

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY
2024 School Bond Education Committee
Thursday, July 25, 2024

The first meeting of the 2024 School Bond Education Committee was held on Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the Donna Baker Room of the Whitted Human Services Center in Hillsborough, NC.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Ciarochi, Dr. Danielle Jones, Sarah Smylie, Jean Hamilton, Phyllis Portie-Ascott, Andrea Tanner, Jason Johnson, Samantha Earnhardt, Benjamin Alschuler

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Rani Dasi, Anissa McLendon, Vina Modaress, Frederick Davis

COUNTY ATTORNEYS PRESENT: Morgan Pierce

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT: Travis Myren, Kirk Vaughn, Kristin Prelipp

OCS STAFF PRESENT: Kevin Smith

GUESTS: Bonnie Hauser, Terri Buckner

1. Call to Order, *Co-Chairs Commissioners Jean Hamilton and Phyllis Portie-Ascott*
2. Introduction of Committee Members
3. Review Bond Education Committee Charge, *Co-Chairs*
 - a. Commissioner Hamilton read the Establishment, Charge, and Composition for the 2024 Bond Education.
 - b. Sarah Smylie wonders how much information committee members can share without breaking the rules.
4. Legal Parameters for Bond Education Committee, *Morgan Pierce, County Attorney*
 - a. Pierce explains that you cannot lobby using county money. Educating our community and potential voters is allowed.
 - b. Ask yourself the following two questions: Are public funds being used? What kind of communication?
 - c. In your individual capacity you can say whatever you want. However, you must be sure to be clear you are speaking in an individual capacity.
 - d. It is important to avoid guaranteeing any specific project. For instance, you can say we are going to improve security for our schools. But you cannot say we are going to install cameras at Cedar Ridge High School.
 - e. When in doubt request guidance from the County Attorney's Office.
5. [Background on School Facilities Needs Assessment](#), *Kirk Vaughn*
 - a. In 2016 there was a \$120 million General Obligation Bond for the districts.
 - b. In 2022 the school capital needs work group recommended that the county hire a consultant on behalf of the districts to evaluate the county's approach to school capital planning, design, contracting, and financing options for managing design and construction.

- c. Woolpert was hired and they went into every school building and classroom to assess the facilities. They also did an educational adequacy assessment according to NCDPI standards.
 - d. Both districts have aging facilities. Estimates \$262 M in current deficiencies, and additional \$236 M in life cycle replacements in the next 5 years. \$ 1.1 B in total need over 10 years.
 - e. The county established option C as its initial target for the bond.
6. Review Draft Scope of Services for Public Relations Support
- a. The goal of the scope of services for public relations support is that all committee members will be using the same materials as they educate our community.
 - b. The RFP will be sent out as soon as possible. A committee will select the firm and review the proposals.
 - c. Comm. Portie-Ascott asked who would be on the committee? Will it be staff or members of the committee or both? Travis Myren suggested that staff vet the proposals and present the finalist to the committee. That could happen as soon as August 11.
 - d. Sarah Smylie discussed the tight deadline and the fact that the ballots will already be sent out in September. She wants to set a deadline so that they information is disseminated before early voting starts. She suggests putting any existing materials up on the website.
 - e. Andrea Tanner wanted to know if the exact text on the ballot has been determined. It has and it was prescribed by the state.
 - f. Comm. Portie-Ascott asked that we list early voting as one of the important dates.
 - g. Discussion of the third bullet point that says, "Create tailored messaging to reach diverse stakeholders within the community." Andrea Tanner wants to be sure we include UNC-Chapel Hill students. Dr. Jones said in a future meeting they need to be specific about who those stakeholders are. Comm. Hamilton posited whether we should be specific in the RFP about their need to reach all community members from rural to urban, including the UNC-Chapel Hill community. Suggested text would be to add from rural community members to the UNC-Chapel Hill students. Comm. Hamilton suggests we include the text, "hard to reach community members". Samantha Earnhardt brought up whether we should focus more on those that are more likely to vote and have children in school.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, August 20 at 6 p.m. at the Solid Waste Administration Office at 1207 Eubanks Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Time of adjournment: 7:30 p.m.