

MINUTES
JAMES CITY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Joint Budget Meeting with WJCC School Board, Board of Supervisors, and Williamsburg
City Council
James City County Law Enforcement Center
4600 Opportunity Way, Williamsburg, VA 23188
December 3, 2019
9:00 AM

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Icenhour called the Board of Supervisors to order at 9:01 a.m.

Mr. Freiling called the City Council to order at 9:01 a.m.

Ms. Ownby called the School Board to order at 9:01 a.m.

ADOPTED

JAN 14 2020

Board of Supervisors
James City County, VA

B. ROLL CALL

Board of Supervisors: Present were Mr. Michael Hipple, Mr. James Icenhour (Chair), Mr. John McGlennon, Ms. Sue Sadler (left meeting at 9:35 a.m.) and Ms. Ruth Larson. Also present was Mr. Scott Stevens, County Administrator.

City Council: Present were Mr. Ted Maslin, Mr. Douglas Pons, Ms. Barbara Ramsey, Mr. Benny Zhang and Mr. Paul Freiling (Mayor). Also present was Mr. Andrew Trivette, City Manager.

School Board: Present were Dr. James Beers, Ms. Kyra Cook, Ms. Julie Hummel, Mr. Jim Kelly, Ms. Lisa Ownby (Chair) and Mrs. Sandra Young. Mrs. Holly Taylor was absent. Also present were Dr. Olwen Herron, superintendent; Ms. Rene Ewing, CFO; Ms. Janet Cerza, clerk of the board; staff; press; and, the public.

C. JOINT MEETING AGENDA ITEM

1. School Board Update on FY2020 Operating Budget

The Superintendent's Proposed FY21-25 Capital Improvement Plan was presented. (See Attachment) The presentation consisted of the following:

- Projects included anticipated A&E costs, contingency and escalation at a rate of 3% annually
- New projects may appear in the CIP for the first time due to new or updated information
- Recommended Cycles for auditorium, gymnasium and generator replacement
- Recommended Projects for FY21-25
- HVAC/Window Replacements
- Roof Replacement/Repair/Refurbishment
- Other CIP Projects
- Facilities - New Construction
- Additions to 5-Year CIP
- Modifications to 5-Year CIP

- Modifications to FY21

Mr. Sean Walker, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary School Leadership, presented information on the Need for a New Elementary School.

Mr. Zhang asked if WJCC had received any registered concerns from teachers or parents on the limited spaces. Dr. Herron responded no formal concerns have been received. The schools are still serving students, but it is not under ideal circumstances.

Mr. Zhang asked if there would be rezoning to mitigate the large population of economically disadvantaged students at James River Elementary School (depends upon location of new elementary school.)

Mr. McGlennon questioned how capacity in elementary schools is affected by Pre-K students; use of space in schools with Pre-K; possible impact of governor's initiative on Pre-K; and, impact on special needs students in the future. Mr. McGlennon asked if it was possible to provide dedicated facilities away from existing schools to achieve objectives of Pre-K students.

Dedicated facility/facilities separate from schools for Pre-K students was discussed. A conversation with citizens is needed to address the impact of Pre-K issues.

Mr. Icenhour asked what type of Pre-K facilities WJCC was considering (two to add to existing elementary school sites.) Dr. Herron stated adding onto existing school sites is one option. The percentage of special needs students is growing significantly causing less service to at risk students that WJCC is not required to serve. There are 100 children on the waiting list that are at risk. The size of Pre-K space needs to be determined during the community conversation. Dr. Herron noted the \$22 million is a placeholder in the CIP that was based on 250 students at each site (number of students x cost per student x cost per square footage).

Mr. Kelly noted there was an elementary school problem, not a Pre-K problem. Today's students have more academic needs. Teachers must also be considered as their teaching space is being taken away. Teachers talk with their feet by leaving the profession.

There was discussion on the definition of "capacity" and "operational" at schools. Mr. Freiling noted the group had this conversation last year and they (city and county) have planned their capital expenditures budget for the next five years. Overall, the elementary school enrollment over the next 6-7 years is stable. It is hard to create a sense of urgency and get the general public to understand why it has to happen now instead of four years out when there is an increase in enrollment. The public interprets 100% capacity as full and needs to understand that schools are at capacity before 100%. Most of the schools were built 20+ years ago and are not the size needed to meet the academic needs of our community today.

Ms. Cook pointed out that the three groups came to common understanding last year on capacity at 85% and 90%. In terms of urgency, enrollment has reached these capacities even with flat enrollment. At the School Liaison Committee, we are trying to work cooperatively to communicate a Long Range Plan to citizens and stakeholders.

Ms. Cook noted school space issues were mentioned at a recent PTA Council meeting. Williamsburg has one of the largest rates of homelessness in the state.

There was discussion on which students are mandated to receive Pre-K (special education students.) The general assembly does not fully fund Pre-K, the localities pick up the rest of the cost of funding Pre-K. Mr. Hipple asked why the new elementary school has been moved forward seven years. Would moving Pre-K from the schools to alleviate space be less expensive than adding onto existing schools?

Mr. Hipple said the board of supervisors wants to support the school division as high as they can and will work with the school division to try to figure out options they can afford and the schools can live with.

Ms. Ownby clarified, regarding the federal requirements for serving students with disabilities is required by law; services to Pre-K students at risk is optional; schools at 100% do not have Pre-K. Bright Beginnings provides Pre-K services to students with disabilities and at risk students. The governor's initiative for universal Pre-K also has to be considered. Students have changed, buildings have not. More small group services and instruction are needed.

Dr. Beers discussed how Bright Beginnings has evolved; the need for more direct instruction for disadvantaged students individually and in small groups; and, the increasing caseloads of special education teachers.

Ms. Larson noted a tax increase would be needed to pay for much needed resources and the school board would have to support the tax increase. There was discussion on the capacity for a new elementary school (700-750 students) and messaging to the citizens to keep them aware of upcoming needs, and long-term outlook for capital projects.

Mr. McGlennon said there was a serious issue with Pre-K and they need to address and bring before the community what they want to do about class sizes. There are 100 kids on the waiting list for Pre-K. Would we need to reconfigure current spaces to address these needs? Important choices need to be made and they will have consequences for the facilities of the community. Justification on why current facilities are not meeting the objectives is needed.

Mr. Pons said they would have to bite the bullet on how they want to educate students. Teaching is a hard profession to get into and teachers are being expected to do more. If we do not have the facilities to accommodate teachers and treat them with respect, it will have a negative effect no matter the size of the school. He felt sooner is better and they need to support the school division for doing the analysis.

Mr. Icenhour said they do not argue there is a need for elementary school space, but there are two separate pieces - elementary school and Pre-K. If the schools want to do Pre-K first, then that would take the pressure off capacity in the elementary schools. It would require reconfiguration of elementary schools because Pre-K would be in separate facilities. He could not see the two pieces separated. Mr. Icenhour noted enrollment is projected to grow at 2% over the next ten years. Need to consider how it will be integrated over the years. Coordinate building elementary school and Pre-K facilities in the existing schools. Ability to pay for new elementary school and take care of the problem for the long term. Which did the school division want first - the general assembly will come out with something on budgeting cycle.

Ms. Cook noted if the school board asks for a new elementary school to be funded as soon as possible, the 10 year plan to handle Pre-K with facilities is predicated on guesses. The current school board could not make promises for future school boards.

Ms. Larson said they need to have a conversation on the vision of the school board.

Mr. Maslin said he saw a strong message for adding special use spaces at all elementary schools. He did not see the need for a new elementary school.

Mr. Stevens said there was a swimming issue in James City County. The JCC Recreation Facility pool closed on November 25 because the grounding for the pool was failing. The pool will be closed until it is repaired and this will affect the school swim teams.

D. ADJOURNMENT


1. Adjourn

At 10:43 a.m. School Board, City Council and Board of Supervisors adjourn.

Mr. Hipple made a motion to adjourn the Board of Supervisors. The motion carried 4:0 (Ms. Sadler left the meeting at 9:35 a.m.)

Mr. Zhang made a motion to adjourn the city council meeting. Mr. Pons seconded the motion, which carried 5:0.

The WJCC School Board adjourned.


Deputy Clerk