

AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE JAMES CITY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, WILLIAMSBURG-JAMES CITY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD, AND THE WILLIAMSBURG CITY COUNCIL, HELD ON THE 28TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2002, AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES TRAINING ROOM, 150 POINT O'WOODS ROAD, JAMES CITY COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

A. ROLL CALL

James G. Kennedy, Chairman, Stonehouse District
Jay T. Harrison, Sr., Vice Chairman, Berkeley District
John J. McGlennon, Jamestown District
Michael J. Brown, Powhatan District
Bruce C. Goodson, Roberts District

Sanford B. Wanner, County Administrator
Frank M. Morton, III, County Attorney

B. PRESENTATION

Mr. Kennedy called the meeting to order.

Mayor Jeanne Zeidler welcomed the all parties to the joint meeting and stated that she had been asked to chair the meeting.

Dr. Carol S. Beers, Superintendent of Schools, made a presentation on: the research done on school size and how it affected the Williamsburg-James City school system since the late 1980s; the High School Options study conducted in 1992 and the subsequent study survey results that favored the building of a new high school in addition to the renovation of Lafayette High School; and the subsequent focus group reviews, studies, and comparisons of the issues.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

The Board of Supervisors of James City County, Williamsburg-James City County School Board, the Williamsburg City Council, and staff discussed the following items in relation to the proposed School Budget.

1. Enrollment Projections

Enrollment projections indicated that High School enrollment has grown 55 percent over the past ten years, by 2006 the high school enrollment is estimated to be 3,025 students, and it is estimated that from 2006 to 2012 the projected enrollment will be at or above 3,000 students.2)

2. Research – Smaller High Schools

Dr. Charles Maranzano provided an overview on the research the school system has done on school size and stated that the research indicates that moderate-sized high schools create more leadership opportunities for students, humanize the learning process, connect schools to the community, better serve

economically disadvantaged and minority students, are safer and more secure places to learn, and have a higher success rate than larger or much smaller high schools.

3. Alternatives Considered

Dr. Beers provided an overview on the alternatives the School Board considered to the option of building a third high school which included: the expansion of Jamestown High School, the shared facility for Career and Technical education, the use of Bruton High School, and the different grade configurations.

Dr. Beers stated that the wetlands, high water table, parking capacity, and athletic fields all limit the ability to expand Jamestown High School; that Lafayette High School offers ten career and technical education opportunities and the State of Virginia requires only three; that due to renovations underway at Bruton High School, the projected student capacity will drop from 975 students to 800 students and will result in some constraints in the implementation of shared space; and that the current middle school configuration is the best for adolescents in their most vulnerable years whereas the realignment of the grades would involve major curriculum and staffing changes, logistical challenges, and would put a strain on the physical facilities.

4. High School Programming

The Blue Ribbon Committee, consisting of educators, industry representatives, and community leaders, first met in February 2001 and made several recommendations regarding the programming in the third high school facility from which set the foundation for the High School Programming Committee. As a result of these Committee recommendations, the School Board concluded that 900-1,200 students is the best sized high school for the success of the Williamsburg-James City County school division.

7. City and County Presentation on Development Potential

Mr. John T. P. Horne, Development Manager, stated that the County is projecting the population growth for the Comprehensive Plan, that the population projections to 2010 range from 64,000 to 67,000, that housing growth in the areas north of Centerville Road will increase in the mid- to long-term and that area holds the most long-term potential for large-scale housing growth within the existing Primary Service Area (PSA) boundary.

Mr. Jack Tuttle, City Manager, stated that the children from the City comprise less than ten percent of the school division children and that number is estimated to remain the same over the next five years.

8. City and County Presentation on Bond Rating and Debt Capacity

Mr. John McDonald, Manager, Financial and Management Services, stated that the County's bond ratings are Aa3 from Moody's and AA from Standards and Poor. Mr. McDonald also provided an overview of the County's policy for debt capacity that includes a recommendation that the Board of Supervisors set aside approximately \$3.5 million in advance of the major school bond issue to fund the "spike" in debt service cost, thereby allowing the Board of Supervisors to issue the debt and fund the increased annual debt service without raising the real property tax rate.

Mr. Tuttle stated that the City has never sought a bond rating because it has not needed one due to the City's pay-as-you-go financing method in funding the City's Capital Improvement Program. However, the City's share of a third high school would require additional debt financing and would pursue a bond rating if it would improve the cost of borrowing.

9. State and Local Budget Issues

Mr. Wanner stated that the Governor's budget will not be available until late December; however the budget cuts will impact on the localities. Localities do not have the ability to generate enough revenue to offset all the Governor's cuts.

10. Timeline for Referendum

Ms. Ainsworth stated that the School Board had shown the need for a third high school and recommended a referendum be held in March to avoid a potential additional cost of \$1.8 million.

D. DISCUSSIONS

The Board of Supervisors, School Board, City Council, and staff discussed enrollment projections in connection with the proposed new facility size, the need to expend within the next five years rather than in ten years or later; propose new facility size meeting the needs of the school curriculum, enrollments, and staffing; and clarification on the alternatives the School Board considered in respect to the range of costs.

The City Council and Board of Supervisors requested the following information:

- a. cost benefit analysis of the alternatives;
- b. operating costs of a third high school; and
- c. impacts on the real estate taxes.

Mr. Ludwick stated that the architects had provided a ten-year trend line that showed construction costs increasing approximately four percent each year.

Dr. Beers reviewed the process that would take place for the third high school to be put before the voters in a referendum including a Board of Supervisors requesting a referendum that would then be forwarded to the Circuit Court for placement on the ballot.

E. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kennedy made a motion to adjourn.

On a roll call vote, the vote was: AYE: McGlennon, Brown, Goodson, Harrison, Kennedy (5) NAY: (0).

The Board adjourned at 8:10 p.m. until 7 p.m. on November 12, 2002.

Sanford B. Wanner
Clerk to the Board