

JEFFREY K. BARTON
Clerk to the Board



September 27, 2011

JOINT BOARD WORKSHOP

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

AND

COUNTY COMMISSION AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE SPACE

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SEPTEMBER 27, 2011

The Board of County Commissioners of Indian River County, Florida, met in Joint Session at the Teacher Education Center (TEC) of the Indian River County School District's Administrative Offices, 1990 25th Street, Vero Beach, Florida, on Tuesday, September 27, 2011, to discuss administrative office space. Present for Indian River County were Board Chairman Bob Solari and Commissioner Wesley S. Davis. Commissioners Gary C. Wheeler and Joseph E.

Flescher were absent, and Commissioner Peter D. O'Bryan arrived at 1:45 p.m. Also present were County Administrator Joseph A. Baird, Assistant County Administrator Michael Zito, County Attorney Alan S. Polackwich, Sr., Public Works Director Chris Mora, and Deputy Clerk Leona Adair Allen.

Present for the Indian River County District School Board were Chairman Matthew McCain, Vice Chairman Carol Johnson, Board Members Jeffrey Pegler, Claudia Jimenez, Karen Disney-Brombach, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Francis Adams, Assistant Superintendent of Finance/Operations Carter Morrison, District School Board Attorney Suzanne D'Agresta, and Executive Assistant to the School Board Judy Stang.

1. CALL TO ORDER

School Board Chairman McCain called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP

School Board Chairman McCain announced that the purpose of the workshop was to discuss the lease for the School District's Administrative office building. He reported that the lease expires in February, with an option to renew; and he stressed the need for required maintenance to the building. He revealed that there had been recent chatter about the need to demolish the School District's office building, and the School Board possibly moving to Administration Building "B". School Board members believed a joint meeting would allow for an open discussion regarding the chatter, available space, race track funds, and answers to the current lease. He said this workshop was not intended for the Board of County Commissioners to direct them in what they need to do, but rather to receive correct information and dispel misinformation.

3. PRESENTATION BY SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF

Dr. Adams highlighted the items on her point paper (on file) regarding the history and lease extensions of the School District's Administrative office building. She recalled that the original Lease Agreement was signed in 1980 with a 30-year term (\$3,750 per month rent), which included a 10-year renewal option. She also pointed out that in the original Agreement, the School District waived the right to share any race track funds for the period of the lease (estimated at \$446,500).

School Board Chairman McCain expressed that since the County is the current landlord, the School Board members want to know what their options are before they make decisions in moving forward.

4. OPEN QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

School Board Vice Chairman Johnson felt this meeting was appropriate and essential because it is not a matter of if, but when, something will need to be done. She disclosed that the School Board members are looking internally for their "true" needs because the analysis of their space needs and growth pattern has changed tremendously. She stressed the openness to any suggestions and negotiations, and wants what is best for the taxpayers' dollars.

School Board member Pegler believed it was important for the School Board members and County Commissioners to come to a consensus for where they should be in two years. He acknowledged that the School District Board does not have the legal right to race track funds in accordance with the 2011 Florida Statutes, and wanted to come to a resolution for the future, where everyone could join forces and collaborate for the benefit of both the County and School District.

School Board Chairman McCain wanted to know what their options are. He asked if there was going to be another ten year lease, whether it could be for a shorter time span, or whether the lease could go year-to-year.

Administrator Baird read portions of Florida Statute 218.20 (on file) to clarify proceed distributions regarding race track funds collected, and how the monies are distributed to the County, not the School Board. He informed the School Board that the County does not have room for the School District in Administration Building “B” since there is only 25,000 square feet of shelled space in the building, and 35,000 square feet has been requested for expansion needs (Courthouse and Sheriff’s Department).

Administrator Baird addressed lease issues for the School District’s office building by recognizing that the building is old and probably in an undesirable location, but felt the lease for the 26,000 square foot building, for about \$1.79 per square foot, was very reasonable in today’s market. He saw no problem leasing space on an annual basis, and recommended the Board of County Commissioners give the School District an opportunity to find another space to rent, or a site to build on. He suggested they purchase (at fair market value) and relocate to the property the County used before moving to its current location. He said he had not discussed rent with the Board of County Commissioners, but at this time staff was not considering a rent increase.

Discussion ensued regarding shared costs for the building maintenance, the self-sufficient costs incurred by the School Board when the old Administrative Building was demolished, the School Board office building being deemed “uninhabitable” during a study, and the maintenance expenses ultimately being paid by the taxpayers.

School Board Vice Chairman Johnson acknowledged appreciation for the low rent, and reiterated that the School Board wants to make do with what they have for the least amount of money. She reasoned that if the growth is to the point where the Administration Building space is needed, they will not push for that space; however, she wanted the County to share what they

have in mind for the future, and what is viable for the School District. She felt their current location was good, but they need something long range.

Commissioner Davis wanted to know how much space the Sheriff's office required in the Administration Building, and Administrator Baird replied that they will need about 100,000 square feet over the next three to five years.

Discussion ensued regarding the current office building's configuration, the amount of wasted space, its inefficiency, and the services that are not able to be located within the building.

School Board Chairman McCain did not feel the School Board was currently in the position to purchase land and build a new office building. He did not know how much longer they would be able to stay in their current location because the building needs a new roof and possibly a new air conditioner. He did not think it would be feasible to pay for these repairs then tear the building down two years later.

Administrator Baird encouraged the School Board to consider the option of a year-to-year lease and to make the necessary roof repairs.

School Board member Disney-Brombach wanted to ensure that before giving direction to her staff, this would be supported by the County. She said about \$800,000 over the past five years had been spent on maintenance, and if they spend \$300,000 on the roof, it will be over \$1 million, which she felt was spending money unwisely. She asked Administrator Baird to recommend available properties.

Administrator Baird suggested three properties: (1) the property across from South County Park (the Anson piece) on Oslo Road and 20th Avenue; (2) the location of the ball fields across from the High School; and (3) the land where the old County Administration Building once stood.

Board of County Commission Chairman Solari reinforced Administrator Baird's comments regarding the lack of space and the commitment to the second floor of Administrative Building "B". He said he would support: (1) the School Board taking care of the building to keep the rent low; (2) allowing the School Board to stay in their current location as long as they want; (3) the flexibility of a longer term lease with a quick out; and (4) whatever would meet their needs.

Commissioner Davis reiterated Administrator Baird's concerns regarding space needs. He said he would support whatever concessions are necessary to make this as flexible as possible for them.

School Board member Jimenez said she understood the Statutes, and how the money is to go directly to the County, but she had hoped the County would share the money with the other groups. She voiced concern over the building being uninhabitable, and the amount of money that the School District paid for building maintenance. She appreciated the offer of a year-to-year lease; the opportunity to stay in the building until it is torn down or they find another place to locate; but wondered where the collaboration was for the roof repair.

Board of County Commission Chairman Solari's understanding was that different governments are set up to do different things, and that they have responsibilities set by State Statute and the County has theirs, and that it was not collaboration for the County government to pay School Board expenses. He said he would be happy to work and share assets, but did not think using County tax dollars to pay for a roof could be justified.

School Board member Jimenez responded that usually the landlord has responsibilities, and from a tenant landlord relationship, if the building needs work, there should be collaboration.

Discussion ensued regarding other rental properties, how they are charged, the shared use of assets, and collaboration.

School Board member Pegler summarized earlier comments and acknowledged that it is not the current County Commission's fault that the lease had not been written favorably for the School District thirty years ago, whereby the School District assumes the responsibility for all building repairs. He felt the School Board needs to take responsibility and control of the situation to find a place to relocate. He reiterated that the County was willing to allow the School District to stay in their current location on a year-to-year basis, with an option that if they find another place to go, they can give notice and leave.

Commissioner Peter D. O'Bryan joined the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

School Board Vice Chairman Johnson asked about land swapping and available properties for further expansion.

Administrator Baird commented on long term planning, expansion, purchasing acreage for recreation, and possible negotiations.

School Board member Disney-Brombach spoke about the extraordinary cost in moving their data center hub, and not wanting to move to a temporary location. Her desire would be to leave their current building as soon as possible due to maintenance costs, an unhealthy environment, and the inefficiencies of having satellite offices spread throughout the County.

Dr. Adams thanked Administrator Baird for meeting with the School Board yesterday, feeling it was a productive meeting that allowed for creative ideas in looking at land swapping, which may be a possibility in the future. She asked Administrator Baird to notify her if any buildings become available. She believed that for the short term they would be fine, but for the long term they want to vacate.

Commissioner O'Bryan apologized for arriving late. He said he would help or collaborate in any way possible to find a solution.

5. CLOSING STATEMENT

School Board Chairman McCain thanked everyone for attending. He reiterated the reasons for requesting the workshop and felt assured that they could move forward with a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

ALL BACKUP DOCUMENTATION, RESOLUTIONS, AND ORDINANCES ARE ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK TO THE BOARD AND ARE HEREBY MADE A PART OF THESE MINUTES

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, School Board Chairman McCain declared the meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jeffrey K. Barton, Clerk

Bob Solari, Chairman

Minutes Approved: _____

LA/School Board Workshop