

Note: A full recording of the meeting is on file in the Clerk's Office and on the School Division website.

A Special Board Meeting of the Albemarle County School Board was held on September 29, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., Monticello High School Auditorium, 1400 Independence Way, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

PRESENT: Mrs. Barbara Massie Mouly (arrived at 7:10 p.m.); Mrs. Pamela Moynihan; Mr. Brian Wheeler; Mr. Stephen Koleszar; Mrs. Diantha McKeel; and Mr. Ronnie Price.

ABSENT: Mr. Jon Stokes.

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Pam Moran, Superintendent; Dr. Bruce Benson, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and System Planning; Mr. Billy Haun, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning; Dr. Luvelle Brown, Chief Information Officer; and Mrs. Jennifer Johnston, Clerk.

Agenda Item No. 1.1 Call to Order

At 7:00 p.m., Mr. Wheeler called the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board to order.

Agenda Item No. 2.1. Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item No. 3.1. Moment of Silence.

Agenda Item No. 4.1 Approval of Agenda.

Mrs. McKeel offered a **motion** to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Koleszar **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed with Mrs. Mouly absent.**

Agenda Item No. 5.1. Public Hearing on Superintendent's Recommendation for Red Hill, Scottsville, and Yancey Elementary Schools.

Ms. Patti Stewart is a teacher at Meriwether Lewis but spoke on behalf of Red Hill Elementary School. She attended and taught at Red Hill Elementary School and is a North Garden community member. She worries about taking the small schools from their communities. She urged the Board to consider Dr. Moran's recommendation.

Mr. Wally Adecina is a teacher at Western Albemarle and the president of the Albemarle Education Association. He asked that the Board uphold Dr. Moran's recommendation regarding the southern elementary schools.

Ms. Edna Anderson said that a member of her family has been in Scottsville schools since schools came to the area.

Ms. Waltine Eubanks is a resident of Esmont. The communities have come together during this time. She encouraged the Board to keep all three elementary schools open, and the upgrades should take place to address the expected increase in enrollment. The issue of the need for land may be addressed because her family owns one of the parcels and they are willing to sell the land at fair market price.

Mr. Graham Paige is a member of the Esmont community. He thanked Dr. Moran for her recommendation. The children of Yancey and the community are worth more than \$400,000. The community will suffer with lower property values if the schools are closed. He urged the Board to keep the schools open.

Mr. Jeff Luck is a parent. He was relieved to hear Dr. Moran's recommendation. He spoke about the need to buy land for Yancey – but the other options would also require land or more funds to expand an existing school or build a new school. The schools are the centers of communities which are spread out.

Dr. Stephanie Wilkerson is a Scottsville parent. She supports Dr. Moran's recommendation. Student achievement should be considered when making a decision regarding these schools. She provided information on research on school size and achievement. She asked that the Board keep all three schools open.

Mr. John Snoddy is the mayor of the Town of Scottsville. He supports Dr. Moran's recommendation regarding the three southern elementary schools. He feels that the recommendation is the best for southern Albemarle County. He asked that the Board support the recommendation as well.

Mr. Clark Draper is a Scottsville resident and parent of students at Scottsville Elementary School. As the Town Administrator he needs to look at economic development and the Town is still feeling the impact of Scottsville School closing. He asked that the Board support Dr. Moran's recommendation.

Ms. Peggy Scott is a southern Albemarle resident. She shared a story about a student who attended a larger elementary school then moved to Yancey Elementary School. She supports Dr. Moran's recommendation for the southern elementary schools.

Ms. Jenny Pickens is a parent. She supports Dr. Moran's recommendation. She appreciates the time that was put into the decision. She spoke about her daughter's experience with a combined class at Scottsville Elementary School. She asked that the Board uphold Dr. Moran's recommendation.

Ms. Rosa Hudson said that her land adjoins Yancey Elementary School. She thanked Dr. Moran for her recommendation regarding the schools. It is not about money, it is about our children. We need to be more concerned about our children rather than money. There is always discussion about closing Yancey. She urged the Board to uphold Dr. Moran's recommendation.

Mr. Kevin Quick is a Scottsville parent and real estate broker and appraiser. He commended the Board for visiting the schools to see what takes place there. He thanked Dr. Moran for her work on developing the recommendation. You will find community spirit in these small communities and that is part of what makes small schools special as well. He asked that the Board enhance the schools and not mess with what is working currently. In the small schools, teachers get behind their students and encourage them.

Ms. Belinda Mills thanked Dr. Moran for her recommendation regarding the three schools. She said that Dr. Moran has a heart and she hears what the communities are saying. Children are our jewels and we need to consider what will happen to the children if the schools are consolidated. The schools make the communities.

Mr. Ed Brooks supports Dr. Moran's recommendation. He also thanked the Board for visiting the schools. He spoke about taking these schools to a different level and how can we connect them to the rest of the schools in the Division. There is a lot of history in these small schools and communities.

Mr. Darcy Burn is a Scottsville parent. He spoke about some experiences he has had within the division over the last month with the Scottsville. Small communities can do great things.

Ms. Kelsey Johnson said that she supports Dr. Moran's recommendation. She provided information on educational research regarding small schools. She has found this process to be inspiring and many connections have been made.

Ms. Ray Carol Klantz is the Red Hill PTO President. She cannot imagine the change her children would endure if they were put into a large school. She introduced Charles Lewis who spoke about Yancey and the significance of the community within the school. They spoke about how the communities are working together to build relationships.

Ms. Melinda Whitehurst is a Red Hill parent. She supports Dr. Moran's recommendation. All three schools are vital to their communities. She provided the Board with her child's experience with combined grade classes. She does think a new school is needed in order to excite teachers. This process has united these three

communities and collaboration will continue after the decision is made. She asked that the Board uphold the Superintendent's recommendation.

Ms. Trish Pugh is a Red Hill parent. She asked that the Board support the Superintendent's recommendation.

Ms. Valerie Quick is a Scottsville parent. She is an active volunteer. She is always looking to get more "Bang for the Buck" and she understands where the savings are. She cannot help but wonder if it is not worth it. She did not see the "extra fat" in the schools and having three empty schools would be a waste.

Ms. Stephanie Morris is a special needs parent. Teachers make sure that her child is taken care of at Red Hill. She commended Dr. Moran on her recommendation to keep the three schools open. She hopes that the Board looks at best practices for school size and when does a school become inefficient and when do we need to put more resources into a school. She asked that the Board uphold the recommendation.

Mr. George Davies is an Albemarle resident. He owns the property south of Yancey Elementary School. He thinks that the land issue at Yancey can be resolved.

Mr. Robert Anderson is resident of southern Albemarle County. He said that bigger is not always better. How can you place a value on the education of students? He encouraged the Board to be different and not build a bigger school.

Ms. Lisa Moore shared a story about her experience in Red Hill Elementary. She encourages the Board to keep the schools open.

Mr. Nathaniel Thompson said that he was nervous to send his child to public school after he was homeschooled. We have an amazing school and she enjoys attending the smaller school. Why do we want to damage our community?

Ms. Linda Watkins said that her family moved here a year ago. A lot of the decision to move here was based on where they wanted to go to school. She loves Scottsville Elementary. The volunteer system is wonderful. The teachers and support systems are wonderful. She supports Dr. Moran's recommendation to keep the schools open.

Ms. Lillian Schatt is a resident of southern Albemarle County. She is a former teacher. Children are her first love – it is not the money, it is the kids. She is all for the small schools and the attention that children get in small schools.

Mr. Charles Lewis said that keeping the schools open is not enough. He thinks that the 29 and 20 corridors should be more attractive to teachers. His teacher is the only African-American teacher at Yancey. He feels that teachers should be able to connect to the students that they are teaching.

Agenda Item No. 6.1. Other Business by Board Members/Superintendent.

Mrs. Mouly thanked individuals for giving the Board a sense of the quality and values in the community. There has been a sense of collective wisdom in what was shared.

Agenda Item No. 7.1. Adjournment.

At 8:35 p.m., Mr. Price offered a **motion** to adjourn the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board. Mrs. McKeel **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Chairman

Clerk