

**COVINGTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Minutes**  
**March 26, 2020**

The Covington City School Board held a special called meeting in the Board conference room on Thursday, March 26, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

Tamala Preston, Chair  
Bert Baker, Vice-Chair  
Jonathan Arritt  
Erika Hunter

Tonya Jones joined the meeting remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Superintendent Melinda Snead-Johnson was present, as was Rebecca Irvine, Board Clerk. Shannon Fuhrman, Director of Instruction and Technology, joined the meeting remotely.

Mrs. Preston called the meeting to order and noted that Board room occupancy would be limited to ten people due to the COVID-19 Pandemic guidelines. Questions for the Board could be submitted electronically. Mrs. Preston requested a moment of silence and those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2020 – 2021 BUDGET**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the Preliminary Budget approved by the Board was submitted to the City Manager on March 6<sup>th</sup>, but the final state budget approved by the General Assembly was not released until March 13, 2020. This required a budget revision that is presented for approval tonight. Upon budget approval, the revision will be submitted to the City Manager, however Mrs. Snead-Johnson anticipates the current COVID-19 Pandemic crisis will also significantly impact state and local revenues, thus more revisions will be necessary. City Council has postponed its budget presentation meeting scheduled for March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Ms. Irvine noted that the FY 20-21 budget totals \$12,308,790 which includes \$11,715,646 for General Operations, \$520,027 for the Cafeteria Fund, and \$73,117 for Textbooks. The net increase over the preliminary budget submitted to the City is \$75,879. Projecting an Average Daily Membership (ADM) of 960, state funds increased by \$64,021 with the final approved state budget.

The budget adopted by the General Assembly includes the state share of Compensation Supplement funds based on a 2% salary increase effective July 1, 2020, and a 2% salary increase effective July 1, 2021, for SOQ instructional and support positions. This amount totals \$97,720. To be eligible for compensation supplement funding, the School Board must provide the recommended salary increase. State funds also include \$248,002 for "Infrastructure and Operations." These funds replace the Supplemental Lottery Per Pupil Allocation included in the Governor's Budget.

Federal funds decreased with the phase out of the GEAR UP program (\$40,000) and a reduction in Title II funds (\$16,000). All other revenues remain level for the upcoming year. The Cafeteria Fund will require a transfer from Operations of \$145,103 based on projected expenditures.

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The proposed budget adjusts the starting step of each current salary scale by 2% and provides a step increase for all eligible staff. For any employee not eligible for a step, their salary is increased by 2%. The budget also includes funds to accommodate the mandatory minimum wage increase.

The minimum wage for Cafeteria Workers has been adjusted to \$9.50 per hour and the minimum wage for Instructional Aides has been adjusted to \$10.25 per hour. To minimize the impact of the minimum wage increase, the number of “contracted” days and the number of work hours per day for instructional aides will be reduced. Instructional Aides will be contracted to work 195 days for 7.5 hours per day.

Some discussion ensued regarding the need to be flexible with budget projections given the current COVID-19 Pandemic and its impact on the economy. Sales tax revenue could be substantially reduced. Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that the Board should have an opportunity to discuss budget concerns with City Council when the budget presentation meeting is rescheduled.

Upon a motion by Ms. Jones, seconded by Mrs. Hunter, the Board unanimously approved the FY 20-21 budget as presented.

## **COVID-19**

Mrs. Snead-Johnson updated the Board on COVID-19 activities within the division. Packets of instructional materials are being distributed to families and on-line instruction continues. Staff are practicing social distancing when preparing materials for distribution. The feeding program continues with “grab and go meals” at three distribution sites. Between 146 and 246 families are receiving meals. The feeding program will continue until the end of the school year. Mrs. Snead-Johnson noted that today The Feeding Southwest Virginia Program provided \$25 gifts cards to both CHS and ACPS for distribution. The gifts cards are due to donations from Food Lion and Kroger. Mrs. Snead-Johnson commended all staff as well as the community for their dedication and commitment to servicing students during unprecedented crisis. Staff are tracking all expenses if disaster or stimulus funds are made available.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon a motion by Mr. Arritt, seconded by Mr. Baker, the Board unanimously approved an executive session at 6:59 p.m. to discuss matters in relation to the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) Personnel.

Upon a return to open session at 7:40 p.m., the Board agreed to certify the closed session under the Code of Virginia, Section 2.1-3711 (A) (1) Personnel with a roll call vote.

## **PERSONNEL**

Upon a motion by Mr. Baker, seconded by Mrs. Hunter, the Board unanimously approved the following personnel appointments/resignations:

### **Resignation:**

Powell, Linda

CHS Special Education Teacher, Retirement at the end  
Of the 2019 – 2020 school year

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The Board adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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Tamala Preston, Chair

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Rebecca Irvine, Clerk

