

**MINUTES**  
**JAMES CITY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**Joint Meeting with Williamsburg City Council and W-JCC School Board**  
**Room 127, Stryker Center, 412 N. Boundary Street, Williamsburg, VA**  
**March 17, 2023**  
**8:30 AM**

**ADOPTED**  
**SEP 26 2023**  
**Board of Supervisors**  
**James City County, VA**

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**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Dowell Calls the Joint Meeting to Order for the School Board - The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Mayor Pons Calls the Joint Meeting to Order for City Council.

Mr. Hipple Calls the Joint Meeting to Order for the Board of Supervisors.

**B. ROLL CALL**

**School Board** - Present were Dr. James Beers, Mrs. Andrea Donnor, Ms. Julie Hummel, Mrs. Kimberley Hundley, Mrs. Sarah Ortego, Mrs. Sandra Young, and Mr. Greg Dowell (Chair). Also present were Olwen E. Herron, Ed.D., superintendent; Ms. Starr Robinson, deputy clerk of the board, staff, press and the public.

**City Council** - Present were Mr. W. Pat Dent, Ms. Stacy Kern-Scheerer, Ms. Barbara Ramsey, Mr. Caleb Rogers, and Mr. Douglas Pons (Mayor). Also present were Mr. Andrew Trivette, City Manager; and, Ms. Dustie McCay, clerk of council.

**Board of Supervisors** - Present were Mr. James Icenhour, Ms. Ruth Larson, Mr. John McGlennon, Mrs. Sue Sadler, and Mr. Michael Hipple (Chairman). Also present was Mr. Scott Stevens, County Administrator.

Prior to the Budget Presentation, Mr. Dowell shared a report from a recent school board visit to Laurel Lane Elementary School to emphasize the importance of the joint meeting discussion. He noted that the deliberations that take place have real consequences, and that the success they are seeing in the school division is in large part to work that takes place during the meetings. Mr. Dowell then thanked the funding partners for their continued leadership.

**C. JOINT MEETING AGENDA ITEM**

**I. FY 2024 Operating Budget**

Dr. Herron opened with an introduction and gave a description of the budget process and background information on the proposed budget.

Rene Ewing, Chief Financial Officer, presented the FY24 Operating Budget. The following members of the WJCC senior leadership team also presented: Stephanie Bourgeois, Senior Director for Student Services; and, Tim Baker, Senior Director for Human Resources.

Highlights from the presentation included:  
-State Code Requirements

- FY 24 Budget Process Timeline Reviewed
- Local Composite Index (LCI) - As the LCI decreases, state funding increases
  - Williamsburg
    - 2020-22 LCI = 0.7459
    - 2022-24 LCI = 0.7217
  - James City County
    - 2020-22 LCI = 0.5553
    - 2022-24 LCI = 0.5331
- Local Composite Index Comparison
- Enrollment History K-12 (Sept. 30 count) - planning for SY 23-24 enrollment to be 11,308 (not including preschool students)
- State Revenue Comparison - FY 24 Estimated \$67,728,716 (change from FY23 8.0%)
- Budget Development Goal - explained mandatory vs essential expenditures
- Expenditure Increases
  - Goal 1: Academic Achievement/College Readiness \$1,896,757
  - Goal 2: Educational Equity \$355,000
  - Goal 4: Safety and Security \$441,200
  - Goal 5: Human Capital & Positive Culture \$13,726,513 - Mr. Baker showed a comparison of WJCC salaries to neighboring divisions, and also spoke to the declining number of teachers and the increasing number of resignations with dates before the end of the school year.
  - Goal 6: Organizational Efficiency & Effectiveness \$781,950
- Budget Reductions & Savings (\$1,499,920)
- Operating Expenditures by Function - focusing on Instruction which = 74% of total budget Revenue/Expenditure Summary
- Additional Funds Needed (request from localities): \$10,623,366

After the presentation, school board members spoke about the rationale for their budget request, and also acknowledged that the 10 million dollar shortfall was a hard ask.

Board members commented that the community needs to decide what is important; schools are an important part of attracting professionals to the area; while the county overfunds the minimum required by the state, cannot just maintain the status quo - it is a time to go beyond and not let the infrastructure crumble; teachers should be paid fairly with the ability to live in / spend their dollars in Williamsburg / James City County; in addition to the 10% - support staff, maintaining ratios, and counseling are important; inflation increased since March of last year and with health insurance costs rising it negates any positive bottom line to quality of living; many teachers have additional jobs, and/or run after school activities for the stipends; teachers are leaving the profession or going to other divisions for a higher salary - a recent survey revealed the largest turnover of 148 leaving the division; supporting the raise is a value proposition - does the community want a solid school system that will attract businesses and residents to Williamsburg/James City County, and produce high-functioning graduates who will be self-sufficient members of society; there is a mental health crisis and WJCC is not exempt - it is important to maintain teachers, and have more counselors and psychologists; \$59,000 is the median salary for WJCC teachers and it takes between 18-29 years to reach that median (depending on the teacher's degree); teachers are the bedrock of the community; it is the post-pandemic reality - teachers are faced with things they never had to deal with in the past and do more than educate - schools are administrators of social services, done out of generosity and care for students; teachers and staff feel like they are drowning; have to come up with a way to alleviate the pressure - even with a large raise, people are breaking due to the expectations in schools; and, there is a need to resolve the shortfall and ward off a potential crisis that will allow the division to gain sure footing with the start of the next school year.

Testimonials from teachers were shared during the school board members' comments.

The Board of Supervisors and City Council then raised questions and made comments regarding the budget. There was agreement that a quality education system is vital to both communities, and that while education is supported, there is a limit in the amount that can be budgeted for the school division; there are other county/city employees who are requesting raises that have to be considered; agreed these are unprecedented times and county departments are also frustrated with retention issues; clarified that the 10% would be for all staff across the board, not just teachers; inquired what issues may be negatively impacting teacher satisfaction - it was noted that not everyone leaves due to pay, reasons should be investigated further, and 10% will not stop all of the outside stressors; it was noted that the county designates a certain amount of funding for the schools (more than what is legally required) and then the school division decides how to allocate the funds while there are other Virginia localities where the Board of Supervisors allocate per budget line for the school division; a suggestion was made that WJCC could push a project back to give more money to the teachers, and that tough decisions may need to be made by the school division - some employees could receive a higher salary increase than others; discussed neighboring divisions who receive more state funds than WJCC; commented that teacher salaries is a national issue; clarified the different budget possibilities from the state; noted that if the senate and house increase to 7%, the county has to find the money to cover 2/3 of the additional 2% and hope that the state will remove the cap from support positions to help; confirmed that there is not a permanent fix for the elimination of the grocery sales tax at this time; and, a comment was made that the county is committed to finding as much money as they can to address the needs of the school system - just as much as finding resources so citizens can feel safe from a public safety perspective, have opportunities to live in a high quality community with parks and rec, proper daycare, and resources for working parents - it was noted there is a limit to the degree they can think about those issues and share the frustration with the school board.

Dr. Herron noted that it is a pivotal moment in time for public schools.

Mr. Dowell thanked the funding partners for supporting public education.

#### **D. ADJOURNMENT**

##### **2. Adjourn until 1 pm on March 28, 2023 for the Business Meeting**

**School Board Adjourns** - The Williamsburg-James City County School Board adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

**City Council Adjourns** - At 10:03 a.m., Ms. Ramsey made a motion to adjourn the Williamsburg City Council, and Mr. Rogers gave the second. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried 5:0.

**Board of Supervisors Adjourns** - At 10:03 a.m., Ms. Larson made a motion to adjourn until 1:00p.m. on Tuesday, March 28th. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried 5:0.

  
Deputy Clerk