

DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Regular School Board Meeting
December 14, 2016
5 p.m. – School Board Office

PRESENT: Rocky Barton, Chairman; Susan Mullins, Vice-Chairman; Shanghai Nickles; Dr. Lurton Lyle; Rick Mullins; Reba McCowan, Clerk; and Haydee Robinson, Superintendent.

ROLL CALL AND MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN, ROCKY BARTON:

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Good evening everybody. We will get started with the Pledge and Moment of Silence. Everybody is here except Dr. Lyle and he is on his way.

Superintendent Robinson: Before we approve the agenda, I just want to share with you that Delegate Pillion will be with us today. He has another donation to the nursing program. I'm going to ask him if we can just leave him on the agenda; public comment from now on; that way he can come any time he wants to. (Ha, ha) I would like to ask the Board after he comes if we can have another picture like we did last time. Also with him will two other gentlemen, John Johnson, Johnson Chevrolet and Collin Royster. He has been working with these two gentlemen in coordinating this contribution to the nursing program.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: We will need a motion to adopt the Agenda.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make a motion that we adopt the Agenda as presented. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded the motion. All votes aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman, Rocky Barton: We will go ahead with our Public Comment. I only have two names on the list for Public Comment: Ms. Kathy Musick, VPE, and Allison Mullins.

Ms. Kathy Musick: Good evening Mrs. Robinson, Chairman Barton and Members of the Board. My name is Kathy Musick of the Virginia Public Educators, and I just want to take this opportunity, I know this year has been a tough year especially for those who are managing public money, that Virginia Professional Educators, as we start this new legislative season will do everything we can to go to bat for teachers for salaries and getting that 2% back. Any initiative for teachers, we will go to bat for.

I also want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and hope that 2017 brings increased enrollment and good tidings to Dickenson County Schools. Thank you.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Allison Mullins with the DEA.

Ms. Allison Mullins: I apologize for the way I'm dressed; it's good to see you all. I'm going to give you guys a copy of our newsletter; there's some information I want to share. I just wanted to update the Board and Mrs. Robinson on what the DEA has been involved in.

We had our Christmas Banquet last week and you can just read and I'm sorry that I had to do these in black and white and the pictures didn't turn out to well. Maybe I can email you the colored pictures. In the first picture it's Mrs. Robinson with our VEA President, Jim Livingston who was our guest speaker at our Christmas Banquet. He is presenting Mrs. Robinson with a copy of the Resolution to support the Coalfield Equity Summit held in October; that is from the VEA not just our region but the VEA. We are very blessed that at our Christmas Banquet we fed 57 people that included not only teachers but support staff. We were very, very pleased with the turn out, the program and Mrs. Robinson attendance; wish you guys could have joined us. We had some great speakers.

Monday night, the next picture there, we had our Legislative Dinner and at the Legislative Dinner Mr. Pillion was there and we got to talk to him. Terry Kilgore, Israel O'Quinn, Ben Chaffin and others were there and we were very pleased with their remarks and comments. At the Legislative Dinner, the DEA was represented by me, Vicki Barton, Phyllis Mullins, Jesse Neece and Dennis Deel. Phyllis, Vicki and I got to take part in presenting the VEA's agenda for this year's legislative session to our legislators. This will tell you what our agenda is for this year. It is: Modification of Hearing Officer Requirements; Pursuit of state policy regarding salaries, and I've attached the second page which is kind of a study. A benchmark study of salaries for teachers and this is with Masters Degrees for 2016-17. You can read the chart for yourself, the point is the average Virginia teacher salary is \$49,826. It takes Dickenson County teachers 33 years to reach the Virginia average salary. We think that is unacceptable and I hope you all think that is unacceptable. You can see in this chart that in district A, we all start out pretty well at the same ranking but as you go through the years, at 30 years Dickenson County is 124 and other school districts around us have moved up in ranking. I believe it's unacceptable for teachers in other localities to start pay at what it takes a 30 year teacher to get in Dickenson County. So, we would certainly want to provide that by way of information.

We are very optimistic about the start of this school year. You all may know that teachers, I'm sure you do know in Dickenson County are short staffed, short supplied but not short in spirit and attitude and we are working very hard. I know that you have limited funds but I pray that this year the School Board will look at where our budget is disbursed and where our teachers stand in that budget situation; that's all for today and Merry Christmas. It's good to see you all, I haven't been here for a while and again I'm sorry about my attire. Thank you.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Thank you, Allison. That brings us to Good News from Our Schools.

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS:

Superintendent Robinson: I am going to ask Mr. Mark Mullins to come and share with you about our Rapoca funds. Also, I know that our individual schools are doing many, many things to help our children. Many individuals, many private citizens and companies are doing things to help. One in particular that I want to bring your attention to is Dennis Deel at Sandlick Elementary School shared this with me, Dennis couldn't be here tonight, he is giving a final exam at UVA Wise. As you see, Julia Manner from Poquoson School and an anonymous donor have contributed toys, clothes, and money for the students and families in

the Sandlick area. Mrs. Manners and her husband will be visiting Sandlick Elementary School this Friday bringing a U-Haul with all the gifts. Also, a sum of \$25,000 was donated to Sandlick Elementary to feed our families who are struggling this holiday season. I asked Mr. Deel to share with the Board what their plans were and as you see, they are going to provide the families before Christmas with items to prepare the Christmas meal such as ham, potatoes, stuffing and so on. After Christmas, boxes of food will be given to those families until the money is gone. Approximately 25 families will benefit. E & S Grocery has been a great help in preparing the food boxes and helping with the distribution. We just wanted to share that with you. We also want to recognize all our schools, which are working and providing many things to those in need. Social Services has also been very actively involved with that. I wanted to share.

Mr. Mark Mullins: Once again, the school system this year received \$13,000 from what we call the Rapoca Christmas Fund. Rapoca is actually no longer in operation but Clyde Stacy, one of the founders of Rapoca, has continued on with that fund. We have distributed that out to our schools for those kids who are in need and they use it in different ways depending upon other monies that they receive. We tried to find out how much money we've received from Rapoca, Mr. Stacy, over the years. As long as I've been here, we've always got that money and even before I got here, we got that money. We did calling and checking and we were going to recognize him with a resolution or something along those lines. I spoke with a person that we work with from the office in Bristol and she said that Mr. Stacy would not want that. He would accept it if you did that but I've been working for him for 32 years and they have been doing that ever since I have worked for him. We don't know how much money it's been, but for the last 5 years he has wrote a personal check for \$13,000 to the school system.

Chairman Rocky Barton: Is he from Garden Creek?

Mr. Mark Mullins: He is from Buchanan County and from what I understand; Mr. Stacy and John Matney started this fund. Mr. Matney's wife was a school teacher in Buchanan County. It has just continued on and at one point had a big golf tournament to raise money. That has gone away, but Mr. Stacy has continued to do that on his own. They do this for Dickenson County, Buchanan County and at one point they did it for Kids Central and probably others that I don't know about. He still does that for us and we greatly appreciate it.

Superintendent Robinson: We have had a lot of people who are just so helpful. Mr. Mullins and I were going to ask for a resolution for Rapoca, only because they had done it for so many years. However, we understand and respect Mr. Stacy's wishes.

Delegate Pillion, welcome. The Board has voted to have you on Public Comment agenda for the rest of the year. (Ha, ha, ha.)

Delegate Todd Pillion: So this is it, right? (Ha, ha, ha)

Superintendent Robinson: No, until June sir. (ha, ha, ha) We are just going to keep you on the agenda.

Delegate Todd Pillion: That's a lot of pressure. January and February I will be in Richmond.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for once again; allowing me here this evening and I've brought friends. One of them you know very well, John Johnson, of Johnson Chevrolet and Collin Royster, who is with the Virginia Auto Dealers Association. He will give a little brief history of what we are doing. The Virginia Auto Dealers Association recognizes that auto dealers in your home town mean a lot to everyone and John is included in that. He does a great job at being a great community supporter. This is a way for us to work with them to get some supplies out in the community for better programs just like the Nursing Program at Ridgeview High School. Tonight, we have four Resusci Annie's to present that will be used at the high school and hopefully throughout the community. These are four brand new ones that the school does not have to purchase now. We've been working with the Virginia Auto Dealers Association to get this done and they've been gracious to give us four. We are happy to present those to the Nursing Program. I will turn it over to Collin.

Mr. Collin Royster: Thanks again for having me, as Delegate Pillion said; we have four Resusci Annie's. My wife laughed at me as I left and said you are going to get in a wreck with those in your car and it would be very suspicious. (Ha, ha, ha)

All car dealers in the United States have charitable contributions that go into a pot and one of the things that they are passionate about is education and lifesaving training. So on behalf of all your local auto dealers of Virginia, we hope this will go a long way in training hopefully some kids and adults to save a life one day. From all car dealers, thank you for all you do every day. Thank you.

Superintendent Robinson: Mr. Johnson would you like to say something?

Mr. John Johnson: No, I think Collin did a great job.

(Pictures with Delegate Pillion, Mr. John Johnson and Mr. Collin Royster)

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Having known John and coached him and stuff, not only does John work with our school system, but his father Freddie Johnson was one of the most giving people that has ever been in our community. That has filtered down; the apple did not fall too far from the tree. By the way, buy local folks when you buy.

Mr. John Johnson: Thank you; I appreciate that.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman, Rocky Barton: First on the Consent Agenda is the Approval of Minutes. Has everybody had a chance to check out the minutes?

Dr. Lurton Lyle: One comment, on page 19, I probably should have said Mr. Yates instead of Mr. Edwards, with that noted I would approve the minutes.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: *I make a motion that we approve the Minutes with the change as noted. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Next we have Approval of Monthly Bills. Are there any questions about the bills? I see we have some additions.

Superintendent Robinson: The additions are highlighted on the last page. Any questions?

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Susan and I were looking at the power bills and they are running about the same as they did when we had all schools open.

Mr. Larry Barton: It is and actually I was wanted to get that posted but run out of time today but with Ridgeview we are good again this month. We are below where we were last year at this time by \$6,000 to \$7,000.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: But it's been warmer this year.

Mr. Larry Barton: It has.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Of course they may be a little better at regulating too.

Superintendent Robinson: They are doing that too, but to know that you are heating and cooling and are \$6,000 to \$7,000 below is good.

I have asked Mr. Larry Barton to share about a few utility bills.

Mr. Larry Barton: We have three bills that have not come in and I want to share with you that we will go ahead and pay these bills before we go on break. They should be in at the end of this week and we will include those with the January packet. We are expecting MountainNet for our long-distance service and it should be less than \$200. Our Verizon Wireless has not come in and its \$235 every month and the credit card bill which has not come in. We looked on-line and the balance appears to be about \$1,400. We will need to pay those to avoid late fees on those three.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: *I make a motion that we approve the Monthly Bills with the three mentioned that are not present to avoid late fees. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

School Operating Fund – December 14, 2016 – Bills

Check Nos. 876810 through 876889 ----- \$180,875.43

School Operating Fund – December 20, 2016 – Payroll

Check Nos. 387897 through 388024 ----- \$1,680,879.43

SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUND:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—The School Activity Fund is an informational item in your packet.

APPROVAL OF FIELD TRIPS:

Chairman, Rocky Barton: We are now ready for the Approval of Field Trips.

Superintendent Robinson: I would like to mention that the field trip to Pikeville to Mr. Gatti's, Ms. Chesney Barton's class, will be rescheduled. They were unable to make that trip due to the weather. We are asking the Board's approval for the field trips requested.

Mr. Rick Mullins: *I make a motion that we approve the Field Trips as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

Approved:

- ❖ Ridgeview High School
December 2nd – Haysi Christmas Parade – 8th – 12th Grade
December 14th – The Attic – Clintwood, VA – 9th – PG
December 16th – Velma Crabtree's House – Clintwood, VA – 9th – PG
February 9th – 12th – VA State BETA Convention – 9th – 12th Grade
- ❖ Ridgeview Middle School
December 14th – The Attic – Clintwood, VA – 6th – 8th Grade
- ❖ Clintwood Elementary School
December 14th – Heritage Hall – Clintwood, VA – 2nd Grade

Superintendent Robinson: Mr. Barton, would you like to say something about the Revenue Summary Report and Expenditure Summary Report? It's included in the Activity sheets from the schools.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I just have one question. On the non-payroll expenses, we are over-spent on our insurance.

Mr. Larry Barton: Yes, what that is; is when we did our budget we budgeted the number we had from VACORP for insurance, but then we added the catastrophic coverage it increased what we had originally budgeted for. That was a onetime expense and there will not be any more activity in that account for the year. Since you mentioned insurance, on our health insurance we got a report yesterday and we are looking really good so far for the year. We only have three months of data but we are under budget by 7%.

Another area over budget is Private Carriers; that is from the new pre-school program at Sandlick Elementary and when we did the budget we did not have that program in place. That is for expense of transporting students. Our revenues are coming in as anticipated so far this year; things are looking good there. We have a cash balance as of 11/30 of \$537,244.81.

We should be getting information on Friday on the first round of information on the adjustment for this years' budget.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Is it not true, that the Governor said he was going to take care of the education system. That he was going to work on that and make sure that we were not going to be penalized or something like that?

Superintendent Robinson: There was an article Mr. Nickles that I forwarded to the Board that said he would take care of K through 12. That was the same article that said instead of the 2% raise slated for all state employees, teachers and school personnel; that has been removed. In its place there will be in December 2017 a onetime bonus of 1.5%. It does not appear at this point that there are raises included for our teachers.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Is that the first time it's happened like that? The way he said it.

Superintendent Robinson: The bonus is very unusual. But it's been an unusual year because when the Governor and the General Assembly agree to a 2% raise, most of the time that is given; honored. Many school divisions began giving that in July and they are really facing some tough decisions now. We were not able to do that, so it's been an unusual year. The Governor did say that he was not going to touch K through 12, but the budget comes out on Friday and we will know what the initial cuts will be to this years' budget. We are quite concerned.

I want to thank Mr. Barton and his staff; it looks much more detailed than it has been and we certainly appreciate it. We appreciate his work and the finance office's work on this. We know exactly where we are.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS FOR THE BOARD:

Superintendent Robinson: I would like to ask Mr. Setser to come to the front and share with us the student enrollment information. Mr. Setser:

Mr. Mike Setser: Thank you, Mrs. Robinson. Mr. Chair and Members of the Board while the attendance percentages are not where we would actually like them to be there is a little good news for the month of November. We ended the month with 2,110 students, which is an increase of 9 students for the year. For the year; that puts us 7 above where we started.

As always, I've included a comparison of attendance rates on the second page. As you can see it's not as good as we would like but for some schools it's better than last year. The monthly attendance percentage winner, I want to commend Clintwood Elementary and Mrs. Muncy who is present, they have won the banner every month this school year. Keep up the good work.

I did include a list of where students went last month.

Superintendent Robinson: We would also like to recognize Ervinton Elementary School; they were second with 92.14%. Thank you.

I have included under informational items for the Board: VSBA 2017 Schedule of Meetings and Conferences: 1. VSBA Capital Conference January 23rd and 24th. I think this year there needs to be an effort to attend that because we would be able to meet with our legislators; and not just ours but others throughout the State. I think we are going to need their support in helping without budget. Again, if you are interested in attending on January 23rd and 24th; it's in Richmond at the Marriott and please let Mrs. McCowan know so that she can make reservations for you. 2. VSBA/WVSBA Hot Topic Conference, March 15th in Wytheville Community Center, a little closer. Again, if you would like to attend, please let Mrs. McCowan know.

As Mr. Barton has mentioned, Friday is when the Governor will publish his budget, of course it will have to go through the Senate and General Assembly; and then the Virginia Dept. of Ed. will publish its entitlement sheets Monday or Tuesday for each school division. We will have a better idea at that point, where we are. Even though we budgeted for less students than the VDOE estimated we are still anticipating a budget cut. We don't know, but we have an idea of \$200,000 to \$300,000. We will come back to the Board in January there will some difficult decisions that this Board will have to make again for this current budget. We are hoping and praying for the best but preparing for the worst. I hope we can meet in the middle somewhere. Thank you.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: On to new business.

DISCUSSION OF THE DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2017 AT 5:00 P.M.

Superintendent Robinson: First item on new business is just a discussion of the reorganization meeting of the Dickenson County School Board. That meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. I shared with a Board just a draft of the schedule of that first meeting for your information and recommendation. We will include the election of the Board Chair, election of officers, meetings dates and times, discussion of "nuts and bolts" for agenda, meeting procedures, etc. and then at that time the Chair will request a motion to adjourn the meeting and a second will adjourn that meeting. At approximately 5:30 p.m. the Chair will call the regular January School Board Meeting to order. We will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence. I've also included recommended meeting dates and times, but what I would like to recommend it that after the School Calendar is set; at that time we make any changes to the meeting dates and times. That way we won't be changing meeting dates like we've had to do this year. I apologize for that. I know that can be difficult. This is just a draft, the Board may choose another day or time; this is basically what we've done this past year. Questions or comments?

Mrs. Susan Mullins: Is there not an occasion that you might need a Chairman before January 25th? Rocky's term ends at the end of December. A lot of Boards go ahead and elect a Chairman in December.

Mr. Scott Mullins: We have policy that says we have a reorganizational meeting that day, but if we have some emergency come up before our organizational meeting then we would have a Special Called Meeting and reorganize at that point and time. Does that make sense?

Mrs. Susan Mullins: It does. The Board of Supervisors have already reorganized and I just wondered why we waited until January.

Mr. Scott Mullins: I don't think the Code of Virginia says you can't do that but our policy is pretty clear that we have a reorganizational meeting every year before we start.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I guess because of the election we would wait until January of that year, but trying to be helpful and getting ahead shouldn't we just go ahead and do it?

Superintendent Robinson: I'm going to ask Mr. Setser to look at policy BCA. In the information that I have it says the first January meeting.

Mr. Scott Mullins: I can look at that policy right here; it says: The Dickenson County School Board will hold an organizational meeting annually. At the meeting the Board will, and then it lays out all the things we just talked about. It actually says that the Board's annual organizational meeting will be held in January.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I was trying to save us some time.

Superintendent Robinson: Any other comment or changes? Any changes, recommendations you would like to suggest, please do so. We will look at the dates and times closer next year after we adopt the School Calendar 2017-2018.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: The conference I went to in Wytheville last year. It was a great conference by the way but it's scheduled for the 15th and the Public Hearing for the budget is scheduled for the March 15th. I didn't get finished there last year until 3:00 and I didn't get back here until half way through our School Board Meeting.

Superintendent Robinson: So, you are saying we may want to look at changing that by moving it to Tuesday, March 14th or Thursday, March 16th? Is that correct?

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: I was just saying that if anyone attends that conference they won't get back in time. I know that for a fact.

Superintendent Robinson: Is there a preference for the Board?

Mrs. Susan Mullins: As long as it's 5:00.

Superintendent Robinson: Tuesday, March 14th is that alright? And we certainly can write that in as a change and the Board can make its final decision in January. Anything else?

One of the discussions for nuts and bolts, Mr. Mullins referred to this last month regarding Public Comment.

Mr. Scott Mullins: I've actually reworked your public guidelines, the information Mr. Nickles reads in. I will send it to the Board to be contemplating before our organizational meeting. I think that will be a nice point for us to talk about; how we are going to conduct ourselves next year. Essentially it refers to two things you really need to be thinking about, one of which is not really discretionary, but that is an Attorney General's opinion that we need to modify and open it up to a more liberal public comment. As far as criticizing an employee, criticizing the Board, it's sort of a constitutional mandate and we've got to do that. The other is to give you some ideas for what we are going to do as we go through next year. You have someone back here waving their hand during a general board agenda topic, are we going to open that up, or are we going to say that those comments need to be in the public comment section. That is something that I will email to you well in advance. It's not something that is mandatory that we deal with that night, but hopefully we can come to some consensus that night on how we are going to conduct ourselves.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: We need to be sure if we are going to hard line it that we don't open it up when it's in our favor. That's kind of hard to take for some folks, if we are going to open it up when it sounds good for us and if somebody is complaining about something we don't let them talk. That's kind of a thin line there.

Mr. Scott Mullins: That's right and I put in the policy, and you guys can think about it, but you are going to have issues that come before you and the public really won't know exactly what you're talking about until after you've said it. Our public comments are usually at the first, so one of options would be to put the public comments later. The other option we have on things that are truly significant within your community, and I'm talking about the big issues such as location of the elementary or any of those hot button issues, you can always have a Public Hearing where people can come up and have 5 minutes, 10 minutes or even 15. You can have a little leeway. I think what you will see, Robert's Rules of Order and commonsense tell you that if you allow one person to raise their hand and talk, then however many that are in here should have the same right and that can really bog you down. Like you say Rocky, if it's the one person you know they've been a big supporter and they want to voice their approval, if you let them talk then you should let the ones who really think that we are just foolish and the worst Board ever. We've got to let those folks talk too and we understand that. Maybe we let them talk at the beginning of the meeting or at the end; I will give you a regulation that will give you some flexibility.

UPDATE ON DEMOLITION PROJECTS:

Superintendent Robinson: Our next item is the Update on the Demolition Projects and you will see a report and picture of Ervinton High School; 12/7/2016. There has been more demolished since the pictures were taken. One of the things that I want to mention is the boilers that were at Ervinton High School have been sold to Washington County; \$10,000. E. Luke Greene has been very accommodating and took those down. There was a truck from Washington County Public Schools there and it was taken that day. We want to thank Mr. Mooney and E. Luke Greene for all that.

You also see pictures of Clinchco hydro-seeding; that's complete.

As of 12/7/2016 at Ervinton High School they have torn down the kitchen, locker rooms, gym and coal bin. E. Luke Greene will continue demo and hauling debris to the landfill. In a phone conversation with Skanska, we are looking demolition completion at the end of January. That includes removal all materials and hydro-seeding. Just for your information; that process has been pretty amazing.

UPDATE ON THE MITIGATION SITES/PROCESS WITH U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS:

Superintendent Robinson: Our next item is the Update on the Mitigation Sites/Process with the US Corps of Engineers. Last Board meeting on November 30th Mr. Vincent Pero with US Corps of Engineers, Lance Debord, 3M Engineers, Leman Kendrick, Mark Mullins, Larry Barton and I visited the potential mitigation sites for the 4th and last required mitigation site for Ridgeview. If you recall, on that particular day it hadn't rained for months and on that day it rained; and it rained; and it rained.

Two additional sites as proposed by Standard Banner Coal were analyzed on Thursday, December 8, 2016. As you recall, several site in Dickenson County and Wise County have been analyzed, about 15 sites, but the challenge has been finding a sole owner for the surface and mineral rights since Contura will not release any mineral rights from under any surface area that they own. In this search for potential sites, I have spoken with numerous land owners that would be willing to give us their surface property but unfortunately the coal company will not release the mineral rights, even in locations where all the coal has been mined.

After calls with Mr. Pero, after the November visit, we have been informed by the US Corps of Engineers that a decision as to which site must be mitigated will be made by the end of the year. As the school division is requesting the permit, a letter will come to the school division. The three sites right now is Ervinton High School, Spring Fork and any of the sites we have proposed to them. That's where we are at the moment. I had a conference with Mr. Kendrick and Mr. Debord right before this meeting trying to see if there would be something that we could do.

We also received a proposal from; Dickenson County Public Schools a turnkey mitigation proposal from Highlands Conservation Group. This will be discussed further in closed session. It is a proposal we have just received this week. We have a proposal from Highlands Conservation Group for possible mitigation. We have Ervinton High School which has already been permitted. We have Spring Fork which is almost permitted and then any of the other sites have been analyzed for the Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Are you dealing with Mr. Breeding of Highlands?

Superintendent Robinson: Yes sir.

Mr. Rick Mullins: You haven't heard anything from Mr. Debord?

Superintendent Robinson: No we have not. We are expecting a call from Mr. Pero because I think the issue is, or concern is, what site the Corps will tell us we have to mitigate in. I contacted Mr. Pero in an email and asked him for additional time. We just started in the process I'm going to say October and it has been very frustrating; to find a site that meets all the requirements plus the property owner owns all the mineral rights. We just asked for more time. He will quickly tell us that the Board is not in compliance now and that we need to get this done, and we certainly agree. We've shared with him that three of the four sites have already been completed; this is the last one. But this one has been a little more complicated because of the bankruptcy; conversations with Alpha and then conversations with Contura. It has just been a more difficult issue. We are just asking, because of all that, for more time to find a suitable site to mitigate for the School Division.

Mr. Rick Mullins: If that doesn't work out what about mitigation to the Ervinton High School property?

Superintendent Robinson: That site has already been permitted. That is certainly a decision that the Corps can make. That would just have to be something we deal with when it comes.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: It's ready to go; right?

Superintendent Robinson: My understanding is that it would be.

Mr. Rick Mullins: And then we wouldn't have to pay around about of \$136,000 for Spring Fork.

Superintendent Robinson: I think the amount, if you recall that agreement is \$136,000 for the property at Spring Fork and it would also be part of Contura's mitigation and we would then get back \$12,000, but all of those funds would come out of the construction fund. That would be to purchase the land, do the mitigation, do the annual reports for 10 years; all of that.

Mr. Rick Mullins: So you are looking at actual cost of about \$200,000 or \$250,000?

Superintendent Robinson: Probably so; take \$120,000, then \$60,000 to \$80,000 to do the actual work and the annual reports are ten years at \$5,000 is \$50,000.

Mr. Rick Mullins: So if we did that; then the demolition of the high school would be \$400,000?

Superintendent Robinson: We have already paid the \$400,000.

Mr. Rick Mullins: What is the possibility that we could, when we make the deed back to the County, we could make sure that we get our \$400,000 back?

Superintendent Robinson: There is no assurance of that sir. The \$400,000 has been paid from the Construction Project. I think if the question is, do we think we can get that back? I can't answer that.

Mr. Rick Mullins: So that would be up to the Board of Supervisors?

Superintendent Robinson: Yes sir.

Mr. Rick Mullins: It doesn't seem to be quite fair that they can take the property and then negotiate with it without giving the school back the \$400,000? Because, that is going to be money that is completely depleted and we wouldn't have it in our assets anymore.

Superintendent Robinson: I think that would be one way of looking at it.

Mr. Rick Mullins: So what are our options on that? What are you all thinking?

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: I tend to agree with you; what you're saying.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: If we end up using the Ervinton High School property for mitigation then that eliminates the possibility of that mines going there; right?

Superintendent Robinson: There would be deed restrictions on Ervinton High School that would negate a coal mine there; yes.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Unless they renegotiate that?

Mr. Rick Mullins: Exactly.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Can they do that?

Superintendent Robinson: As you recall, one of the things that we asked for early on in this process is that when we spoke to Contura; we asked them to release the mineral rights at Spring Fork to allow us to do the mitigation. Right now we have been told that we cannot use the Spring Fork site; the coal will not be released until the County and the School Division, and right now it's in the School Division, until the School Division agrees to the option that Contura has made to the County. The problem is we are under the gun on time.

Mr. Rick Mullins: But does that put us in a better negotiating position?

Superintendent Robinson: Well, when we had a joint meeting with all of the Boards, the thought was that if we found another site to mitigate and did not have to use Ervinton High School, then yes we would have a better negotiating standing with the coal mine, with the operator. As you recall, we've discussed this in the joint meeting, there are no assurances that this mine is coming. We all hope that it does. But there are no assurances that this mine is coming. What the Division of Mines, Minerals and Energy, their permit has stated that this mine at Ervinton will produce a million tons of coal for the next 20 to 25 years. It's Met

Coal. If you've been keeping up with prices it's gone up. This summer it was the lowest it's been in two years and now it's the highest it's been in two years. So, that's been the bases to all this to allow the County to be in a better negotiating term. Mr. Pero asked a very good question, he asked me because this is under the School Division's name, of course in the last several months with your direction we've been pretty active with this, and he asked me why I was so involved in this now. I shared with him that there were over 2,000 reasons why we were very involved with this now and that's the number of students we had. I also shared with him that in June the School Division took an \$800,000 cut, and as you all recall it was much more than that by the time everything else was added and we're having a difficult time. We're struggling. We met today on a staffing issue and we don't have the funds. We know these cuts are coming next week and we don't have the funds. So, I just shared with Mr. Pero that I had over 2,000 reasons and as a Board let's try to have the County in a position; help the County in a position that they could get more funding. Hopefully, then the School Division would get more funding. That's what all of this is about. There are no other agendas. We cannot go through another budget cut and we cannot remain where we are now.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: If we use the Ervinton High School property we might potential interrupt the coal mines coming, which is not going to be good for anybody.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: That would be terrible publicity for us or anybody knowing that we knocked jobs out.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: If we don't find another site then we're out of compliance now.

Superintendent Robinson: It's difficult.

Mr. Rick Mullins: I think the County can still negotiate once we make the deed over to the County.

Superintendent Robinson: I think for me, we are not in this position because we want to be, we've been placed in this position. If we had found a site that the mineral rights had been released and even if the mineral rights had been released at Spring Fork away from another agreement, then we would not be having this conversation. But, it's just the fact that we all recognize it's not a good position to be in, but one of the reasons we can't get a mitigation site is that the mineral rights won't be released. That makes it even more difficult.

Mr. Rick Mullins: And, if we go to Spring Fork we still have to spend \$250,000 out of the building fund.

Superintendent: Yes out of construction. If you recall the agreement, it's all dependent on if Contura comes and builds a mine there. If they don't then you know we have the land, but the funding. The other concern that several people have expressed to me is; one of the stipulations on the agreement is that Ervinton High School be given as an option to Contura, and if we could negotiate with Contura, and we want the mines to come but much more knowledgeable people than me say lease the property. Lord forbid if Contura goes bankrupt or if there is another new Contura in two years and there is just an option with Ervinton High

School. Then that would go with the new company and in the bankrupt courts. There is nothing that the County might get the \$400,000 or I guess all bets are off at that point. If we could tweak the agreement or be in a position to say with information from good knowledgeable people and come to this Board, come to the IDA, come to the Board of Supervisors and say; if this land could be leased instead of giving an option then here are the pros and cons on that. Let the Boards decide that. If they want to give an option and they know the risks with that and they are willing to take the risks; that's what Boards are for. But if the Boards want to try and looked at something or have some kind of say about Ervinton High School; then at least give them that option. Again, just Board decisions and Board thoughts?

Mr. Rick Mullins: So if we did mitigate the Ervinton High School property, we would still be able to get the estimate or appraisal done on the money you could get? Then we would be able to forward that on to the Board of Supervisors to establish some sort of accredited, true value system of what that property's worth?

Superintendent Robinson: Yes and those were the marching orders of both Boards. That is scheduled on Friday to begin those initial discussions.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: The agreement from Contura, was it with the School System and the County?

Superintendent Robinson: I'm not quite certain Mr. Barton. I'm not quite certain.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: I was just trying to think that through.

Superintendent Robinson: There was not a School representative. The School Division was not legally represented in any discussions with the agreement. No school official was present. The agreement came to the County and that has also been a difficult issue to deal with. As far as knowing what the discussions were, or what the discussions were not and what was discussed; nothing. Nothing was shared with the School Division or myself and none of you were asked to be there.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: In having discussions with people who work or have worked for the company, I heard just last week that there were two other sites in Dickenson County that they could go to. We were constantly hearing this is it; if they didn't go onto Ervinton High School campus they were going to Russell County. Which anyone who has worked in mining knows that would be virtually impossible for them to face that mines up in Russell County to mine it where this coal is at. If we had to do that last option, that mitigation site, it's not like our County is going to lose that tool tax or whatever because I believe if this mine goes it will be in Dickenson County. I've been hearing from some other guys that there is another site or two in that area that they've looked at.

Superintendent Robinson: The Corps can come back and say; it's going to be Ervinton High School and if they do there is nothing we can do. They may come back and say it has to be at Spring Fork and at that point and whatever the agreement is on the table, then that's going to have to be agreed upon. Or, the Corps may say; you need more time, you have this

proposal, you have other sites; we'll give you enough time to do that. We don't know what that will be. I think, I believe if there had been at least the flexibility with mineral rights I think we would have already found a piece of property to mitigate. Standard Banner has been, Mr. McNear, Mr. Harris their attorney has just been wonderful. They have said what do you need? We will help the County. It's been a perplexing issue and there are varying opinions as there always are. I think for this Board and for me is that I would like to see Dickenson County to be in a better position to negotiate with Contura. Boards may not agree with that. If they don't then okay, but I would like to at least give them the information. If this property is going to be used as a stock pile, it just may be more valuable than the \$400,000. We don't know that and I always allude to the fact that if it was my property, my personal property what would I want. When I look at we are all stewards of the monies and the property then what should our actions be?

Mr. Rick Mullins: Initially they were going to pay us \$400,000 to tear down Ervinton High School but now that won't happen.

Superintendent Robinson: That's come out of the construction fund.

Mr. Rick Mullins: What do you all think?

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I don't see a good solution right now. A lot will depend on the Corps of Engineers. We probably can't do much until we find out what they say.

Mr. Rick Mullins: Do you think re-mitigation is something we need to leave on the table? Wait and see what the Army Corps of Engineers says?

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I don't think we have any option. I think if we can't find another site we have no other option but to use Ervinton. We have to be in compliance. We just have to keep looking for another piece of property. Are we out of options?

Superintendent Robinson: Pretty much; we have the proposal.

Mr. Rick Mullins: We do need to protect ourselves as much as we can with the scenario we're in.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I was a little concerned at the joint meeting that other Boards did not seem to be as interested in finding out the value of the property; relying on statements of a few individuals that may know what they are talking about. But eventually the Board of Supervisors did go in on the expense of finding out, and it will be interesting to find out what we find out.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: What did Leman say about that? Wasn't the condition at the joint board meeting that we were going to explore who was going to do the evaluation of the property and if Leman thought it was a creditable evaluation then we would move forth but if he didn't then we wouldn't? Wasn't that what was said that night? What did he say?

Superintendent Robinson: We are meeting with Mr. Smith on Friday that will be our first meeting to determine the scope of the evaluation.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: To determine what kind of study for that amount of money.

Superintendent Robinson: Any information, and there are differing opinions on this, from the property is more information than we have right now. We know nothing about this property; the worth of this property. There are differing opinions and ways of looking at it and neither the School Board nor the Board of Supervisors is going to use money from construction to pay for an expensive study, so this study is really a preliminary study to see what it could be. Even if that information, which is a small price; that information is much more than what we have now. Currently we don't know anything, we do know there is this property and others are negotiating hard to make sure there are, as you said Mrs. Mullins, few sites and that there are few options left and mitigation option will have to be done at Spring Fork or if the Corps says at Ervinton and the School Division will have to do the mitigation at Spring Fork.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I think our focus has to be on finding a site for mitigation.

Superintendent Robinson: Thank you and that's what we are trying to do.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: And then whatever the County chooses to do, what kind of deal then ultimately that's the IDA and the County. The School Division being in compliance should be our number one priority and if we can't find another site suitable then I don't think we have any choice. We have Ervinton.

Superintendent Robinson: The issue with Ervinton is we own the property we don't have to purchase it. It would cost us for the mitigation. It is an important issue for our County and it's one I would like to see all three Boards come together and be actively negotiating for that. So, I think my marching orders from the Board are to continue looking for sites. If we don't find a site then Ervinton High School maybe a potential site because it's permitted. I think the biggest emphasis is to find a site.

Mr. Rick Mullins: Are you okay with that?

Dr. Lurton Lyle: Yes.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: Yes.

Mr. Rick Mullins: Shanghai?

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Yes.

Superintendent Robinson: Alright. If anyone knows a site, any other questions or comments.

APPROVAL OF DIRECT DEPOSIT FOR SUBSTITUTES AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES:

Superintendent Robinson: Our last item is Approval of Direct Deposit for Substitutes and Part-time Employees. We are requesting that School Board approve direct deposit for all our substitutes and part-time employees beginning in January. With this approval, all our employees will participate in direct deposit. I would like to ask Mr. Barton to come and share where we are with it.

Mr. Larry Barton: Thank you. We would like to update the School Board on the progress made since the July 27, 2017 Board meeting when direct deposit was approved for all full-time employees. All of our full-time employees have signed up for direct deposit and have been receiving an emailed direct deposit summary instead of a printed statement since August. This has been a considerable savings for the division, not only in the cost of more than 200 checks, envelopes, paper and ink, but has saved the countless man hours by not having to process all this paper, take checks to be signed and having employees from each school come to pick up checks for that school. The first month, we had some employees that experienced a slight delay in receiving their emails and had a couple of incorrect email addresses, but everyone received their funds in their accounts first thing that morning. By the second month, we started sending the email the evening before, which eliminated the delay in email we had experienced the previous month. Every month since August, we have had several part-time employees voluntarily sign up for direct deposit, but we are still processing around 100 checks each month. We would like to recommend that the Board approve direct deposit for all part-time and substitute employees starting with the January payroll. This too would be a significant savings for the school division, as well as make our office operate more efficiently.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I think that is a no-brainer; I've wanted to do it for years. I make that motion to approve direct deposit for all employees. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Superintendent Robinson: We appreciate your support on that. This does conclude our open session.

BOARD COMMENT:

Chairman, Mr. Rocky Barton: That brings us to Board Comment.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I apologize for being late. I was at my second job as math tutor and couldn't get away. Other than that, I have no comment. (Ha, ha, ha)

Mr. Rick Mullins: It's been a good month and I wish everyone a Merry Christmas. I wish you the very best in the coming new year.

Chairman, Rocky Barton: I'm glad to see our enrollment numbers, it's very little, but it's up. It's better than down, so that's a little Christmas present.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I would like to comment on the pantries, and I only see one Assistant Principal here, you guys are really making a difference for kids. Now is going to be the time that we will be missing school and those backpack going home; as a matter of fact we avoided a removal the other day and the only food in the whole house was what was received in a backpack from Ridgeview. I'm not sure if the kids fixed it, but that's what was there. It really is important and if we can help you guys even more, we'd be happy to do that. I'm talking about the Department of Social Services.

Superintendent Robinson: Mrs. Mullins, we kind of focus on the Christmas holiday, but we are seeing the need all year long. Would you agree with that?

Mrs. Susan Mullins: There were fights Tuesday at the Food Bank, because people were being turned away. They ran out of food, I guess. I don't know but people were complaining to me and I really don't have anything to do with the Food Bank; I just have the luxury of being across the road, but people were coming and complaining to me. We tried to find everyone some food because it's important. People have families; kids are going to be out of school for 2 weeks, if you have extra, send it. Now would be the time to do it.

Mrs. Lavada Muncy: I speak for Clintwood Elementary. We are currently sending home food for nearly 70 students every week. We are so blessed and thankful for Dickenson County and those who have been sending us donations of food and we've had the United Way that has come in and they are helping us too. It's been wonderful on our end and I'm sure it's going great in other places too, but I'm speaking for my end.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: We closed all February one time and I was calling and begging Mrs. Robinson, can we have school? We were getting so many calls because people were hungry. Do you have food, do you have food? It's because the kids are home and they are not prepared for the kids to be home. During Christmas there's extra family and extra cooking.

Superintendent Robinson: It seems, as you said, that the need is everywhere and it's increasing.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: You guys might not see the difference that you make; but I am seeing the difference that you make and it's good. It's good.

Shanghai Nickles: I know that McClure Kiwanis has been sending backpacks home even in the summertime.

We talk about the charts and what our teachers make; which is way too little. I know we've talked about us, Lee County, Wise County because they are our neighbors. We are basically even with Lee County for the Masters and we ranked, with 20 years, were ranked 123 they're ranked 124. But, when they get over there to 30 years there's an \$18,000 difference. We go to 124 and they go down to 65. We're pretty even with Wise County too until you get down to that 30 year and there's \$7,000. I'm hoping money can come from somewhere where we can get that a little closer.

My second comment, thanks to John Johnson and what he does for the school system. John has been such an outstanding person to help us in so many different ways and this thing tonight with what he's done; that could have easily been somewhere else. Because, when you start talking there are bigger dealerships that sale more cars and I don't think anybody does any more. I'll throw in a plug on that, the gentleman at the Morgan McClure place in St. Paul, they send food to a place over there in Washington County. Everybody thinks Washington County is a rich area; they're feeding about 180 kids.

My other comment, thanks Ms. Muncy. Great job! I think you need to go to Ervinton a day a week, since that's where you started; with those numbers. We do appreciate you getting those fine folks in.

My fourth comment, I happen to be at the school tonight setting up for a broadcast and ran into Mr. Compton. He said SOLs were absolutely going fantastic up there. They were blowing them out of the water. That's always a good thing to hear. That's a super job with their scores.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year to fellow members here and everyone in Dickenson County School System. This time last year, I thought we were going to have a tough year; it has been a tough year, but with the help of these folks. I think we are still swimming, not sinking. I think we will swim upstream a long time to keep our kids heads above water and I appreciate them. I appreciate the jobs everybody does in our school system. It's kind of neat to be able to say I am from Dickenson County, because Dickenson County does give. Thank you.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman Rocky Barton: Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 A of the Code of Virginia, I move that the board convene a closed session for the purpose of discussing: 1.) Employment issues relating to salary, resignation, retirement, FMLA request and consideration of employing substitute. 3.) Discussion of evaluation of real property pursuant to VA Code 2.23711 A (1) (3) and to consult with legal counsel on these issues pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.23711 A (6) (6). Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman Rocky Barton: I now entertain a motion to go out of Closed Session. Dr. Lurton Lyle made the motion and Mr. Rick Mullins seconded. All votes aye. Chairman Rocky Barton stated; we have been in closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3712(a), Section (1) to discuss potential contracts and proprietary information. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712(d) of the Code of Virginia, he moved to certify that during the closed meeting just concluded the Dickenson County School Board discussed only matters lawfully exempt from the open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia. Dr. Lurton Lyle, Mr. Rick Mullins, Mrs. Susan Mullins, Mr. Shanghai Nickles and Chairman Rocky Barton; all certified true.

BOARD ACTIONS:

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we accept the resignation of Hollie Arrington, part-time aide at Sandlick Elementary School. Chairman Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we accept the retirement of Brenda Reynolds, aide at Clintwood Elementary School. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the FMLA request of Cara Justice as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the substitute as requested contingent upon completion of background checks and all necessary paperwork. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Oakley “Andrew” Davis

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we adjourn. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Adjourned: 9:40 p.m.

Susan Mullins

CHAIRMAN

Approved: 1/25/2017

Reba McCowan

CLERK