

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
and
DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Monday, May 24, 2004

4:15 – 5:40 p.m.

Place: Commissioners' Room, second floor, Durham County Government Administrative Complex, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, NC

Present: DPS Chairman Gail M. Heath, Vice-Chairman Regina George-Bowden, Superintendent Ann T. Denlinger, and members Steve Martin and Jackie Wagstaff.

Commission Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, Vice-Chairman Joe W. Bowser, and Commissioners Philip R. Cousin, Jr., Becky M. Heron, and Mary D. Jacobs.

Absent: DPS Board Members Phillis Scott and Kathryn Meyers

Presider: Commission Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow

Staff Present: Dr. Carl Harris, Hank Hurd, Jennifer Bennett, Hugh Osteen, and Nancy Hester

Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Reckhow called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Chairman Reckhow said the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the proposed budget for FY04-05. The Commissioners will hear the budget and time will be allotted to ask questions after which the meeting will be open to the public for comments at the end of the session.

Chairman Reckhow recognized School Board Chairman Gail Heath for opening comments and introduction.

Ms. Heath said she was pleased to present the Durham Public Schools budget requests. After her comments, she asked Dr. Denlinger to present the budget.

Dr. Denlinger began the budget presentation by using PowerPoint slides for comments.

The slides presented by Dr. Denlinger were as follows:

- 2004-05 Budget Request
- Our Vision
- Our Commitment
- Goals for 2007
- Grades 3-8 Composite-Reading
- Grades 3-8 Composite-Math
- No Child Left Behind

Dr. Denlinger said the preliminary test scores at this point are looking really good for the young people in our schools. It appears that we have had a second wonderful year in improving the test scores of our young people.

The slides presented by Dr. Carl Harris addressed the instructional aspect of the budget as follows:

- Accelerating Progress – Quality Teachers, Educational Technology
- Quality Teachers – Recruitment and Retention
 - Salary Supplement Scale for 2003-04
- Quality Teachers – Recruitment and Retention
 - Proposed Salary Supplement Scale for 2004-05
- Educational Technology
- Catching Up with Technology
- Technology Plan – Cost \$1.8 million

The slides presented by Hank Hurd concerning the financial aspect of the budget were as follows:

- FY 2004-05 Projected Revenues – State Appropriation 47% Total budget is \$297,000,000
- Expenditures – 82% of all funds committed to salaries and benefits
- County Appropriation Comparison (since 2001-02)
 - \$5.2 million total increase in county appropriation
 - \$1.5 million has gone for charter schools growth
 - \$7.6 million required for DPS salaries
- Continuation Funding Requirement – Total Funding to maintain services and staff at current levels \$6,086,081
- Expansion Request – Operating Expansion \$5,245,933, Capital Outlay Expansion \$1,000,000. Total \$6,245,933
- Total Budget Request \$12,332,014
- Budget Impact – System Efficiencies
 - Zero-Based Budgeting, Redirect Current Resources, and Streamlined Operational Areas.

Questions and Comments

Chairman Reckhow asked the County Commissioners if they had any questions and comments.

The Commissioners asked several questions. The schools' staff responded.

Commissioner Heron commented that the proposed school budget requests will have to be reduced due to the lack of funding.

Commissioner Cousin said we cannot reach this \$12.2 million budget request in this fiscal year. The public should know that we are dedicated to education in this community.

Chairman Reckhow requested enrollment data for the upcoming year compared to the previous five years.

The Chairman wanted to know what the enrollment projection was for the current year compared to the actual enrollment.

Chairman Reckhow would like a previous five-year trend for fines and forfeiture. What are you projecting for your budget this year?

Chairman Reckhow wants to know how many young people are in group homes in Durham County being served by Durham Public Schools.

Commissioner Heron said she had the opportunity to visit the vocational education programs in the Durham Public Schools last week. The schools visited were Riverside, Hillside, and Southern High Schools. I was pleasantly surprised at how well these programs are being carried out and the enthusiasm of the students. One disappointment was the fact that at Southern High School, a new stove and other equipment were needed in the culinary unit. Overall, she was impressed with the programs they visited. We need to let the young people learn more about the vocational programs in the public school system.

Citizens' Public School Comments

Each citizen was given five minutes to make comments about the schools budget. Four citizens signed to speak.

Dr. E. Lavonia Allison, Chair of the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, made comments and spoke about the size of the budget increase. When you go to the public for acceptance, one problem is the fact that there are a number of items that we don't have documented data to give to the citizens.

We have schools that we don't know about the qualification of the teachers. Where are the best teachers? The best teachers are put where the greatest challenges are. Where are the greatest challenges? It is where the students need tremendous attention. As I look at the budget, the increases are happening in benefits and salary based on what the state is doing. The school system has the responsibility of determining where we are going to get the greatest bang for the buck.

Ms. Anita Hammond said that she was concerned about the number of teachers on the Budget Advisory Committee. We want as much diversity of talent, skill, expertise, knowledge, and back ground when we deal with the school budget. I wonder how many of those teachers are residents and taxpayers of Durham County. Who was representing the community-at-large on the advisory committee? That needs to be addressed. She was also concerned about the drain on the budget to charter schools. When you have students dropping out of school, you are losing money for the school system. We need more programs in terms of keeping the children being suspended from school. I want to know more about charter schools.

Chairman Reckhow asked about the trend of the charter school enrollment.

Ms. Victoria Peterson, Triangle Citizens Rebuilding Communities, said her program is the only one like it in Durham County. We work with the persons that leave the county jail. We have been getting clients from the prison system. Ms. Peterson gave the Commissioners the latest crime statistics from the Durham Police Department.

Ms. Peterson asked the school personnel if they have put money in the school budget request for a vocational center for our children, especially for the African-American males who continue to "fall through the cracks" in the county. We need to do something about the crime situation in this county. Most of her clients have not finished high school. I hope the Commissioners will put money in the budget for a vocational center to help the young people in this community.

Mr. Jack Steer, 729 Quiet Woods Place, Durham, NC, said that he is here as a citizen to see what is going on with the school board and the Board of County Commissioners regarding the budget. He said that the school board is improving yearly on the way it is putting the budget together. Some improvements still need to be made in the presentation for clarity. The fact that the Board is talking about a zero-based budgeting approach is very encouraging. It is the way to go. The budget is high, but there are a couple of reasons I think the County Commissioners have to consider more than the fact it is high. We need to meet a market condition, on the salary scale. Vocational training is very important for the students. In this time, students must have a love for science and mathematics.

Chairman Reckhow said she would like to see the budget for the hearing impaired on page 137. I would like to see that breakout.

Answers to Questions

Commissioner Heron asked Garry E. Umstead, Clerk to the Board, to take the questions from the audio tape and send the questions to the school administration for the answers.

Adjournment

Chairman Reckhow thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Garry E. Umstead, CMC
Clerk to the Board