



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 19, 2015

Minutes of Meeting

Call to Order: Senator Hanger called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m.

Roll Call of Members: Members present: Senator Emmett Hanger, Delegate Dickie Bell, Delegate Tony Wilt, Virgil Cook, John Pleasants, Alice Frick, Mike Asip, and Ann Latham-Anderson

Members absent: Senator Barbara Favola, Judy Sorrell and Paula Johnson

Advisors to BOV: Wanda Council, VDOE; Wendell Roberts, AAG; Mona Siddiqui, AAG; Pat Trice, Interim Superintendent

Roll call of members was conducted by introductions. Senator Hanger declared a quorum.

Reading and approval of March 25, 2015 meeting minutes: John Pleasants moved to approve the March 2015 minutes with no corrections to minutes. The motion passed.

Motion to Enter Closed Session:

Delegate Wilt proposed that the Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind convene in closed session to discuss personnel matters related to the selection of the Superintendent for the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind pursuant to the personnel exemption at §2.2-3711(A0(1) of the Code of Virginia.

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind has this day adjourned into Closed Session in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act: and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act provides for certification that such Closed Session was conducted in conformity with the law.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors hereby certify 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.

Delegate Wilt moved that the board go into closed session with Mike Asip seconding the motion.

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

1. Senator Emmett Hanger - Aye
2. Delegate Tony Wilt – Aye
3. Alice Frick – Aye
4. Mike Asip – Aye
5. Ann Latham-Anderson- Aye
6. John Pleasant – Aye
7. Virgil Cook – Aye
8. Delegate Bell – Aye

Ann Latham-Anderson moved that Pat Trice be approved as Superintendent of VSDB, effective June 10, John Pleasants seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

John Pleasants expressed appreciation to Pat for her help with the Blind Alumni Weekend.

Reports

Superintendent's Report: Pat Trice presented information from the “Reshaping and Redefining VSDB” Strategic Plan which addresses the restructuring of the VSDB education program. Staff will continue to look at the program and phase in the new programs centering on the C.A.P. (Continued Education and Preparation for Employment) for students who are seeking a Standard or Advanced Studies diploma with the goal to further their education at the post-secondary level or to enter a career field after graduation. The L.I.F.E. (Life Skills for Independence and Future Employment) program is for those students who are seeking an Applied Studies diploma and whose goal is independent living and employment after graduation.

The two pilot programs will be implemented in phases with the first year serving as a work-planning year. Virtual classes will be explored or provided by staff and possibly partnering with Augusta County Public Schools for some classes. Block scheduling will be used in the high school to match other school divisions.

Delegate Bell stated that benefits with technology are improving with virtual programs that can fill a need for students with VSDB staff providing support.

Delegate Bell moved to accept the “Reshaping and Redefining VSDB” Strategic Plan. Mike Asip seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Pat asked the Board to consider the possibility of changing the 2016-2017 school calendar to reflect starting and ending dates to align with the Staunton, Augusta County, and Waynesboro public school divisions. Because there are some VSDB students who attend the Valley Career and Technical Center, it would not be feasible for VSDB’s school year to begin two weeks later. Tentatively, the school year would begin on August 9, 2016 and end on May 25, 2017. Pat and staff are looking at logistics to see if this calendar change would be feasible.

Delegate Wilt moved to study the feasibility of changing the 2016-2017 school calendar. The motion passed.

Repairs to the flood damage in the Yates-Shinpaugh Education Building continue with painting and repairs to be completed this summer. Interest in other building rentals continues; however, the available buildings not currently in use are not ADA compliant. A request will be put into the Capital Budgeting Request for funds to be used for renovations to Strader Hall to be ADA compliant because the renovation will generate more interest in building rental.

The first Foundation Board and Alleghany Mountain Institute fundraiser (Farm-to-Table) is scheduled for August 22, 2015 with tickets selling for \$60 per person. Donations of local foods are expected. Approximately 150 people can attend, and First Lady, Dorothy McAuliffe, is expected to attend.

Budget and Grants: Janice Rankin, Director of Operations, presented information on the current year budget. As of the end of May VSDB is 3% under budget with no deficits at the end of the fiscal year. VSDB has received two one-time additional federal grants for fiscal year 2016. Board members received a copy of the proposed fiscal year 2016 budget.

John Pleasants moved that the budget be approved. The motion passed.

Changes in transportation for the 2015-2016 school year will result in a net savings of approximately \$50,000 by eliminating one of the charter buses used for transportation of the residential students to and from school each weekend. Bus routes have been researched and changed so that VSDB buses, van and cars can be used to transport some students.

Concerning the 2016 Title I Grant, a few changes with SOL remediation tutors, a literacy coach for both departments, and ASL bilingual and Braille training with staff will be paid by a stipend. In addition, foreign language translation, conferences for staff, SOL field trips, medical and dental exams for some students, travel expenses for field trips, textbooks, classroom supplies, iPad, etc. expenses will be covered. This grant totals \$88,380.54.

The Title II Grant funds, totaling \$18,861, has few changes from previous years. Para-professionals will receive training and staff tutors will receive stipends. In addition, conferences, para-professional testing, expenses for conferences and training will be covered by this grant.

Mike Asip moved to approve the Title I and II Grants. The motion passed.

Janice is working with the Department of General Services with the Master Plan to expand the request for Main Hall renovations to include the Chapel renovation at \$45 million. Other capital projects requested are 1.1 million to complete Bradford Hall renovations, \$961,000 to renovate Strader Hall to attract renters, to install storm structures in residential halls at a cost of \$752,000, \$1.8 to renovate the superintendent's house, \$1.9 million to renovate Llewellyn Gym, \$515,000 to expand emergency generators and \$480,000 to correct the slope behind Kiser Hall. To help the board rank these projects, Mike Asip proposed a walk-about on campus during the September BOV meeting to look at proposed projects.

Human Resources: Nate McLamb, Director of Human Resources, presented two proposed options for teacher salary scales to be competitive with local school divisions, particularly for teachers with less than 15 years of experience. The Teacher Salary Scale Option 1 provides a salary scale which has been adjusted to reflect the August 10th pay increase approved by the General Assembly and includes an increase of the starting salary for teachers with no experience. The estimated cost of implementing this scale for Fiscal Year 2016 is approximately \$5,000 because VSDB would need only to absorb the extra cost for new hires. Increased funding to cover the cost of the increases for existing staff will be provided by the Department of Planning and Budgeting.

The 2015-2016 Teacher Salary Scale Option 2 provides a proposed teacher salary scale that has been adjusted to the average salary scale of the local school divisions. An additional \$40,000 in personnel services money would be needed to fully implement this salary scale. If approved, any teacher with a salary below the scale would receive a pay increase. This scale would primarily impact teachers with fewer than 15 years of experience because teachers with more state experience will receive a higher increase on August 10th.

Delegate Wilt moved to approve the Teacher Salary Scale Option 1 and also approve the Teacher Salary Scale Option 2, contingent upon the agency being able to identify funding in the Fiscal Year 2016 budget for the necessary implementation costs. The motion passed.

School Report: Keith VanFossen, Interim Principal, reported that 16 students graduated on June 5th and that all graduates are planning to participate in post-secondary placements. At this time nine new students have been accepted to start VSDB in the fall. The high school will be moving to a block schedule in the fall, which will help with transferring students who are coming in from a block schedule. New teachers have been hired, leaving one more teaching vacancy to fill in addition to a part-time horticultural specialist with the CROP program. Staff continues to work with DOE on the new Braille code transition. Staff has already starting teaching students the new code which goes into effect in January 2016. Two VI students will enroll in the Virtual Virginia Coursework in the fall and will need materials in Braille or large print.

Continuing Business

Wendell Roberts updated the Board on the sale of the Grizzel estate property. The General Assembly put an appropriation in the budget which was approved for the Foundation Board to receive the property and then sell it to the current buyer. The Foundation Board has obtained a real estate attorney to handle this process. The expected revenue from this sale will benefit VSDB.

New Business

Pat asked the Board to approve the re-appointment of Foundation Board members Harrison May, Janice Rankin, Emmett Hanger and Paul Singleton, whose three-year terms are expiring. John Pleasants moved that the board approve the appointments. The motion passed. Foundation Board Chairman, Harrison May, can update the BOV at the September meeting.

The Board members would like for Pat and Wendell to inform them on VSDB including anything about the school and its operation. Board members can let Pat know what information they might want over the next year. Senator Hanger asked that the Board focus on the physical plant at the September meeting which would include a tour of the buildings and grounds.

Pat requested that the Residential Hall reports be added to future agendas.

Effective in December 2015, all staff will vacate Main Hall. Staff has met with the design team, gaining input that will include more meeting space.

Public Comment

Rocco DeVito proposed to the Board that the school provide two invitational weekends each year for students and staff from other deaf/blind schools to visit VSDB. He also proposed that the alumni have some space in Main Hall for organizational offices.

The VSDB Mission is changing to serve students with more severe disabilities. Pat reported that there is currently no program for upper elementary and middle MD students. Senator Hanger stated that the Board would like a short report at its September meeting on students who have not been accepted.

The next Board of Visitors meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2015 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Senator Hanger moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed.

Virgil A. Cook, Board Secretary