special meeting minutes of May 18, 2020 and May 19, 2020. The motion was seconded by Gay Lookabill and approved by the board. Motion carried.

I. Chair's Report

Public Engagement: Several board members commented on how well graduation went on May 23, 2020. Board members mentioned how parents they talked to wanted it like that in future years. Mike Turner asked if graduation was longer than a regular graduation. Mr. Freeman said it lasted approximately one hour longer. Lisa Davis said the graduation showed how our community came together with many different agencies helping on

graduation day. She said it echoed how our community came together as one. Lisa Davis thanked the board for allowing her the opportunity to give her daughter her diploma. Dr. Truman said that is a long-standing tradition and he was glad she had that opportunity.

Superintendent's Report

Calendar: Mr. Freeman explained he has an updated calendar for approval based on changes in law. He mentioned this calendar may change again before school starts. He said the calendar includes a change in start date to August 17. Mr. Freeman also stated he left a significant number of teacher workdays at the beginning of the year but teacher employment dates did not change. He explained we are mandated to have five remote learning days and those days may occur on teacher workdays. He explained those remote learning days will be in November and December. Mr. Freeman stated they also had to carve out a number of teacher workdays to acquire the extra five days that were required for us to add to the calendar. He explained the graduation day has not changed and graduation will be held the weekend before Memorial Day.

New Anson Middle School Construction: Mr. Freeman said there have been challenges in meeting again with the board of county commissioners as they navigate and work on their budget process and as they work on a way to continue the construction of a new Anson Middle School. He explained he hoped those meetings will occur in the future. Mr. Freeman said given the current financial climate, COVID-19 challenges and the feelings of caution received from the county manager, county finance director and commissioners from the virtual meeting, he has communicated with the construction at-risk firm and architectural firm and has asked them to stop working at this point on any work products. Mr. Freeman stated he hopes the work and project will resume in the future. He explained there is a distribution form in the board packet and this form has been done on multiple occasions. He said it is mandated and it is something the commissioners and board of education agreed upon in 2018 when the capital needs grant money was accepted in the amount of \$15 million from the state that is still being held for this project. He explained this form shows the summary of the expenses and distributions thus far. Mr. Freeman said he has talked to the board of education on several occasions about how the state requires the funding to be pulled down and we have to have proportional amounts for each invoice received over the course of the project for the \$5 million county match and the \$15 million from the state. He said we are not allowed to pull it from one or the other for the full amount; they have to break it up. He said this should be the last distribution request until the project is resumed. He explained the county commissioners freed up a designated amount for their county finance officer and county manager to distribute without them having to take formal action. Mr. Freeman said they are very close to that level and they are working to make sure the county is fully aware of any needs and they are waiting on their responses. Mr. Freeman said they are still waiting on funds from the county for projects like security upgrades at Anson High School and parking lot issues. He said he knows they will get it to us but apparently there are some challenges within their division that delays when they can deliver these funds. He said he has files of well-documented information where it takes months and months for the County of Anson to distribute funds for us to pay our bills. Mr. Freeman said he will make sure his replacement is aware of this situation.

Mr. Turner asked if the board is voting on policy changes today. Mr. Freeman said that is correct and since there are changes related to the law, those policies should be updated and approved.

Ms. Gibson asked about the last distribution form for \$48,000 and if the county has paid that one. She said she thought that was the last distribution form. Mr. Freeman said the one presented today is the last form.

Ms. Bennett asked how long the commissioners would hold out until they can resume. Mr. Freeman said that will be up to the commissioners and board of education to have that conversation about resuming the project. Mr. Freeman said they found out the balance of the \$15 million from the state is secure and it is not to be used for anything else and it is designated for Anson County. He said the commissioners are not allowed to use their money for anything else.

Ms. Gibson said this money is for the plan that we have yet to see. Mr. Freeman said the money distributed has been for survey work, geographical studies, architectural work and construction at-risk work. He said they do have the drawings and they have shown those basic drawings at board meetings. He explained the drawings have been shared with the state and approvals have been given. Mr. Freeman stated all of this has been shared by Edifice, Morris-Berg and by him at various meetings. Mr. Freeman said as far as the board seeing plans, those can be available but that is typically not given to board members; those plans are given to those that are doing the work. He said board members' role is policy work.

Mr. Turner stated there would be no more distribution requests after this point. Mr. Freeman said that is correct. Ms. Berry said she has verified with all vendors that there are no outstanding bills. Mr. Freeman said all the work that has been done must be completed before a quote can be given. He said whether anyone likes it or not, those are the laws and procedures that must be followed and county commissioners and board members cannot dictate that.

II. Consent Items

Upon a motion by Frank Liles seconded by Gay Lookabill, the following consent items were approved by the board: Personnel Report, Distribution Request Form, 2020-2021 School Calendar Revisions and the policies listed below. Motion carried.

- 2127 Board Member Technology Use
- 1310-4002 Parental Involvement
- 1320-3560 Title I Parent and Family Engagement
- 1600 Governing Principle – Professional Development
- 1610-7800 Professional and Staff Development
- 3102 Online Instruction
- 3227-7322 Web Page Development
- 3300 School Calendar and Time for Learning
- 3405 Students At Risk of Academic Failure
- 3410 Testing and Assessment Program

- 3420 Student Promotion and Accountability
- 3460 Graduation Requirements
- 3470-4305 Alternative Learning Programs/Schools
- 3610 Counseling Program
- 3620 Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
- 4040-7310 Staff-Student Relations
- 4110 Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission
- 4120 Domicile or Residence Requirements
- 4152 Unsafe School Choice Transfer
- 4210 Release of Students from School
- 4270-6145 Concussion and Head Injury
- 4325 Drugs and Alcohol
- 4345 Student Discipline Records
- 5040 News Media Relations
- 6306 School Bus Idling
- 6325 Parking Areas for Students
- 7240 Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace
- 7241 Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators
- 7360-8225 Crowdfunding on Behalf of the School System
- 7500 Workday and Overtime
- 7505 Compliance with State Board of Education Employment Policies
- 7510 Leave
- 7540 Voluntary Shared Leave
- 7805 Superintendent Evaluation
- 7900 Resignation
- 8350 Fixed Assets Inventory

Superintendent Contract:

Upon a motion by Mike Turner, seconded by Frank Liles, the board unanimously approved the superintendent's contract. Dr. Truman commented that the conditions in the contract will be the same as Michael Freeman's contract but it will be for two years.

New Superintendent of Schools:

Lisa Davis made a motion to approve Howard McLean as our superintendent to begin on June 1 and following contract agreements. The motion was seconded by Mike Turner and unanimously approved by the board. Motion carried.

Dr. Truman congratulated Mr. McLean with an applause. Dr. Truman asked Mr. McLean to speak to the group if he was interested. Mr. McLean thanked the board for the opportunity to lead the district. He said please do not let his personality as the number two man for the district influence you as being the number one man and it will be completely different. Mr. McLean said he and Mr. Freeman have totally different leadership styles but they have a common vision for the district and he thanked the board again for the opportunity to lead.

Mr. Freeman said as the meeting concludes, the Honorable Mark Hammonds will do the swearing in of the new superintendent. In closing, Mr. Freeman said the board has selected someone who is ready to lead the pack and make it happen on behalf of children, staff and families of Anson County. He said the rest of us will be in our lanes cheerleading, supporting, encouraging and praying for the success of everyone involved.

Dr. Truman wished Mr. Freeman a happy retirement.

III. **Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made at 2:58 pm. by Mike Turner, seconded by Gay Lookabill and approved by the board. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

Dr. George Truman, Chairperson

Mr. Howard McLean, Secretary