

AGENDA
BEDFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
JOINT MEETING WITH BEDFORD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
BEDFORD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER
MARCH 3, 2005

7:30 P.M. WELCOME

- (1) CALL TO ORDER
- (2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- (3) APPROVAL OF AGENDA *(switched during the meeting with Item 4)*
- (4) STUDENT RECOGNITION *(switched during the meeting with Item 3)*
- (5) CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY LIST *(switched prior to the meeting with Item 6)*
- (6) FY2005-2006 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION *(switched prior to the meeting with Item 5)*
- (7) ADJOURNMENT

Board of Supervisors

Roger W. Cheek, Chairman – Dist. 3, Gary M. Lowry, Vice Chairman – Dist. 7, Dale C. Wheeler – Dist. 1, Charles Neudorfer – Dist. 2, Robert L. Bashore – Dist. 4, *Steve Arrington – Dist. 5 and Bobby G. Pollard – Dist. 6

**Mr. Arrington arrived at 7:40 p.m.*

Staff present: Kathleen Guzi, Carl Boggess, Susan Crawford, Brigitte Petersen

School Board Members

Mr. D. S. Black, Chairman – Dist. 3, Mrs. A. M. VanDerwerker, Vice-Chairman – City, Ms. J. W. Wright – Dist. 1, Mr. T. S. Huff – Dist. 2, Keith Jones – Dist. 5, Mrs. S. B. McCabe – Dist. 6, Mrs. D. S. Hoback – Dist. 7

School Board Members Absent

Mr. J. G. Fields

Staff Present: Dr. J. G. Blevins, Dr. J. B. Rogers, Mr. R. L. Edwards, Dr. B. F. Johnson, Mrs. S. S. Staton, Mr. D. W. Overstreet, Mrs. B. A. Padgett, Mr. G. W. Davis, Mr. W. C. Peterson

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- (1) Chairman Black called the School Board to Order.
 Chairman Cheek called the Board of Supervisors to order.

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- (2) Chairman Black led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(3) Dr. Julie Rogers introduced and recognized students and professors who were visiting from Bosnia as part of a Youth Leadership and Civic Education Program sponsored by Legacy International. They were shadowing students and teachers at JFHS this week, and after a trip to Washington, D.C. would return to work on projects before returning home. One of the students thanked the boards for the opportunity to share their culture and experience our government. A professor extended gratitude to the boards for allowing them to attend tonight's meeting, and expressed hope that their school system would benefit from these shared experiences.

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- (4) Chairman Black asked that the Discussion of the Budget and the Capital Improvement Priority List be switched in placement.

Dr. Jones made a motion to approve the agenda as amended with Mrs. VanDerwerker seconding. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Dr. Bashore to approve the agenda as amended.

**Voting yes: Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Neudorfer, Dr. Bashore, Mr. Cheek, Mr. Lowry,
 Mr. Arrington, and Mr. Pollard**

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously.

(5) Mrs. Debbie Hoback, opened the discussion of the Capital Improvements Priority list with a PowerPoint presentation. Three main priorities, to be achieved in three phases within five years, were given as follows:

1. No longer use the JFHS building
2. Decrease use of mobiles for permanent classrooms
3. Ease high enrollments and plan for future growth

Stage 1

- Build fourth high/middle school and a smaller JFHS as a “package deal” as presented in the PPEA (*Begin in October 2005, Complete in January 2008*)
- Build Bedford Primary multi-purpose building (*Begin in 2005, Complete in 2006*)

Stage 2

- Build Staunton River High School gym and complete high/middle school renovation
- Begin Thaxton addition (*Begin in 2008, Complete in 2010*)

Stage 3

- Build Liberty High School gym and begin addition to elementary schools as dictated by population growth (*evaluation to begin no later than 2008*)

The PowerPoint presentation illustrated the cost of leasing mobile units, debt service, enrollment projections, and a timeline. The board concluded that it was more cost effective if both new high schools were built simultaneously.

Following the presentation, Mr. Black took questions from the Board.

Supervisor Bobby Pollard asked how the School Board stood on the Priority List that was presented to the supervisors two or three years ago. Mr. Black asked if this was the same as the CIP list; Mr. Pollard confirmed that it was. Mr. Black responded that nothing had been done on the CIP list presented years ago; everything on it continues to “move out”. Mrs. Hoback stated that they have been on-target this year. She said there were a couple of unforeseen projects that came up for about \$500,000 so they were not able to complete other projects. Mrs. Hobeck explained that each year projects get moved due to emergencies that must be funded. Safety issues that arise must be funded first; other projects are pushed down on the list. Mr. Huff agreed, noting Thaxton and Bedford Primary had been “next” on the list for years. Mr. Black said that projects remain on the list unless they are funded.

Supervisor Bashore interjected that the last he remembered they were taking care of Staunton River, Liberty, and JFHS, and then everything “fell” after that – this is the last priority list he remembers. Mr. Huff commented that it was the last list of many.

Supervisor Pollard stated that it looks like a priority list is only good for the first and maybe second items on the list. Mr. Black replied that unless all the priorities are funded they have to be pushed out.

Chairman Cheek noted that the school system reported that enrollment was increasing, while census figures showed that the birth rate has dropped by 8% since 2000. He asked how many students coming from outside the county attributed to the overcrowding, and why the attendance zones have not been adjusted. Dr. Blevins responded that there were less than 12 students paying tuition county-wide, and elementary attendance zones were altered when the new elementary schools were built. Attendance zones for the high schools have not been changed, as they would have an impact on the middle and elementary schools. Attendance zones for some of the elementary schools have been adjusted.

Chairman Cheek also asked why the sixth grade was still at BSTC after five years, when the supervisors were told they would be out in three years. Mr. Black explained that there was no funding or plan for moving the sixth graders out. He encouraged members of the Board of Supervisors to meet with the School Board to discuss the middle school issue and also the city/county contract and the city's funding.

Supervisor Pollard made reference to a presentation by the School Board titled "How We Got To Where We Are" which was viewed by the Board of Supervisors several months ago. He wanted to know "why are we where we are" and stated all the information being presented to the Board of Supervisors tonight was already in the newspaper. Supervisor Pollard stated that he, along with the citizens he represents in District 6, have been very disappointed with the entire process the school system has taken in its attempt to build a new school to replace the current JFHS. He said several years ago when a consultant was hired to do a needs study; he said that when the contract for the consultant was drawn up, it was "slipped in" that a new school for Jefferson Forest was to be the first priority, even though the neither the Board of Supervisors nor the School Board were consulted. The issue of a new school for Jefferson Forest was begun before the needs study was even done.

Supervisor Pollard also feels that said that JFHS should receive a renovation just as SRHS and LHS did. He said that he would like to see plans and bids for renovation before making any decision. He said that both boards agreed not to use the PPEA process since you tend to loose control of the construction. He felt it unfair that the proposal calls for three high schools in the eastern part of the County, when the County is only 754 square miles. Supervisor Pollard stated his area of the County was promised a high school after Jefferson Forest was first built, and this has never been realized in the west end of the county. He pointed out that the students in the western half of the county must endure long bus rides because there was no high school close by; some students ride 30 miles each way to school.

Mr. Black responded by reminding the Board of Supervisors that JFHS was built with three stories as opposed to a campus style school, and they were unable to guarantee that a remodeling project could provide the same quality of facility as Staunton River and Liberty. Mr. Black also stated that the School Board chose the PPEA route in order to keep the cost down, not to lose control of construction. The site selection for a new school has been driven by the location of population growth, which was in the lake, Boonsboro, and Forest areas.

Supervisor Arrington stated that he had seen the PowerPoint presentation and had a problem with procurement and the PPEA. He also said that referring to mobile classrooms as "trailers" was sending a bad message to all of the mobile home owners in the county. He feels that the modular units are a deal compared to new construction, and also pointed out that his own three children were in the public school system and educated in the "trailers" with no negative impact on their education.

Supervisor Pollard commented that a lot of the School Board's decisions have been based on people with six-digit incomes; while there are people in Bedford with six-digit incomes, there are far more in the lower five-digit or even four-digit income bracket. He feels these people needs to be given their due consideration. Supervisor Pollard would like to see some renovation ideas and bids for renovation before any decisions are made.

Supervisor Pollard also stated he would to commend both Mr. Huff and Mrs. McCabe for looking out for the interests of the taxpayers of Bedford County.

Supervisor Wheeler asked how many mobiles were in use, and how many students were in mobile classrooms. Supervisor Neudorfer responded that, according to the information there were a total of 27 mobile units representing 49 classrooms (the Forest Middle School has 9 units with 14 classes, the Jefferson Forest High School has 6 with 14 classes.) Mr. Francis responded that the entire sixth grade of the middle school, 202 students, were out of classrooms for six periods each day.

Mrs. Hoback explained that mobile classrooms do not last as long as a permanent structure and were more expensive to keep up. It would be better to invest in a permanent structure. Mrs. Wright indicated even though teachers love these "learning cottages," because they can control their own heat and air conditioning, there are problems when the students must move for various activities. She felt it was imperative to keep all students together in permanent structures, so as not to make them feel set

apart from their peers. Mrs. VanDerwerker also noted that the core facilities could not support more students.

Supervisor Wheeler said he didn't understand the need for a new school, but he did understand the need for a new cafeteria. He felt that the cafeteria and nine classrooms could be included in a renovation.

Mr. Huff said that a previous board voted to renovate, but politics came into play when a new board was elected.

Mr. Black said that the new board revisited the issue and reviewed the professional studies. They agreed that they did not want to put money into a renovation, when all recommendations pointed to building a new school.

Supervisor Neudorfer told the boards that he is a 'numbers person', and it would take a while to digest all the information he has received tonight. He would not make a decision until he could have the numbers explained. He indicated that the population growth had flattened (according to the professional studies done) resulting in the elementary schools bottoming out, and said that it appeared the School Board wanted to build schools for less students. He also pointed out the needs study that was done recommended building one school for 1,600 student, not two separate schools.

Supervisor Neudorfer suggested the priority list be extended to ten-to-fifteen years. He also stressed the fact that he had no position on this issue at this time and would not have one until factual numbers had been presented to him.

Supervisor Arrington stated that he believed the School Board was sincere in doing the right thing, but he too needed very hard figures before making an intelligent decision. He asked for the cost of duplication in regard to staff, teachers etc. He agreed that there were many issues to look at, i.e., the large number of mobiles and student population; recruiting good teachers and retaining them should also be a priority. He stated that the numbers he has been given thus far simply do not add up, and in fact some of the figures conflict with each other. Supervisor Arrington has considerable experience in the construction business and said that the PPEA is a backward bidding process, and the only way it should be done was an up front bidding process which does not remove any competitive bidding.

Supervisor Bashore said that several preliminary studies had been done that recommended a new school as opposed to renovation if the renovations costs were more than 67% of the cost of a new building. For some reason, no action was taken. He said that HSMM's concept drawings for renovation increased from \$27 million to \$38 million with the addition of a sound system, flooring for the stage, a cafeteria upgrade, and roadwork. Supervisor Bashore agreed that it was a waste to spend \$38 million on a renovation of this building.

Mrs. McCabe told the boards that she had been through the whole process from the very beginning. She indicated that when the two new elementary schools and the renovation of LHS were proposed, the plans were drawn and bids were accepted, the Supervisors allocated the money even though there were scope changes that exceeded the original bids. In the early stages of planning for JFHS, the School Board asked for a new science building equal to the other high schools, a new heating and air conditioning system, and a new roof. From that point on, additional items were continually added, and the School Board was made to jump through hoops by the Board of Supervisors until a new board was elected. The School Board recently rescinded its vote to renovate and voted to build a new school. She said that it is the duty of the boards to remember all the children of Bedford County.

Supervisor Bashore stated that if three campus-style schools had been built in 1972, they would not be having this discussion today.

Supervisor Lowry told the boards that they must get their personal feelings out of the way and make a decision on the future of JFHS. He reminded board members that the boards must do what is right for all of Bedford County and keep politics out of it. Supervisor Lowry challenged both boards to make a decision before he gets off the Board of Supervisors. The longer they wait, the more expensive this will be.

Supervisor Neudorfer reiterated that he would like to see a decision while he is still on the board. He said that he had reservations that spending \$87 million on facilities was the best way to educate the

students. He indicated that he would like to see a compromise so that new schools could be built and still have the ability to take care of the buildings currently in use.

Mr. Huff said that a decision should be made soon, as some parts of the current system can't be repaired.

Supervisor Bashore added that some of the current systems are not repairable, and the warrantee on the mold remediation repairs would be running out soon.

Supervisor Wheeler interjected he was proud of the renovations done at the schools so far, and was still leaning towards renovation for Jefferson Forest High School.

Supervisor Neudorfer asked how the next decision from the School Board would be reached?

Mr. Black told the supervisors that the School Board would put together a timeframe to get this off the table and answer their questions. Supervisor Bashore also asked the student population numbers be revisited by the School Board as well.

The Board of Supervisors will speak with its financial advisor to get a sense of how much the county can afford and how it will affect local taxes.

(6) The next agenda item was the School Board's proposed revenue for FY 2005-2006. Mr. Black told the Board of Supervisors that the School Board was asking for \$700,000 in new local county funds and expected \$500,000 from the city. Most of the increase is from a 3½% increase in salaries and benefits; more money was also put in the maintenance line. The School Board will present this proposal to the supervisors following its approval on March 10, 2005.

Mr. Lowry moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

**Voting yes: Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Neudorfer, Dr. Bashore, Mr. Cheek, Mr. Lowry,
Mr. Arrington, and Mr. Pollard**

Voting no: None

Adopted Unanimously.

Motion was made by Mrs. VanDerwerker, seconded by Mrs. Hoback, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m. to the call of Chairman Black.

Chairman