

**DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD  
Regular School Board Meeting  
October 25, 2017  
Central Office**

**PRESENT: Susan Mullins, Chairman; Rocky Barton, 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, MRS. SUSAN MULLINS:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Good evening everybody. I would like to call this meeting to order. I notice that there are a lot of people standing. Do we have any extra chairs?

**Superintendent Robinson:** Madam Chair, I asked them if they wanted to get a chair right here or over there, and they said they would rather stand.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay. I will go ahead and note for the record that all members are present including our Superintendent, Mrs. Haydee Robinson and our Clerk, Mrs. Reba McCowan. We will go ahead and start our meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence. Thank you and please be seated. You have the Agenda before you. Are there any changes, additions or corrections?

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** I think we have a request to move Public Comment after New Business which would be Item V. K I guess.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Are there any other changes, Mrs. Robinson?

**Superintendent Robinson:** I'm sorry could you say that again.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Mr. Barton has made a request to move Public Comment down to after New Business Item V. K. Would someone like to make a motion to approve the Agenda with those changes?

***Mr. Rocky Barton made the motion to approve the agenda with the change as requested.  
Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, that brings us to Item III. Consent Agenda which includes the approval of the Minutes, Monthly Bills, School Activity Fund (which is informational) and Field Trips. We have those in our packets. Has everyone had an opportunity to review these? Are there any questions or concerns? The only thing that I will note is that Mrs. Willis' name is with an "e" instead of a "y" in the Minutes. If not, I will entertain a motion to approve the entire Consent Agenda.

***Mr. Rick Mullins made the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

Approved:

❖ **Minutes:**

September 27, 2017 – Regular Meeting.  
October 4, 2017 – Special Called Meeting

❖ **Monthly Bills:**

School Operating Fund – October 25, 2017 – Bills  
Check Nos. 877880 through 877990 ----- \$ 209,607.41

School Operating Fund – October 31, 2017 – Payroll  
Check Nos. 388323 through 388351 ----- \$1,701,900.05

❖ **Field Trips:**

Ridgeview High School

Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> – Clintwood Elementary School – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> – Velma Crabtree’s & Pizza Hut – Clintwood, VA – 9 – PG  
Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> – Clintwood Elementary School – 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> – UVA @ Wise – Wise, VA – 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> – The Attic – Clintwood, VA -9 – PG  
Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> – Bristol Caverns – Bristol, VA – 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> – Tazewell Career Center – Tazewell, VA  
Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> – SKILLS USA Fall Rally – Clintwood, VA – 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> – Ripley’s Aquarium – Gatlinburg, TN – 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> – The Hairbenders Salon – Kingsport, TN – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> – LaCasa Mexicana – Clintwood, VA – 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> – Emory & Henry School of Health Science – Blacksburg, VA – 12<sup>th</sup>

Sandlick Elementary School

Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> – Council Park – Council, VA – 1<sup>st</sup>  
Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> – Nickelsville Pumpkin Patch – Nickelsville, VA – K

Ridgeview Middle School

Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> – Coalfield Ag Center – Clintwood, VA – 6<sup>th</sup>  
Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> – UVA @ Wise – Wise, VA – 6<sup>th</sup>  
Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> – Career Expo – Washington Co. Fairgrounds – 7<sup>th</sup>  
Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> – Bristol Caverns – Bristol, VA – 6<sup>th</sup>

**INFORMATION FOR THE BOARD:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Item IV. is Information for the Board. This has been in our hands for some time. Is there anything you would like to say Mrs. Robinson?

**Superintendent Robinson:** There is the usual VSBA Annual Convention. If you have any questions, please call Mrs. McCowan.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** The last day to register would be?

**Superintendent Robinson:** It is usually pretty close to the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. We will check on that and let our Board Members know.

**GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** That brings us to New Business with Item E. Good News from Our Schools. I will turn it over to Mrs. Robinson:

**Superintendent Robinson:** While Mr. Setser is coming to the front let me share some good news that we received today. We have heard from Mr. Adrian White. Mr. White is the facilitator of the Scholastic Bowl at Ridgeview. He writes that: “Ridgeview is 3 and 1 in the District and tied for second place with wins against John Battle, Abingdon and Union. We play again in two weeks against Gate City and Union. It pleases me to have Good News to report. I have a hard-working bunch that continues to get better every week. I hope to be able to have more Good News throughout the season. It is great for academics to make us a well-rounded school. Thank you for your support and for Mr. Compton and the Board. It really boosts the morale of our team to know that you guys follow them.” This was from the Scholastic Bowl Facilitator, Mr. White. As the season moves on, we will ask him to come and be recognized along with the Scholastic Bowl Team.

The other is from Mrs. Susan Wilder. She writes: “Good News from Ridgeview—The FFA Forestry Team competed Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> in the Career Development event and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> as a team.” We recognized them last year if you will remember:

- Josh Bise—5<sup>th</sup> Place
- Alexis Fleming—11<sup>th</sup>
- Dalton O’Quinn and Mary Stiltner

So congratulations to our Scholastic Bowl Team, Mr. White and Mrs. Wilder and our FFA Forestry Team. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Setser will have our attendance.

**Mr. Mike Setser:** Thank you Mrs. Robinson, Madam Chair and Members of the Board. At the end of September, we had 2,017 students which is actually up 2 since August. That is some positive news. However, I did run the numbers this morning, and October is not being very kind to us because right now we are down 9 if those numbers stand. As usual you have the full packet in front of you. I will pause for a second to see if there are any questions. While you are reviewing that, I will take a second to commend all of our schools for the work they do with attendance. For the month of September and for the second time this year Clintwood Elementary School wins the Attendance Banner with an attendance percentage of 96.14%. I don’t think Ms. Newton or Ms. Muncy is here, but I want to commend all of the schools.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Are there any questions about attendance for Mr. Setser?

**Mr. Mike Setser:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

**DISCUSSION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COMMITTEE:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** I believe that brings us to Item F. Discussion of the Recommendations from the Elementary School Committee, Mrs. Robinson:

**Superintendent Robinson:** You have this in your packet. On Thursday, October 5, 2017, the Elementary School Committee met at the School Board Office. The Elementary School Committee recommended the following proposals be presented to the School Board for the discussion/approval at the School Board meeting today. The recommendations were:

1. To propose a projected scope, cost and timeline for a study to be done on Backbone Ridge and Haysi High School for site costs and site development such as removal of earth and also mineral rights research.
2. To review prior engineering studies conducted at Ridgeview for the viability of constructing an elementary school on site behind Ridgeview Middle School and Ridgeview High School.

It was requested by the Elementary School Committee that Scott Mullins begin to contact engineering firms to begin to develop a projected scope, cost and timeline for the study to present to the School Board.

So, Madam Chair do you or the Board Members have any discussion about this request?

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Is there any discussion? I guess I will start out. I'm not sure if we are trying to make a school fit somewhere or if we should start eliminating sites that are not feasible. I, for one, would like for us to consider Ridgeview, and how much is it going to cost to do all of these studies?

**Superintendent Robinson:** I think Mr. Mullins was looking at a proposed projected cost for the timeline for Upper Backbone Ridge and Haysi High School. He may want to comment on that at this time and give us some kind of timeline if the site is just Ridgeview.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** We don't know exactly how much time it is going to take until you start. There are some tasks at hand to be completed. The first thing you have to do is to go out and physically look at the land and say we need this much land. Then you have to determine who owns that land, and once you determine who owns it you have to do a title search. If you are serious about acquiring it, you need to make sure who has a title to it, if there are any exceptions to the title or if there are any liens on it. I understand from talking to the county engineer and others that there may be seven tracts on Upper Backbone.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** Basically, one family owns about half of them.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** So you do the title work on that property and see who owns the surface. Around here sometimes the person who owns the surface also owns below the surface such

as oil, gas and coal. Sometimes those minerals are separated and sometimes even seams of coal. One person may own the Norton Seam and another may own another seam. So, you have to determine who owns the minerals. At that point, we would probably be coming back to you about the process and talk about this. If you determine that there are minerals there and it is not owned by the surface owner, you will try to negotiate and work through the issues. Not all minerals are mineable. You don't have to find minerals that have no value. I have heard it said by others, and I tend to think this is true, but I don't know, that if there was coal there which was mineable, it would have been done years ago. (coughing) They will find someone who will say whether it is mineable. Basically, when you build a public building, the coal will be sterilized or reversed condemnation. The only way that you can really tell if coal is mineable is probably with a bore hole sample. Bore holes cost money. So, there is a process. You are talking about title work by lawyers. If it goes beyond that, you are talking about trying to evaluate the minerals as to value. The standard for that is bore testing which is (coughing) costly. I have been told by the county engineer that you can count on roughly \$50,000 for bore testing. Beyond that, once you determine that there is a seam of coal there, coal can come in various uses and needs to be determined if it mineable. So it is a process. It is not new. We have been doing it around here for a long time, but that is how it works. It is hard to say the scope and magnitude. It is hard to say because you never know until the attorneys start doing the title work. It is usually a lot more for the title work than the minerals. What the attorneys do for title work takes more time. I would say the scope and magnitude for everything could be \$150,000. Just to be clear, anywhere you go and try to build a public building you have to make sure that you have a good title. The only complicating factor with this one is typically we know who owns the coal around here because it is typically owned by one or two entities in the county. The people I know who own that can't typically say they own the coal because there has not been a title search done.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** So we have four sites, and we are looking at \$150,000 to \$200,000 per site?

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Upper Backbone and the Haysi High School site are a little bit different. You would think that because it had a school on it for many, many years that we acquired the mineral rights, but a title search has never been done. I don't know that for sure. What I would suggest is that if Haysi is in the running, the first thing we should look at before we go to the mineral and all of those issues is how much dirt we would have to move because that is a relatively easy computation for an engineer to do. I have heard it said that the Haysi High School site would require a lot more earth moving. You can die a death of a thousand cuts trying to construct a facility. I would think that one of the two sites is better than the other just based on the sheer volume of dirt that would have to be moved to go to that site. Focus on that site and do this aggressively. We may go into this and find that the surface would cost more than the mineral. The owner may say they own the surface and the mineral and am ready to deal with you. Or we could go into it and find something contrary.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Does anyone have anything to say. I would like to say that I don't want to spend \$200,000 on all four sites. I would perhaps be in favor of working backwards. If we know of one that is a viable option or could eliminate one, we should start there. What are your thoughts?

**Mr. Rick Mullins:** I would like to see Ridgeview as that first option. I would like to see the feasibility of a 500-700 student school and see if the feasibility is there. We would have to see the cost of the sewer system. That is my first option.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** I would like to see whether or not it is actually possible to build the school at Ridgeview. If we can, we need to find out what size school we would need to build. If it isn't feasible, we need to look at the Haysi High School or Backbone sites. I think we should start with one and work our way back. We don't want to spend all of that money for something that no one wants to see happen.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** What about the committee's findings as far as what the engineers say about the Ridgeview site? We have been told before that a building can't be constructed behind Ridgeview High School and Ridgeview Middle School.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Lemman brought in, and I hope you all have seen it, a map that basically says that Ridgeview was mined out basically where the football field is. There is a 28-degree angle that you come from the end of the mining, and that is the area where you could easily anticipate subsidence. That basically eliminates everything at the back of the Ridgeview Campus. So if there is going to be anything built there, it would clearly have to be on the front of the angle of the line where the draw would come from.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** Then what kind of structure would we be able to build? We have \$21 million and any way that you would go we would have 900 and some kids. Are we saying that we would put more grades in the middle school? Is that what we are looking at?

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** I don't think we are at that point now. We need to first see if Ridgeview would be a feasible option. I don't think we are at the point of discussing how it will fit. First of all we need to see if we want the school there.

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** The option would be to see if the site is feasible to put a school there. There is a parking lot in front of the school. If we elect to build a school there, where is the parking going to be?

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Ridgeview has lots of challenges. When it is all said and done, we will see that all of our sites have lots of challenges. But ultimately the market will be that when we put this out for bids, we will have two sites. We will probably do a procurement. When you do that, you will take a budget and ask the contractor to build a school on this location or that location, and you will see the differences. But Ridgeview has the parking lot area which has infrastructure under it. It has sewer drains, water drains and has lots of issues when it comes to the contractor. Where are you going to store your materials? Can you put road around the sides? Ridgeview clearly has challenges as will every other site that we have. There is no easy site. Rocky sort of nailed down the question as to what you could do. With the limited budget that we have, I know that this is a struggle within our community. But we have to be very mindful to not study anything that does not have merit because every dollar that we spend now would mean bricks and mortar somewhere else. I know you guys may

differ; the community may differ, but spend as little money as you can in excluding things that can be excluded. If that is Ridgeview, then that is what you exclude. If that is Haysi, that is what I want to exclude. I don't want anyone to be misled. Every bit of information we get will be from independent sources. There will be a day of reckoning because it won't be hypothetical when we let it out for bids. If you can't get it in under budget, then we are not getting it done.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** That is what I am saying. We have \$21 million to build the school which was exactly the size of school to replace Sandlick Elementary School and Clinchco Elementary School. I don't see any way at Ridgeview that we can do that. I don't see that the county can come in with more money to help us do that. If we get it down to a 700-seat facility and build it at Ridgeview it will be \$20 million. That will only leave us with \$1 million for sewer upgrades and roads. We are talking about 80 buses coming to that school. Every bus in our fleet would come to that school every day. I have been told that Clintwood Elementary School alone will have 150 parent pick-ups, and Sandlick Elementary School has 50. That is 200 more cars not counting the 80-90 employees that will be at the school. Where will VDOT come in. They will likely make us do something at the 4-Way let alone the entrances. I just don't see Ridgeview as a viable site. (Applause!) I don't see where we will get the money. Of course, I know the board gets tired of me saying that it was never what it was supposed to be anyway. The preliminary studies on both of the Haysi sites said that coal was not an issue on either site. I don't think coal is an issue on the Haysi High School site. I think we will be wasting money going back to Ridgeview. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** We are supposed to narrow it down to two choices, right? If we think Haysi is the site, we need to eliminate Ridgeview first. (Applause!) In order to do that, I think we need to have someone look at it like Curtis and see if we can even think of it as a site.

**Mr. Shanghai Nickles:** We have always said that we want to make sure that it is the best thing for all of our kids. We have also said that it is not an easy decision because of the emotional ties to the community. How many people are here from Ervinton? You would all like for the studies to determine the best place for your kids and grandkids. That is one way that we can get rid of one of these sites.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** We came into this knowing that we are so blessed to have the money. This is a democracy, and we respect each other. We may not agree with each other, but everybody has a job to do. Ultimately, math is going to prevail. This is going to be an ongoing discussion. I anticipate at the next meeting someone will come here with a piece of paper that outlines their findings. The only thing I will say as for me and the school administration and I would say for the independent contractors, they are just trying to get the facts, and we will do whatever you tell us to do. What we do we will share with the community and press so that they can see exactly what you are looking at.

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** The problem with having two sites evaluated makes more sense to me. It looks like from the September enrollment, we have 944 elementary students and 125 Pre-K. That is 1,000 students. In my opinion, there is no way that we can build one school with the

money that we have for 1,000 students. (Applause!) Again, in my mind, it would reasonable to evaluate two sites and in order to speed up the process the Ridgeview site is school property. The Haysi High School site is school property. In my mind that leaves Backbone Ridge and Ridgeview to be evaluated. I would suggest that would be a reasonable way to go about this.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Does anyone else have anything else to say?

**Mr. Rick Mullins:** I think this is the beauty of a democratic process. We all have ideas and opinions, and it is sort of like a marriage. Whatever decision all of us are going to make jointly, we all have to live with it. I think it is a long-term decision. We just want to make sure and do it right.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Rocky, I will put this to you. Is there a split in your community between the Haysi High School site and the Backbone Ridge site?

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** Most of the people want it to stay at Sandlick, but we all know it can't. I don't think they care which site as long as it stays in Haysi.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** The thing that I would say is that you live there, but what I have determined from Lemman and Curtis is that there is a lot more earth moving at the Haysi High School site. If you disagree with that, now is a good time to tell me. What I am trying to do to accommodate your constituents and this School Board without spending money. What that would look like to me and what Dr. Lyle is saying is that if there is a cooperative effort to identify the tracts, you guys know who the landowners are then let's start talking with people and see when they get their tax ticket does it show mineral.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** The Haysi High School site has only one owner which is the Fuller family. They have indicated that they would give all of their property. (Applause!) The Backbone Ridge site has basically three owners: Arlene Deel, the Belchers and some heirship property. Basically, three people to deal with. I would not have thought there would have been that much dirt to move at the Haysi High School site.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Basically, what I am telling you is that I know who owns the Haysi High School site. The landowners and I can get together and look at their deeds and start looking at those two sites. Compared to what you are going to spend on searching titles and deeds, it is a relatively cheap endeavor. We can evaluate that site from the mineral by perhaps using the county engineer or someone else to look at the cubic yards of dirt required to get the space. If we did those things, it would basically be on par with what you are doing at Ridgeview. Because what I understand what you want to do at Ridgeview is you want to see if the school will actually sit there with a road around it. I think you would also want to know if there are major impediment under the parking lot which would cost an arm and a leg to move then someone could say why it doesn't work. I'm not talking about spending a lot of money there either. If the Board is inclined to take that approach, Haysi High School is a lot easier than the Backbone Ridge site. That is attainable with only spending a few thousand dollars.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** If it can't be there it needs to be at the Upper Backbone Ridge site. (Applause!)

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Again, when the Board directs me, and I see three votes up there, to go out there and start the true evaluation that is what we will do. I will do whatever the Board wants me to do, but what I am trying to do is to achieve some compromise that we do something at Haysi that is approximately on par with what you are doing at Ridgeview.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** So you are saying for us to choose two sites and evaluate those sites. If those don't work, we will come back to the drawing board and evaluate the other two.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** I think a civil engineer can tell us how much dirt we would have to move at the Haysi High School site in order to have the school there. I hope that Lemman will be able to do that if we show some humility and ask him. If we could get that done cheaply, we have owned the Haysi High School site since the '50s. We could determine the minerals there and how much dirt you would have to move. That is not a hard thing to do. It would take a little time, but it is not expensive to do.

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** I think we need to do both.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** I think I need to count to three and get on with this.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** I think you need to put it to a vote to give us some direction. I am not going to run around lost trying to find what you guys want me to do. I think we need to try to find something in the Haysi community to construct it there, and at the same time try to do what the Board tells me to do.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Does anyone have a motion.

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** *I would move that we evaluate the Haysi High School site and the Ridgeview site.*

**Mr. Shanghai Nickles:** *Are we not saying Backbone at all?*

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** *Not in this first evaluation.*

**Mr. Rick Mullins:** *One of the things that concerns me as a Christian and as I look at all four corners of the county is that we don't have many Ervinton people here. Mr. Butch Lambert came and talked to us at the School Board and told us that the Contura Mine at Ervinton would be the last feasible coal mine in Dickenson County. He said if you are going to take care of things, you need to take care of them now. Long term we have to look at that vision and scope to what is going to be fair for all of us as well as the Ervinton students, too.*

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** *Okay, now is not the time for everyone to talk. This is only a Board discussion. You will have an opportunity to speak at the Public Comment. That is why we moved it. We have a motion on the floor, is there a second?*

**Mr. Shanghai Nickles:** *I second it.*

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** *Do I need to ask for a different motion?*

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** *I'm sorry, I could not even hear what was being said.*

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** *Dr. Lyle made a motion, and Mrs. McCowan you may have to help me, to evaluate Haysi High School and Ridgeview to see if a school would fit at Ridgeview and see what the dirt removal would look like at Haysi High School.*

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** *If that doesn't work out, we will evaluate the other two sites.*

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** *I guess we need a place to start, so we are going to start with Haysi High School and Ridgeview. I have a motion, and I have a second. We need to do a roll call vote.*

*Votes - Yes: Dr. Lyle, Rick Mullins, Susan Mullins and Shanghai Nickles. No: Rocky Barton. So that is 4 votes yes to explore Ridgeview and Haysi High School.*

**Dr. Lurton Lyle:** All of those in attendance need to understand that this is preliminary.

**Chairman, Susan Mullins:** Everyone needs to remain calm, and if there is anyone who wishes to sign up for Public Comment, I will give you a chance here in just a second. So we have a directive for Mr. Mullins and Mrs. Robinson for those possibilities with the engineer. Would it be feasible to have that by our next meeting? Okay.

#### **UPDATE ON THE PROPOSED RIDGEVIEW BATTING CAGE:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Item G. Update on the Proposed Batting Cage.

**Superintendent Robinson:** I am going to ask our Attorney, Mr. Scott Mullins and Mr. Setser to go through the planning process for the Board on the Batting Cage at Ridgeview.

**Mr. Scott Mullins:** Madam Chair, Mr. Setser and I met with the engineer and the county administrator. Just a brief background: it is not the operating account that we are talking about. It is the Corps money that we had left over. There was a question from the community that we were not following practice. We went out and reviewed that for small purchases authorizing us to spend up to \$100,000. We did that, and we came back with bids. The one that we were talking to; gave a bid of \$17,000. We are going to go back and get the building itself and the concrete bought so that we can work within the conditions of the winter. We will sort out how we will actually procure the batting cages with that. It may be that the coaches can do that, and it may be that we will have to get some assistance. I know that we have to stay within the procurement. I think we had six contractors show up. They were all

reputable contractors. It was a very competitive process. It will continue to be a competitive process because we will go with our highest strength bidder and try to get them to ditch the price because of the little money that we have to spend. My request would be that the Board authorizes the Superintendent to execute the purchases policy so that we can continue with the batting cage for this facility.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** We will need that in the form of a motion.

*Dr. Lurton Lyle made the motion to authorize the Superintendent to execute the purchases policy and move forward with the batting cage. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

**DISCUSSION OF DCPS SIX-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**

**Superintendent Robinson:** Our next item for discussion is Item H. the Discussion of the Dickenson County Public School Six-Year Comprehensive Plan. This plan was voted on last November. I am going to ask Mr. Tony Robinson, Director of Instruction, to update the Board on the Six-Year Comprehensive Plan with final revisions and updates in November for the Board's discussion.

**Mr. Tony Robinson:** Madam Chair and Members of the Board (Presentation)

***Attachment 1: Dickenson County Public Schools Comprehensive Plan 2017-2023***

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Do you need us to vote on this, or is it just for our information?

**Superintendent Robinson:** This is just an informational item right now. If the Board has anything they would like to add or discuss, please let us know. We will bring this back to the Board with your comments and suggestions for just a review that you have seen it and have approved the direction of the school division.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Would you like to give us a time frame of when you want this information back.

**Superintendent Robinson:** I will just as soon as we decide when our November Board Meeting is.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, thank you, Mr. Robinson.

**APPROVAL OF EARLY EMPLOYEE PAYROLL FOR NOVEMBER 17 AND DECEMBER 19, 2017:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Next is Item I. the Approval of Early Employee Payroll for November 17 and December 19, 2017. Do I have a motion?

*Mr. Shanghai Nickles made the motion to approve early payroll for November and December as requested. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

**APPROVAL OF RESCHEDULING THE NOVEMBER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATE:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Item J. is the Approval of Rescheduling the November School Board Meeting Date. I believe that Mrs. Robinson asked for November 29<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. Is that correct?

**Superintendent Robinson:** Yes, Ma'am it is.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Do I have a motion to move the meeting or does anyone have a conflict?

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** I don't have a conflict. I was just wondering why.

**Superintendent Robinson:** I think there was a scheduling conflict with some of our Board members.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Do I have a motion to change the date?

***Mr. Rocky Barton made the motion to reschedule the November Board Meeting. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

**Superintendent Robinson:** To answer your previous question, please have your suggestions or comments to add to the Six-Year Plan by the 29<sup>th</sup> of November.

**Mr. Shanghai Nickles:** What are we looking at for the December Board Meeting?

**Superintendent Robinson:** The last day of school is the 19<sup>th</sup>. The issue of having it earlier is paying bills. Is there another alternative is to have it? The date for the Board to consider is Tuesday, the 19<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Since school gets out early could we have the meeting earlier in case anyone wants to go on vacation?

**Superintendent Robinson:** Whatever the Board needs to do.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Could I have that in the form of a motion?

***Dr. Lurton Lyle made the motion to have the December meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

**Mr. Shanghai Nickles:** Thank you so much you guys.

**APPROVAL OF TITLE IV, PART A, STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT (SSAE) GRANT:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** That brings us down to Item K. the Approval of Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grant. Mr. Mullins mailed this information to us. Do any of you have any questions? I think it is good news. Would you like to tell the group?

**Mr. Mark Mullins:** Title IV Part A is a new Federal Grant that we received in the amount of \$18,658.99 which is new this year. So combining it with our Title II Part A funds which as you will remember we took a huge cut for this year. That helps us with class size reduction in the elementary schools. We will need a motion to approve that.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Do I hear a motion to approve?

***Mr. Rocky Barton made the motion to approve Title IV Part A grant as presented. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

**Chairman, Mr. Susan Mullins:** Thank you, Mr. Mullins.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** That brings us down to Public Comment. If anyone needs to sign up, please sign your name on this list. Does anyone else in the group need to sign? Before we get started we have several names on the list. I need to maintain control of the meeting tonight. Our rules are going to be read by Mr. Nickles. Everyone try to maintain your speaking within five minutes. Normally what we do is Mr. Setser will tell you when you have 30 seconds left. If that is not enough time to finish your thought, I am going to ask him to start at one minute to make you aware of the time. That will give you a full minute to finish your comment and keep it within five minutes. Mr. Nickles: (So read)

The first name on our list is Kathy Musick:

**Ms. Kathy Musick:** Good evening Chairman Mullins, Mrs. Robinson, Members of the Board, concerned citizens and teachers. I am Ms. Kathy Musick, and I am the Regional Representative of Virginia Professional Educators. As a visitor in Dickenson County, it is always a pleasure to come and see such passion and concern. You know as a former educator this is always great to see. As a teacher, you can have students who didn't care or had apathy. I don't see any apathy here. I know there are mixed feelings, but at least I know you will work them out together. What I need to tell you about is that my organization gives grants and scholarships twice a year. The first deadline for all of your teachers out there is November 15<sup>th</sup>. They are up to \$500, and it is not difficult to write. If you go online to Virginia Educators, you can get an application. You have to do a resume and give a little information about how the money will be used and why you need it with an itemized list of costs. I hope that some people will do that in order to make a difference. I know as a former educator that money is tight, and it is always good to have some extra things to inspire your students. Thank you, and good luck to all of you in making this hard decision.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Our next speaker is Ms. Phyllis Mullins.

**Ms. Phyllis Mullins:** Good evening. I just want to update you on some of the things that the DEA and the VEA are involved in. We had a pre-legislative workshop last week. Our legislative agenda looks very good. We are in support of any legislation that would raise the teacher's pay to above the national average or at least up to it. We want to support legislation that would employ and fund the Standards of Quality. We want to implement funds and programs that would reduce expulsion and suspensions. We have a lot of good things to look forward to especially when we go to meet with the senators and our delegates at the legislative dinner and when we go to lobby day. Also, we are sending three or four of our members to an IED conference. The VEA highly recommends and supports this. There will be all kinds of different sessions and break-out sessions for people to go to. You should be able to bring back something. I am going to go to one of ESSA and one on social studies which is my field. There will be something for everyone. The keynote speaker is a world-renowned winning lecturer and musical artist, Juwanda Austin. She is a supporter of the underprivileged and children in poverty. The fee is \$75 and the DEA is going to pay that for our members. We appreciate Mrs. Robinson giving us Professional Leave in order to go. It will be well worth it and beneficial. We are working on our Christmas Dinner right now, and we will, of course, invite you to that. Thank you.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Thank you. Our next speaker is Allison Mullins.

**Ms. Allison Mullins:** I want to kind of talk sideways and go really quickly because the time goes fast. If you are in the Clinchco, Ervinton and Sandlick school division, you are responsible for the grant money that the Dickenson County Public Schools have received. The School Board has used that money to implement their master plan, and it really doesn't do a lot of good with the exception of Rocky to present facts or appear to be doing the right thing to this particular Board. Their minds have been made up for a long time, and I believe that to be true. The ink on the original contract was barely dry before the School Board, Board of Supervisors and the IDA changed the location of the Haysi area elementary school to any location in Dickenson County. That happened within months, and I have all of the paperwork. That was part of the plan, and the majority of the School Board sitting here tonight signed off on this resolution. The Corps of Engineers already had the location for the elementary school in the original contract which was Backbone Ridge. They had already done the studies. It should have already been built. The kids in Sandlick are still in the flood zone, and a lot of kids from Clinchco go to Sandlick so they are still in the flood zone. Further proof of this Board's intent is that they formed a committee to do a study on the best site. The committee came back with a recommendation. Guess what? This Board has their own ideas. They are not following the committee's recommendation so it is a token committee. They already had their minds made up. Here is what I want to say to the Haysi community. I would encourage you to not give up. There are things that we can do. As taxpayers in Dickenson County, we have a legal standing to challenge the legalities of expenditures by this Board. I recommend, Mr. Yates, that we set a date tonight for a community meeting in Haysi, and that we hire immediately legal counsel and challenge the actions of this School Board. That money has already been spent. We only have \$21 million left? Where has it gone? There should never be a selfish or political motive in making decisions that affect children. We must make a stand for the children in our communities. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Next will be Ms. Kathy Harrison:

**Ms. Kathy Harrison:** The Haysi community has been asking for you to do this very thing for the past four years because there was money given to buy land or to do studies. You did end up buying a little bit of land so these studies could have already been completed if the Board had got on the ball. You could have done it as the construction was going on. Plus, you already have how much dirt has to be moved at Backbone because you had them come in and do four sites. One of those was Backbone that they did. (Applause!) So that one is free. Now you only have to do three studies instead of just the two because you already have Backbone. This \$21 million has been sitting here for close to two years, and now suddenly it seems like you want to do studies and more studies. You want to check on the unknowns and the variables. You could have already known what the unknowns are. You could have already been checking on the variables then you could truly have made an informed decision. You already have all of the information that you appear to be seeking now. I am just saying that you are already late in trying to do it. We have the money, and we already have Backbone which has already been looked at. Look at Haysi. Look at Ridgeview which I don't see how that is going to work, but if that is what you want to do, just do it. There are three current members sitting here that led us to believe that we would have a consolidated high school, a consolidated middle school and that we would each have an elementary school. (Applause!) If there is not enough money to build a total consolidated elementary school up there, and you start shifting students then we no longer have a true middle school. We no longer have a true elementary school. You have a primary school, you have an elementary/middle school, and you have a middle school/high school. That is not what we were led to believe when we supported the consolidation of the high schools. Remember the words that you already said and the words that are in the minutes that were already taken. Remember the intentions when this got started. I don't think those intentions have changed. Remember the people that you represent. Talk to those on the outlying areas, and remember those people. Also, remember the community that your decision is going to affect and has affected and will continue to affect whether it is on the good side or on the bad side. I just have to mention this one study because it has just bugged me. The one study that you had about the population and the couple came in from Roanoke or Richmond and did a very good presentation. I did notice that they got a lot of their information from the Census which you can get online for free. At the end of the meeting someone asked them a question about the population in ten years, and her reply was "I really can't tell you what the population is going to be in ten years no more than I can tell you what the weather is going to be". That is what you paid for. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Next on the list is Jasmine Yates:

**Ms. Jasmine Yates:** Hi. My name is Jasmine, and I throw my maiden name in there sometime, Counts. I am Erwin Count's daughter. I was born and raised in Haysi, and I still live here. I recently became a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. I am going to Pikeville because I have a job down there to get some experience. I want to come back here to Dickenson County for the kids to have health care here. With that being said I want to say one thing. No wonder this county is still split up with Haysi versus Clintwood. Your vote tonight even said Haysi versus Clintwood. (Applause!) It is simple. Listen to your citizens. The citizens who have

appointed you right to where you sit. I have talked to moms who have children at Sandlick, Ervinton and Clintwood Elementary School. They have said that they don't want to consolidate elementary schools. They specifically said that they hope you build one in Haysi. These moms love the small classrooms and quick access to the school in case of emergency. Think of our latest ordeal. There were multiple bomb threats. This was made by a middle school/high school student. Why put our elementary age children at risk by sticking them too at the Ridgeview Campus? (Applause!) Mass casualty at school is not something that I would like to be headlined in the news. Some moms are also saying that keeping their four or five-year-old on the bus for an hour and a half is too long for them. One mom specifically said that her son needs the one on one attention that the small classroom size provides in that Ervinton Elementary School. There is no fiscal or educational advantage in consolidation. Josh Evans told us that in the county paper, yet there is still talk of consolidation. Even if the contract states that we can build anywhere in the county doesn't mean that we have to build anywhere in the county. That's like saying that even though I have the ability to sin that I am just going to go ahead and sin. The Corps of Engineers granted us money to build a new Sandlick Elementary School so why is there even any discussion about consolidation. If it is saving money then moving this school will drive out about 100 students from the county losing about \$7,000 per child. That is \$700,000 which is not saving any money. This isn't a county school. It is a community school because we are in the flood zone. Engineers said that we have to tear it down and build elsewhere in the community. We don't want to leave our location, but the Corps says that legally we have to. So, again, why is there even talk about consolidation? Did anything I just said say anything about Ervinton or Clintwood? No, but for some reason some seem to think so. You have to get the focus off of what you want and listen to your citizens that elected you. Swallow a little bit of pride, put on a little bit of humility and like the contract says, build a school for Sandlick because it is going to make Haysi a ghost town if you don't. (Applause!) Listen to your citizens, listen to your community. We supported you and now we need your support in getting what we desire. It is a simple request. Go by the original contract and don't act on selfish reasons. Just because consolidation may be more convenient for you doesn't mean that it is the right decision. On behalf of the Sandlick and Haysi community keep our babies close to home. You are only penalizing the children if you don't. I will leave you with this. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit rather in humility and value others rather than yourselves. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, next is David M. Ratliff.

**Mr. David M. Ratliff:** I went to the Board of Supervisors meeting and talked with VDOT. You know that big curve at the high school is a dangerous curve. I'm not going to tell you what Jason said about it. (Ha, Ha!) We need that curve cut off. I am hoping when they tear the old school down that we could use some of the block to build a memorial to all of the students who graduated from there. I want to put my name on it because I am glad to be a Haysi Tiger. (Applause!) I think it would be a good idea to remind everybody that school is more than a building. I know we have some students from Council. They have sent us some good football players. We don't want them to go to Honaker, and we don't want students to go to Grundy. Think about that too. Think about the big picture. Think about Clinchco. How many businesses are there? Is there a drug store? Where is a funeral home in Clinch-

co? There are some things that you have to think about. You have to think about marketing too. When you do marketing, you have to look at all things in the circle where you are. Marketing is the most important thing. You have to think what is best for the kids. Also, we are trying to get industries to come to Dickenson County. If we have a good elementary school at a good location, the industries will come in and look at these schools. What about field trips to the Breaks Interstate Park. What about transportation? That's all I have to say. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, Matt Owens.

**Mr. Matt Owens:** Madam Chair and Board, my name is Matt Owens. Tonight, I am coming to you as a private citizen from a non-profit and a business owner. I just want to appeal to your common sense and to your good nature. We desire to have the school in Haysi. The reasoning behind it is not because we want the Haysi/Clintwood fight. We really and truly believe that the school should be located here. This one school system and one consolidated elementary school basically equate to possible 50 jobs being lost, and I don't think the Board wants to be responsible for putting teachers, cooks and janitors out of work. They would probably have to leave the county in order to find jobs. This loss would result in over a 30-mile travel for the outskirts children. That would basically put them on the road for a long period of time. I know some kids from Council were traveling 20 miles to a batting cage and how treacherous it was. Thirty some miles would be even more plus it is elementary kids not high school kids. (Applause!) I think some things need to be considered here. When they were commenting about switching children from the middle school to the high school or from the elementary school to the middle school; you may say that we aren't that far yet, but it is a fact that will have to be considered in your planning because it will shift everything around. Like Jasmine said it will put all of our children at one location, and if we have some kind of threat like we did a few weeks ago, it will put a big strain on our fire department, police department and on our teachers. With all of these extra cars and buses in one location can you imagine trying to evacuate that area? It would not be a good sight. It could possibly be on the national news. It would be devastating to have all of our children under attack if it really did happen. I pray it never does, but it is something to consider. I was told that you guys did some workshops discussing how many students you could lose if you did consolidate. I really hope that when you saw those numbers that you said this is unacceptable. (Applause!) No Child Left Behind is the motto that we had for many, many years, and I am not so sure that we are holding that up in our Board and in our school system. Just because we can consolidate and burn off a few children and leave them to be casualties because of a financial crisis or a logistical problem is not the way our county or school system should operate. All of those things should be considered. (Applause!) It should not even be allowed to be thought of as a factor to burn off those children. You can't just say we are going to shut this school down and shift children around. If we lose the people from Longs Fork or from Buchanan County so what? To me that just seems heartless and inappropriate for what you guys are tasked to do which is to take care of our children and give them an education. (Applause!) This is where you start. If you start right with those children by having small classroom sizes, they would get the one-on-one attention they would get. They have proved it with the awards that they are getting. If you go with consolidation, you are definitely going to harm their education which means that when they get to middle school or high school they

are already going to have their paths set to either fail because they don't have enough attention or the curriculum is not up to standard. The teachers won't have enough time to take care of each of the children. If that happens with a consolidated school, it will be like at Sandlick when they had to pull in trailers. I'm sure that Mr. Setser can tell you that the SOL scores plummeted during that time. When they were all together, the children were having problems, and the children were using the bathroom on themselves. There is all kinds of negativity when you start pressing children into a small area like that. Because of the mass numbers, 1,000 as Dr. Lyle referred to, being confined in that area is definitely not going to add to their education and quality of life. We just ask that you please be realistic about this and really look at these three school system sites and keep the other two schools open and build a new school at Haysi which is what you promised to do in the beginning. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Mr. Carroll Edwards, you are next.

**Mr. Carroll Edwards:** I'm next? I will try to be very brief. I just want to say to the School Board Members that you have the power in your hands to move this system forward and to make it grow. You have the power to take care of all of the kids. You also have the power to take it backwards. If you consolidate the elementary schools at Ridgeview, you are going to definitely take it backwards. You are going to lose kids like you never thought before. I don't believe that is what we are here for. Aren't you here for the betterment of the whole county, all the kids? (Applause!) Dr. Lyle, when you and I were on the Board, we were for the whole county. I never knew you to make a decision against the kids. I sat beside you and admired you for the way you conducted yourself. We just have to keep the kids in mind because they are the ones you are talking about. You have it in your hands to do them a great justice, but you also have it in your hands to do them great harm. I would just like to say to Mr. Nickles that I sat in this room here and heard a most passionate plea for the kids battling cage so they wouldn't have to travel so far on these treacherous roads. (Applause!) He made a most passionate plea, and the way I looked at it almost every Board Member agreed with him. They were in total agreement. So I would like to ask you, Mr. Nickles, to make that same passionate plea for our young kids trying to get an education. Our five and six-year-olds are going to have to travel miles if the schools were consolidated. (Applause!) This would be detrimental to their education. It has been proven time and time again that it is detrimental to our young kids to have to travel those distances. I encourage you, the School Board, to take the high road and do what is right. Do what is right for the kids. Do what is right for the community. Do what is right for the system. The only right thing to do is to go with the original plan which this young lady so eloquently asked. She is much more eloquent than I am. You need to forget about all of the studies and save that money. (Applause!) I just beg you, the School Board Members, on behalf of our county to do what is right and build the school at one of the sites at Haysi. I don't care which one. It doesn't matter to me. Build it there, and do it now! You don't have any reason to do all of these studies. Thank you. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Mr. Hill:

**Mr. Don Hill:** My name is Don Hill. Please excuse my voice. I have been ill. I live in Clinchco, and I have come before this Board the last four years many times. It has always

advocating students and taxpayers of this county. That is my focus, and that is why I did this study. If we were going to put a business in the eastern end of the county, where would we locate it? The school is a business, and the children are the customers. Where would we locate that business? You would locate it in the most densely populated area. Not because of cost or not because it is what I want or you want. It is about the students. If you find out where they are located, you will solve some major problems. I have this speech here that I am going to go through. I am here again advocating for the students and taxpayers of the county. Both can be impacted both positively and negatively by the site selected for the proposed elementary school. The effect should be positive if the selection for the site is based on hard, numerical data and not opinion, rhetoric or economic reasons. It goes without saying that this Board's responsibility is taking care of the welfare of the students entrusted to your care. You have oversight responsibility to do so. You are now tasked with deciding between multiple sites presented to you. Which one is the most suitable for the location of the new elementary school. How do you make this decision? It is important, and it will affect the students, parents and citizens of this county fifty years into the future. What criteria should be used? Is it student safety and welfare? Is it cost? Is it the potential impact on the taxpayers? Or is it all three? Certainly, in my mind, student safety should be number one. The potential impact on taxpayers and costs are together. They are linked. Here is a macro-model that we might use to make this decision. You might use. I can't make this decision. I can only feed you information, objective information, not biased. Number one is to determine the location based on the student population and its relative density and proximity to the school sites being considered. Relative density is an important term. Number two is to consider the potential impact on the taxpayers. Number three is to gather site related costs. Number four is to evaluate the data presented to you. Number five is to vote to build the school on this site. Madam Chair, I am going to ask you for some additional time to present a continuity to what I am saying.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** We can only allow you five minutes, Mr. Hill. I'm sorry, but I have to treat everyone the same.

**Mr. Don Hill:** I was at the Board of Supervisors meeting the other night, and there was extra time given.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** I understand, but I am not sure that the Board of Supervisors follows the same policy that we have. I think our policy is specific to us.

**Mr. Don Hill:** Following this model would give us some very tangible benefits for students and the taxpayers of the county. (1) minimization of student travel time on buses.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** I do have one question for you, Mr. Hill. I am seeing on your paper that you have Tract 402, 403 and 401. How does that relate to this page?

**Mr. Don Hill:** If you will look in the margins, you will see the tracts and groups. There were four tracts and sixteen groups.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, thank you. That brings us down to Larry Yates.

**Mr. Larry Yates:** Members of the Board, Mrs. Robinson and staff I would like to start off by saying this magic number we hear so many times--\$21 million. That is a big number, \$21 million. It is also critical to the Haysi community and Sandlick. We have been lied to about that money more than once. (Applause!) If it hadn't been for Sandlick Elementary School and what happened in 1977, we wouldn't be here today discussing these schools. (Applause!) Going back to what Dr. Lyle said earlier in the evening, you said there would be 1,000 at Ridgeview. Building a school up there for around \$21 million, and you would have an extra million dollars to take care of the parking situation and meet all of the requirements to get a road in there. We have been told more than once, and I don't know who the expert is that keeps telling us this, but we can't build a school behind the existing high school building. We have a beautiful school. I can go all across this state and other states too, and people brag on that beautiful facility with beautiful athletic fields behind it. We don't want to mess up what we have going there. We have all heard about the fantastic scores we have gotten with the system we have structured now. Do we want to mess up that campus up there by building a school in the front of it there blocking that façade of the middle school? Well, maybe some of us do. To me it would completely ruin what we have up there now. If we want to build a school there, what kind of school would it be? Would we have to go cheap with something a little bit better than a metal building with a brick façade? No, we don't want that for our students. What we want for our students is safety, a quality education and well-being. Would the 4 and 5-year-olds feel safe with the 13 and 14-year-olds or 17 and 18-year-olds? I have been doing community development and working with large budgets now for about 20 years. I have worked with some pretty good-sized budgets and every time when it becomes budget time, we have to start looking at what our state appropriations are. Any non-profit or governmental agency that I have worked for always falls back to state appropriations mostly. Sometimes it is local appropriations. You have to count on the state to help you out. Sometimes it is federal, sometimes an endowment or sometimes it is a grant or whatever. The state plays a big part in it. If we reduce our tax base here in Dickenson County, the bottom is going to drop out of our local funds. If the county can't collect what it takes these schools running, we are wasting our breath here. Not only that but when the state legislation starts to balance their budget, they are seeing what Dickenson County is not putting in but "x" so they certainly can't put but "x" into it. You really need to take that into consideration. Let me just urge you to go back to your original contract. I want to ask you a question. If the courthouse hadn't been built, would we even be here having this discussion? You would have gone ahead and built the elementary school at Haysi so you could get Ridgeview built. (Applause!) I am going to close by asking Mr. Mullins and everybody that voted "yes" a while ago to rescind that vote. (Applause!) Thank you.

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, the last name is Mr. Joey Owens.

**Mr. Joey Owens:** Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Joey Owens. I have worked in Buchanan County for the last 38 years. Some good friends of mine have been on the School Board in Buchanan, and they made the same mistake that you guys are getting ready to make. We gained 75 kids from Russell Prater because they made the mistake of closing the elementary school. They are sitting there with Russell Prater waiting for you guys to make the decision about what you are going to do. You are going to lose at least

100-125 kids in Dickenson County. My kids and grandkids all chose to stay in Dickenson County not because we couldn't go anywhere else. I have worked in Buchanan County for 38 years, and they could have gone there any day, but I wanted my kids here. Now we are making a decision not because of money but because of Sandlick Elementary. You are turning around and trying to re-appropriate this money for the whole county. The biggest supporter in the county is the school system. How many people are you going to lose? Will it be my grandkids, your grandkids or whoever; they are going to move these kids? You just don't understand. I ask you guys to talk to the guys on the Buchanan County School Board to see what kind of mistake they made. You guys just don't understand, and we don't want you to follow the same path. Thank you. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** Okay, I believe that is the last name on our list.

**Mrs. Allison Mullins:** Can we extend an invitation to have the next School Board meeting in Clinchco, Ervinton or Haysi? There are people standing in the hall and outside the building. If you want to promote free speech and give people a chance to say what they want to say have the meeting in a different location. This meeting should have been in a different location. (Applause!)

#### **BOARD COMMENT:**

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** That brings us to Board Comment. Dr. Lyle:

**D. LURTON Lyle:** We are restarting the process, I assume, of determining where the school will be. We have that choice ahead of us, and I hope that we are able to do the work

**Mr. Rick Mullins:** Well, as I said earlier, this is a democratic process. However the votes are, we will all have to unite as a county. We will try to make the best decision for everybody in the county. That is what my goal is.

**Mr. Rocky Barton:** I guess what concerns me the most is that our county school system talked about consolidation for 20-25 years. It would get hot, and it would get cold. It would be on again and off again. We did studies. What scares me the most is that a Board would flip because of money or whatever reason and go ahead and build a school without ever doing the first study on consolidating the elementary schools. We have not looked at any impact studies on what it would do to the children especially the four and six-year-olds for that long bus ride. We have pointed out time and time again that 30-mile bus ride from areas in Haysi, Ervinton and Clintwood one way. That is what concerns me. Everything that you look at; points to smaller classrooms for elementary kids. (Applause!) I have said this before, but we have the cart way before the horse. If our county and community was ready to consolidate elementary schools, we need to quit worrying about the site. We need to do a study about how it is going to affect our kids and community. (Applause!) I have heard a lot of things from a lot of different people about how sometimes we forget the kids. That is what we need to study. Living just a mile from the Buchanan County border all of my life and actually born in Buchanan County, you have to understand how our community is entangled around the county line. Over the years it has been a draw. The Ervinton community is

our biggest loss community. We are already losing kids there. We are going to take the kids from Ervinton Elementary School that has the highest scores and consolidate? It is one-on-one teaching. It may be a little bit more expensive per child to keep that school open, but just look at the education each child gets. If they are not going to send them to that school, they aren't going to send them to Ridgeview. One thing that the study did show, and I thought it was a waste of money too, Ms. Kathy, was the number of students we are bringing in from Wise County. We are bringing a lot of kids in from Wise County on the Clintwood border. Are we going to keep those kids? Probably not. If we are serious and are going to look at a consolidated elementary school, let's start studying it instead of worrying about the site right now. Let's get into that and let the county know what we are doing. Sometimes I don't think we do.

**Mr. Shanghai Nickles:** Eventually, money is going to play a big, important part in this. The final site selection will involve many factors. There is no doubt about that. I just want to make sure that every child has the same opportunity as every other child has in this county. (Applause!)

**Chairman, Mrs. Susan Mullins:** This is a tough decision, and it is a hard place to be sitting. I think all of us here want to do what is right for all of the children. While it may be unpopular we still have to go through the process to see what is right. I think that is where we started today. That is all I have to say.

#### **CLOSED SESSION:**

**Chairman Susan Mullins:** Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711, Paragraph A of the Code of Virginia, I move that the board convene a closed session for the purpose of discussing:

1. Student appeal of Disciplinary Committee decision pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711 A (2)
2. Employment issues relating to salary, benefits, FMLA request, permission to post/advertise, consideration of hiring coaches and substitutes pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711 A (1) and
3. Discussion of transfer of real property pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711 A (3) and to consult with counsel on legal issues pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3711 A (7)

Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

#### **OUT OF CLOSED SESSION:**

**Chairman Susan Mullins:** I now entertain a motion to go out of Closed Session. Mr. Rocky Barton made the motion and Dr. Lyle seconded. All votes aye. Chairman Susan Mullins stated; pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia, I move 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 and identified in the motion convening the closed meeting. Dr. Lurton Lyle, Mr. Rick Mullins, Mr. Rocky Barton, Mr. Shanghai Nickles and Chairman Susan Mullins; all certified true.

#### **BOARD ACTIONS:**

***Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion the Board review the Disciplinary Committee's decision for Student #3717 at the January meeting. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

***Chairman Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we table the safety audit recommendations until the November 2017 meeting. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

***Chairman Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve John Dotson as the Tennis Volunteer Coach as recommended contingent upon any background checks and concussion training. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

***Chairman Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion, that due to the critical need for substitute bus drivers at this time, the Board temporarily adjusts the salary for long-term subs to the rate of \$71.41 per day. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

***Chairman Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the FMLA request for Keaton Owens as requested. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

***Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the substitute list as recommended by the Division Superintendent. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

Substitutes:

- Baker, Kelley – Teacher
- Beller, Shannon – Teacher
- Bevins, Sarah – Teacher
- Gilbert, Tonya – Teacher
- Large, Wanda – Teacher
- Mullins, Heather – Cook
- Roark, Brittney – Teacher/Cook/Janitor
- Schiffer, Amanda – Teacher
- Stanley, Jordan - Teacher

***Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve we authorize permission to post and advertise for Pre K – 6<sup>th</sup> Teacher and a Middle School Science Teacher. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

***Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we authorize the Division Superintendent to sign any documents necessary, reasonable and appropriate to transfer the Ervinton High School property to the County. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.***

*Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we authorize the Division Superintendent to execute a deed for a small section of land in the Middle of the World pursuant to a contract approved by the School Board. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

*Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we authorize the Division Superintendent to put out an RFP for a Civil Engineer. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

Adjourned: 9:05 p.m.

**Susan Mullins**

CHAIRMAN

**Approved: November 29, 2017**

**Reba McCowan**

CLERK