

WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA

JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES



Council for the City of Waynesboro, Virginia held a joint meet with the School Board on Wednesday, July 17, 2019, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Charles T. Yancey Municipal Building, 503 West Main Street, Waynesboro, Virginia, with Mayor Short presiding and calling the meeting to order:

PRESENT: Council Members: Terry Short, Jr., Mayor, At Large
Bobby Henderson, Vice Mayor, Ward C
Bruce Allen, Ward B
Elzena Anderson, Ward A
Sam Hostetter, Ward D (joined meeting at 6:50 p.m.)

School Board: Rick Wheeler, Chair, Ward B
Diane Williams, Vice Chair, Ward A
Debra Freeman-Belle, Ward C
Kathe Maneval, Ward D
Erika Smith, At Large

City Staff: Mike Hamp, City Manager
Jim Shaw, Deputy City Manager
Julia Bortle, Clerk of Council
Cameron McCormick, Finance Director

School Staff: Dr. Jeffrey Cassell, Superintendent
Ms. Vermell Grant, Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Vonda Hutchinson, Finance Director

ABSENT: None

OPENING REMARKS:

The purpose of the meeting was to work toward a five-year operational and capital improvement plan, discussing options and possibilities that will benefit the school system and the city. Staff identified three general concepts regarding the budget process: unspent appropriation, the funding formula, and capital funding. The issue before both bodies is whether the current level of appropriation for public education is sufficient, and if not, the options are to prioritize public education over current expenditures, or, generate additional revenue for the school system.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Unspent Appropriation:

Both the City Council and School Board staffs will develop a policy for an annual approach to capital planning. It was agreed that a written understanding between the two bodies that the unspent appropriation would be re-appropriated back to the School Board would enable them to plan their expenditures.

Mayor Short asked that the School Board make their five-year capital plan available to the City Council. Dr. Cassell supports the idea of a school capital improvement plan, noting they could define dollar amounts to distinguish what is a capital expenditure versus an operations expenditure. The Mayor suggested a review of the School Board's requests for additional funds during the past eight years to provide context to a school contingency reserve.

Staff will discuss the revision of the fund balance policy or related mechanism with the auditors to address the automatic return of the school's annual unspent appropriations.

Funding Formula:

The current funding formula was discussed but never jointly confirmed by both the City Council and the School Board. Consideration may be made by current elected officials to jointly examine, update, and confirm a funding formula that will align with both the City's Comprehensive Plan and the School's Strategic Plan.

Ms. Maneval and Dr. Cassell suggested an in-depth analysis of how the 42.5% funding formula could work in real time as opposed to the current two-year delay. It was suggested that a joint committee with both City and School staff be formed to investigate options and then both bodies meet again in a joint meeting.

Capital Funding:

The School Board was asked to provide the council with capital expenses projected for the next five years to help put in context those items where the Board may ask for additional funding. Dr. Cassell suggested that the School Division manage their debt service and when loans are paid off in such as in 2020 and 2021, the funds be allocated for future school capital expenses, i.e., Phase 2 of the high school renovation project.

Next Steps:

- Discuss providing a written policy regarding the return of school unspent appropriations.
- Review the funding formula and look at options.
- Discuss the school debt balance after the last debt service payment for other capital needs.
- Ensure the items discussed align with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the School's Strategic Plan.

The City Manager will arrange a future group meeting.

With no further matters to discuss, the meeting concluded at 7:20 p.m.

Julia Bortle, MMC, Clerk of Council

Terry Short, Jr., Mayor