



BOARD OF VISITORS

THE VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND
P.O. BOX 2069
STAUNTON, VA 24402-2069

Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
Board Chairman

June 11, 2014
DRAFT

Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind
Board of Visitors
Minutes of Meeting

Members present: Senator Hanger, Senator Favola, Delegate Bell, Delegate Wilt, Virgil Cook, John Pleasants, Rachel Bavister, Alice Frick, Donna Gateley, Jane McNeil

Members absent: Diane Sandidge

Advisors to BOV: Wanda Council, VDOE; Wendell Roberts, AAG; Nancy Armstrong, Superintendent

Senator Hanger called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m.

Roll Call of Members

Roll call of members was conducted by introductions. A quorum is present.

Reading and approval of March 20, 2014 meeting minutes

Rachel Bavister met with the secretary before the meeting to clarify her comments on the Outreach Director. John Pleasants moved to adopt the minutes with Ms. Bavister's correction. The motion passed.

Reports

Budget and Grants

Janice Rankin, Director of Operations, presented information on the budget. At this time, the budget has not been passed in Richmond; several items are on hold and will be forwarded to the Board once the budget has been passed.

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2015 is 10.7 million; a shortfall of \$165,000 is projected. Insurance payments can be held off until FY 2016 to make up the difference. A statewide budget cut from Richmond would adversely affect VSDB's ability to make the budget. Senator Favola moved to adopt the budget as presented. The motion passed.

Title I, Part A, Improving Basic Program grant application was presented to the Board. The total grant amount is \$97,838.56. This grant will be used for SOL Remediation/tutors, CAN/Medical Assistant, Medical and Dental exams for students, Interpreters, Foreign Language Translation, Conferences/Workshops, classroom supplies, and technology. Senator Favola moved to approve the Title I grant application. The motion passed.

Title II, Part A. Teacher Quality grant application was presented to the Board. The total grant amount is \$18,823.68. This grant will be used for tutors to assist teachers in passing needed certification, paraprofessional training, conferences, tuition, PRAXIS and paraprofessional reimbursement, travel and material expenses. John Pleasants moved to approve the Title II grant application. The motion passed.

Human Resources

Nate McLamb, Director of Human Resources, presented information on positions filled, closed recruitments, open recruitments, and positions that are pending approval from the Secretary of Education. Speech Language services are mandated by IEPs, if the position is not filled, the school will be required to contract the service. The Instructional Technology Resource Teacher (ITRT) is responsible for VDOE reporting.

Hanger: hold action on this until after school reports. Look at contracting housekeeping services? Yes, contracting is more expensive. 18 positions are frozen in addition to the positions currently open.

School Report

Pat Trice, Principal, presented a summary of school activities since the last Board meeting. Curriculum development will take place June 16 – 20 and the summer program will be the week of June 23rd.

Change in order of meeting

Senator Hanger reports he must leave for Richmond, therefore he requests a change in the agenda to allow the Board to review the information to be presented by the Executive Committee. The change in agenda is approved.

Delegate Bell moved that the Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind convene in closed session to discuss personnel matters pursuant to the personnel exemption at §2.2-3711(A) (1) of the Code of Virginia.

The motion was seconded by Senator Favola, the motion passed.

Upon reconvening in open session, Delegate Bell moved that the Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind adopt a resolution certifying that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting in which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed, or considered by the Board of Visitors.

The Board of Visitors being polled, the vote was as follow:

Senator Hanger – Aye
Senator Favola – Aye
Delegate Bell – Aye
Delegate Wilt – Aye
Virgil Cook – Aye
John Pleasants – Aye
Rachel Bavister – Aye
Alice Frick – Aye
Donna Gateley – Aye
Jane McNeal - Aye

Virgil Cook moved, on recommendation of the Executive Committee, to offer the position of interim-Superintendent to Pat Trice. The position will start on July 25, 2014. Nate McLamb will be authorized to negotiate up to the standard maximum increase (15%) in salary for Ms. Trice. Accepting the interim-superintendent position does not preclude Ms. Trice from applying for the position. As interim-superintendent, Ms. Trice will not continue as principal. The recruitment for superintendent will remain open through December 31, 2014, but may be closed at any time. Delegate Bell seconded. The motion passed with nine “AYE” and one “NAY”.

Virgil Cook moved for the board to support the filling of the three positions that are pending the Secretary of Education’s approval; the Speech-Language Pathologist, Instructional Technology Resource Teacher (ITRT), and Assistant housekeeping Supervisor. The motion passed. Before Senator Hanger left, the Board thanked Dr. Armstrong for her past work for VSDB and wished her good luck for the future. John Pleasants and J H Cline, Blind Alumni members, presented Dr. Armstrong with a gift on behalf of the Blind Alumni Association. Senator Hanger departed for Richmond; Delegate Bell, Vice Chair, continued the meeting.

Admissions Report

Cyndy Ward, Director of Clinical Services, presented information on admissions. The school continues to receive applications; the trend is toward students with multiple disabilities. Four days are set aside during the summer to review applications.

Intervener Report

Kathy Campbell, Lead Interpreter, provided a summary of what an intervener is and how they are used at VSDB. Interveners work with deafBlind students providing access to their environment. The intervener works closely with the teacher to modify the curriculum for the student. VSDB and VDOE work closely with the deafBlind project at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Superintendent’s Report

Nancy Armstrong reported that the Carrillo Scholarship was not awarded to a student this year so scholarship amount of \$1000 will be presented to the library. The Cafeteria completed a Federal

Review with no violations. VSDB continues to partner with the Alleghany Mountain School with three fellows on campus, creating a teaching community garden.

Dr. Armstrong expressed her concern with the continuing cuts to the budget. Personnel accounts for 95% of the budget, making it very difficult to provide that staffing that is mandated in IEPs. VSDB continues to be cut as both a state agency and a k-12 school. She stressed that the Board needs to work on establishing one definition for VSDB as a k-12 school.

VSDB continues to collaborate with local agencies and universities including Mary Baldwin College, Valley Vocational Technical Center, University of Virginia, and Radford.

Plans for Main Hall renovations are in development. An architectural firm has been hired and is working with the Department of General Services on the plan. Funds for the construction phase have not yet been appropriated.

The VSDB Foundation continues to fund several programs including the summer camp, the horticulture position, deaf student leadership camp, blind student space camp, equipment for both departments, and a part time grant writer.

Dr. Armstrong expressed how it has been a wonderful 14 years as Superintendent at VSDB. She appreciates the support she has received from the Board and urges the Board, especially the elected officials, to work hard at helping the state know about VSDB and the programs that are offered. When asked for advice for the next Superintendent, she responded that it must be accepted that VSDB will never be fully funded by the state. In order for VSDB to continue to offer the quality of service that has come to be expected, then the board and the school need to find alternate ways to bring in additional funds.

Senator Favola requested that a committee be created to reopen the out of state tuition proposal. The committee would research the current cost Virginia incurs to send students out of state and what services VSDB would have to offer to accommodate those children. They would also research the needs of other states for services, and create a tuition model (fee schedule) to ensure the program did not operate at a loss. Check with states that have closed their school for deaf and blind children to find out what their needs might be for out of state education. This information would be presented at the next meeting.

Jane McNeil moved to establish an ad-hoc committee to draft background information and a model approach to accept out-of-state students. The committee would be comprised of up to five members. The motion passed. Current Board members: Senator Favola, Rachel Bavister; non-board members: Nancy Armstrong, Wendell Roberts.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- *Report from Ad-hoc committee*
- *Report on the new direction of enrollment, needs of students with multiple disabilities.*
- *Spend time in classroom observing students*

- *Need to find a tangible way to show that VSDB is the least restrictive environment for deaf and blind children.*

Rachel Bavister thanked Dr. Armstrong for her service to the school.

Working lunch

IT report

Doug Wright, IT Director, reported that VSDB continues to work toward compliance with VITA mandates. The mandates are not funded and are cost prohibitive. Senator Hanger has contacted the Secretary of Education with VSDB's concerns about the cost. VSDB has received four bids for the work, all are higher than expected. Projected cost for the first stage is \$50,000-60,000.

A wi-fi system is being installed on campus. Once it is complete, a guest account can be set up for visitors on campus. The addition of another fire wall will permit access for remote users while keeping them separate from the local school network.

An intern from Blue Ridge Community College will be in the IT office this summer.

Dr. Armstrong recommended that the Board approve the school to move ahead with the hiring of a contractor to complete the IT security work to bring the school into compliance. The longer the school delays in hiring a contractor, the further out of compliance VSDB becomes. The Board wishes to continue to pursue the dialogue between Senator Hanger and Secretary Holton before approving the expenditure.

Continuing Business

Update on museum property from Hampton

The city of Hampton is very excited about being able to use some of the items from the Hampton campus that are being stored at VSDB. Dr. Armstrong and Mr. Roberts are working with the City of Hampton on the contract.

Review naming of facilities

This is a follow-up from the March meeting. The board approved a policy for the naming of facilities in August 2011. The Board assumes the term "facility" refers to a standalone building. A sub-committee of the Executive Committee should be convened to discuss the request from the March meeting. The sub-committee will consist of the Chair and two additional members. Recommendations are Senator Hanger (Chair), Virgil Cook, and Alice Frick.

New Business

Policy

Wendell Roberts, Assistant Attorney General, presented two updated policies for the Boards approval.

1. **Student Records Policy:** This policy has been updated to comply with federal and state FERPA regulations. Delegate Wilt moved to approve the updated Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind Student Records Policy as written. The motion passed.
2. **Performance Planning and Evaluation:** This policy was updated based on the 2013 General Assembly change to the Virginia Code to include a five year probationary period for new faculty. The school may offer a continuing contract after three years under exceptional circumstances. Rachel Bavister moved to approve the Performance Planning and Evaluation policy as updated. The motion passed.

Delegate Bell stressed the importance of appointing a board member to the empty position on the Executive Committee left by Donna Gateley. Ms. Gateley voiced her desire that a parent representative take her place.

Other Business

None

Public Comment

Byron Heath, VSDAA President, informed the Board that the Deaf Alumni Association has been actively seeking a candidate for Superintendent. He stressed the importance that the new Superintendent have ASL skills. He expressed the concern that many alumni have on the naming of the Student Center and reminded the Board that the alumni need to have input in the naming of facilities. Bell responded and agreed that ASL skills are important for the Superintendent. He also clarified the process for naming VSDB facilities. The naming of the facility is the responsibility of the Board, and all alumni have the option to participate by submitting a name for review.

No further business.

Meeting date for September: Board members will be polled by email.

John Pleasants moved to adjourn. The motion passed.