



DRAFT
MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD
 Thursday, April 18, 2024, 6:00 p.m.
 Fire Administration Building – 3rd Floor Conference Room
 528 NW 2nd Street
 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

June 2023 - May 2024

Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Vice Chair Janet Gualtieri	P	4	1
Pamela Aiken	P	5	0
Heather Brinkworth	A	5	2
Kristina Dever	P	5	1
John Gillen	A	1	1
Erin Gohl	P	4	2
Juliet Gray-Williams	P	5	0
Charles Laster	P	2	0
Alyssa Mendez	A	3	3
Denia Perloff	P	4	2
Deborah Rosenbaum	P	2	1
Leticia Newkirk	A	0	1

Also Attending

Von Howard, Public Affairs Administrative Supervisor
 Susan Grant, Assistant City Manager

I. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Vice Chair Gualtieri. Mr. Von Howard informed The Board that we received notification that Chair Suzanne Dean had resigned, and there would be a need to appoint a new chair.

A recommendation was made by Vice Chair Gualtieri to set an agenda item for the May 16, 2024 meeting to allow members time prior to appointing a new Chair of the Board.

Motion was made by Ms. Gohl, seconded by Mr. Laster to approve Ms. Gualtieri as the new Vice-Chairwoman. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair-elect Gualtieri led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum

Roll was called and quorum was present.

IV. Approval of the April 18, 2024 Minutes

There were no noted corrections suggested.

Motion was made by Mr. Laster, seconded by Mrs. Brinkworth, to approve the March 14, 2024 minutes as submitted. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

V. Old Business

a. Reimagining BCPS Schools Update

Assistant City Manager Grant informed The Board that she attended the workshop held by the School Board of Broward and stated that she listened to the discussion and will remain engaged with the ongoing process.

ACM Grant informed the Board there are roughly 60 schools that are in consideration of being reimagined, however the School Board is looking closer to 30 schools that can be affected.

There will be a facilities assessment that will take place by the School Board which will include walk-throughs of schools and it has been requested by the City to participate in these walk-throughs of schools that are in Ft. Lauderdale.

There was a request for a letter of support from the various cities, however the city was not able to provide a response due to the timing when they requested it back and the information given. This is because the request needed to go before the Commission to obtain a consensus and there was no meeting in between the time the School Board needing a response and the next Commission meeting.

Questions:

Member Laster asked to clarify how many schools may be affected by the reimagination: ACM Grant stated it was originally stated to be in the range of 60, however the Board is looking to narrow it down to 30 with some in the City of Ft. Lauderdale boundaries.

Member Gray-Williams asked if there is a thought that a support letter is still important to be sent in the future: ACM Grant stated yes, it is important, however there needs to be a direct discussion with School Board officials and that Mrs. Zoie Saunders provided (2) names and the City is asking them to come in and make a presentation at a conference meeting to the Commission. From that point discussion can be facilitated and get feedback to construct a letter from that point.

Vice Chair Gualtieri asked how much the Commission has been updated on the number of schools that are affected in Fort Lauderdale: ACM Grant informed the Board that the Commissioners are briefed twice per month prior to commission meetings and that is when the information is relayed.

Member Aiken asked what was defined as closing versus leasing school facilities/land: ACM Grant explained that there is a possibility of repurposing a school or the land. There has also been communication from the Cemetery Board at Tuesday April 16, 2024 commission meeting where they made a recommendation to consider obtaining some of the land for repurposing for cemeteries as the City is running out of land.

Member Brinkworth suggested that ACM Grant also consider contacting Alan Strauss as he has now taken the role that was once occupied by Mrs. Saunders with BCPS and he would be a good wealth of knowledge. Mrs. Brinkworth also suggested that the City keep themselves abreast with specifics of the State Fund Balance regarding the charter schools situation. She stated that if the funding falls below a certain threshold, the State could come in and take over the school system, especially with the unknown amount that was agreed upon.

VI. New Business

a. Chief Education Officer Update

Assistant City Manager Grant provided an update on the status of Chief Education Officer position, informing the Board that she conducted eight (5) interviews where the panel made a recommendation and an offer was made to an individual. It is the anticipation to have them available at the May 16, 2024 Board meeting. The selected candidate has over 10 years of experience as an educator in Dade County, 10 years as a principal in Broward County, and most recently as a director within Broward Schools.

Vice Chair Gualtieri asked if the Commission approved the position was approved. ACM Grant stated that it was previously approved in the budget and (4) of the (5) Commissioners were favorable of retaining the position.

Member Brinkworth asked who the dissenting Commissioner was? It was explained by Chair Gualtieri that Commissioner Herbst felt that many of the duties of the Chief Education Officer were a replication of what the Parks and Recreation division is already doing.

ACM Grant told the Board that there is currently a work plan being constructed for the position for items to directly focus on upon their start.

Member Brinkworth then asked if there was clarity if the School Board is moving forward with the reimaging of schools. ACM Grant stated that she was unclear given

the outcome of Tuesday April 16, 2024 School Board meeting, however the City would remain on top of the outcomes.

VII. Member Discussion

Vice Chair Gualtieri asked if the School Board has appointed a new superintendent. Members had general discussion explaining that Dr. Howard Hepburn had been appointed as the new superintendent soon after the announcement was made by outgoing Superintendent Licata. Mr. Howard stated that he would forward the article from the Sun-Sentinel to the Board that provides additional information regarding the transition.

Vice Chair Gualtieri asked about the City Manager's resignation. ACM Grant explained to the Board that there will be an appointment of an interim City Manager at the upcoming May 7, 2024 Commission meeting. Vice Chair Gualtieri asked if ACM Grant was in consideration of the position, which she provided affirmation.

Member Aiken asked the City to create a scholarship for Fort Lauderdale high school seniors as Fort Lauderdale is one of few cities that don't have a scholarship offering. ACM Grant suggested that the Board develop a sub-committee to develop a criteria and supplemental information for recommendation. Member Aiken stated that she would provide some information to Mr. Howard to forward to the Board for recommendations.

Vice Chair Gualtieri asked that the following items be prepared for the May 16, 2024 meeting:

- Appointment of new Board Chair
- School Board Member Jeff Holness
- Summer Meeting schedule
- Location of future meetings
- Discussion of recommendations for scholarships for Ft. Lauderdale high school seniors

Motion was made by Member Rosenbaum, seconded by Vice Chair Gualtieri, to adjourn the meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

VIII. Closing

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2024.