

Anderson County Board of Education
907 North Main Street, Suite 202, Anderson, South Carolina 29621
July 20, 2015

Call to Order

Chairman David Draisen called the meeting to order and Dr. Rev. Rufus Mitchell gave the invocation after which everyone joined in the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag.

Board Members Present:

The following board members were present for the July, 2015 meeting: Mr. David Draisen, Ms. Brenda Bradberry, Mr. Mike Brock, Dr. Gary Burgess, Mr. Nakia Davis, Ms. Dana Grant, Mr. Dale Martin, Rev. Dr. Rufus Mitchell, Mr. Mike Upton and Joey Nimmer, Ex Officio.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Brenda Bradberry made a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. Gary Burgess seconded the motion and with a unanimous vote, the agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2015 Board Meeting

Mr. Nakia Davis made a motion to approve the minutes and was seconded by Rev. Dr. Rufus Mitchell. With a unanimous vote, the minutes were approved.

Consideration of District One Budget

Mr. Dale Martin presented the budget for Anderson School District One for the fiscal year FY2015-2016 in the amount of \$62,858,766 of which \$26,847,637 is identified as local funding. The budget approved and implemented for fiscal year FY2014-2015 was \$60,862,975 representing a budget increase of 3.28 percent for the new fiscal year. Mr. Martin made a motion to approve the budget request which meets State requirements and Rev. Dr. Rufus Mitchell seconded the motion. The final vote was 8 for and 1 opposed.

Consideration of District Two Budget

Mr. Mike Brock presented the budget for Anderson School District Two for the fiscal year FY2015-2016 in the amount of \$26,686,935 of which \$11,330,832 is identified as local funding. The budget approved and implemented for fiscal year FY2014-2015 was \$25,652,830 representing a budget increase of 4.03 percent for the new fiscal year. Mr. Brock made a motion to approve the budget request which meets State requirements and Rev. Dr. Rufus Mitchell seconded the motion. The final vote was 8 for and 1 opposed.

Consideration of District Three Budget

Mr. Nakia Davis presented the budget for Anderson School District Three for the fiscal year FY2015-2016 in the amount of \$18,560,988 of which \$7,832,590 is identified as local funding. The budget approved and implemented for fiscal year FY2014-2015 was \$17,758,865 representing a budget increase of 4.52 percent for the new fiscal year. Mr. Davis made a motion to approve the budget request which meets State requirements and Rev. Dr. Rufus Mitchell seconded the motion. The final vote was 8 for and 1 opposed.

Consideration of District Four Budget

Dr. Gary Burgess asked Ms. Brenda Bradberry to present the Anderson School District Four budget. He requested an opportunity to comment before the motion was made and the Chairman granted permission.

Dr. Burgess stated that he attended a meeting on December 13 to discuss the penny sales tax where he asked two specific questions. 1.) If the sales tax passes, the districts would not ask for any other property tax increases for the life of the sales tax? They answered no. They would still have to increase property tax for operations, use 8 percent money, and other referendums for capital projects, other taxes for emergencies. Of course, this was a reasonable and truthful response. 2.) Are we going to make sure the voters know their property taxes will continue to go up in addition to paying a sales tax? I remember I did not get an explanation. This is from a note that went to Dr. Lee D'Andrea, Superintendent of District Four, and she responded on June 30th. "I do remember you asking those questions. I also remember us saying that it is important for people to know that their taxes could increase on the operations side. I even think I remember you emphasizing that it would be important to communicate that fact, so I think we have a different view of what was said". Dr. Burgess stated that his vote tonight is in good conscious, not for the budgets, but for the tax payers. I also asked Dr. D'Andrea to provide me with all the information that went out to District Four concerning the sales tax. There was nothing in the information that I received that indicated there was a clear delineation to people who attended sessions that explained that operations taxes would increase every year, that school districts would still have the opportunity to pass a referendum and also to use 8 percent money. I couldn't find it. I was perfectly ready to vote for all these budgets tonight if there was something in writing, but I couldn't find it. Therefore, since that was not explained to the tax payers, I have decided not to support the budgets.

Ms. Brenda Bradberry presented the budget for Anderson School District Four for the fiscal year FY2015-2016 in the amount of \$25,340,388 of which \$15,967,186 is identified as local funding. The budget approved and implemented for fiscal year FY2014-2015 was \$24,563,699 representing a budget increase of 3.16 percent for the new fiscal year. Ms. Bradberry made a motion that we approve this budget request that meets State requirements and Rev. Dr. Mitchell seconded it. The final vote was 8 for and 1 opposed.

Consideration of District Five Budget

Ms. Dana Grant presented the budget for Anderson School District Five for the fiscal year FY2015-2016 in the amount of \$98,232,680 of which \$51,733,667 is identified as local funding. The budget approved and implemented for fiscal year FY2014-2015 was \$97,016,838 representing a budget increase of 1.25 percent for the new fiscal year. Ms. Grant made a motion to approve the budget request which meets State requirements and Mr. Dale Martin seconded the motion. The final vote was 8 for and 1 opposed.

Chairman Draisen stated that several of the board members and members in the audience went to the Delegation Meeting and he was very uncomfortable at that meeting. As Dr. Burgess mentioned, there is a perception about the penny sales tax that was approved by the voters as to what it is to go for. He felt that Mr. Nimmer did very well explaining the penny sales tax to the delegation and hopes that next year the millage will go down after the penny sales tax has been in effect for a complete twelve months. Many voters do not understand that the sales tax does not go towards operational expenses but only capital expenditures. It will be in our best interest to see that the millage does decrease if at all possible. Ms. Bradberry agreed that there is some confusion about the difference between bond indebtedness millage and operational millage. We need to explain the difference better than we are doing now. Mr. Nimmer added that this was part of the explanation given at the Delegation Meeting was that before the vote the public was informed that 20 percent of the proceeds off the top would be used to roll back their property taxes for debt. That has happened and will continue to happen for the life of the tax. I think one thing a lot of homeowners do not understand is that the operating millage does not apply to their owner occupied home. The debt service roll back does apply to all classifications of property. So the long term effect from this sales tax will be felt by more taxpayers than if it had been strictly an operating roll back. I want that distinction to be made and that was pointed out to the public in the meetings I was able to attend. There was that distinction made between operating and debt service millage, however, the exact wording that Dr. Burgess mentioned about there being a good chance that operating millage would increase, I don't know if that was necessarily spelled out. I think the biggest challenge in educating the public about this is to let them know the distinctions between the two classifications of property tax and for them to understand that every piece of property, real or otherwise, that is taxed in the county will see some benefit from the sales tax rollback. Chairman Draisen also added a valid point made by one of the district superintendents that: If the state was funding education as they should be; we probably wouldn't have had to raise the millage as we did this year" and he felt that was a valid point.

Ms. Bradberry addressed each district with a question regarding whether the funding for school security increased this year and which agencies they use in this role:

The Superintendent for District One, Mr. Havird, answered that funding did increase slightly mainly due to benefits and salaries. His district only hires certified law enforcement officers and trained SRO's from Williamston and Anderson County.

Dr. Rosenberger, Superintendent for District Two, stated this is our first year under contract with the towns of Honea Path and Belton and we will be using our general funds for that. There are no private agencies used. The salary for the three officers will be about \$50,000 each and the town and city will cover any other expenses. One is with the sheriff's department.

Mr. Keith Martin, Director of Financial Services for District Three, stated that last year the Town of Iva covered the high school and American Security was used for the middle and elementary schools. This year they are using the Town of Iva exclusively to cover all five schools since there is better coverage as they have jurisdiction as far as arrests, transports, etc. The cost increased about \$48,000.

Mr. Larry Young, Finance Director for District Four, answered that they have two officers from the sheriff's department with an approximate five percent increase. Pendleton High has a designated officer on campus all the time. The other officer is at Riverside Middle about four days a week and floats to the in town elementary schools if needed.

The Superintendent for District Five, Mr. Wilson, stated they are using nine county sheriff deputies at approximately \$64,000 a piece, five city officers at approximately \$45,000 each; seven from private security at about \$30,000; to assure every school is staffed. This year will be the second year using private security. Amy Heard, Chief Financial Officer, added that there will be a slight increase for county and city officers, but she wasn't sure about the private security. Private security is only used at the elementary schools and the feedback from the principals is very positive.

Administrator's Report

Joey Nimmer reported that they met with the delegation at their meeting in June. It was a lengthy, lively discussion, however, at the end, the County Board budget was passed 5/6 to 1 and the Alternative School was passed unanimously.

Financial

Tax collections are all above 100% through June 30th. There is a little bit of money that was posted in July that will be added to this. Ms. Bradberry asked if accrued taxes will be added for the next two months. She was informed that, yes, taxes will accrue through August of 2015. This is the first year in the last several that everyone reached 100% by June 30th. Assessment totals held fairly steady from May to June. The actual value of a mil changed approximately \$700 and that is a positive change. That trend continues with new automobile sales being steady.

Old Business

New Business

Ms. Bradberry made a motion to pay the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Burgess and followed by a unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Draisen.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Gary Burgess, Secretary of the Anderson County Board of Education
This is a true and correct copy of notes taken at the meeting.