

Budget Hearing/Regular September Board Meeting

Monday September 11, 2023 7:00 PM, High School Media Center

as advertised in the Pilot-Tribune/Enterprise
and on fortcalhounschoools.org

BUDGET HEARING

-Budget Hearing Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. There were 4 administrators and 11 visitors present. The president noted the Open Meeting Laws.

-Excused Absences: There were none.

-Roll Call: Mike Bonacci, Present; Josh Christensen, Present; Cassie Kelly, Present; Amanda Schrum, Present; Kelli Shaner, Present; Ted Welchert, Present. One more visitor arrived.

-Purpose of the Hearing: Information, comments and questions regarding the 2023-24 Budget. It was explained that the budget would not be voted on tonight, but information on building it will be given.

-Review of Proposed 2023-24 Budget

Expenditures: Salaries and benefits are the biggest part as they are a negotiated agreement and are straight forward. Operations have the biggest changes reflecting the extra ½ payment on the elementary gym lease payment with another one coming next year which will pay it in full one year earlier. Other increases include cleaning services, speech services, and having 2 new level 3 students who require services outside of the district with both tuition and transportation. 1 more visitor arrived. Insurance increased as premiums are based on salaries and buildings. Without these items there is only an increase of about \$65,000.00 overall. Supplies are what is needed for staff to do their jobs. Mental health support has also increased but we will be able to further help students through a grant received for mental health. The monies we put away for textbooks every year is again included. This budget also includes monies set aside for vehicle replacement. There were no changes in dues and fees. The total of \$11,565,000 is under the state's cap and we believe it covers what we need.

Revenue: Local, State, Federal and miscellaneous receipts were explained. Local receipts are mostly mandated by the state but do include property taxes, State Aid is the biggest portion of the State receipts; and grants and Special Education are included in Federal revenues with the reimbursement for special education increasing to 80% as opposed to the current 46%. Revenue of \$11,562,000 is conservative and expenses could be less-there is about a \$3,000 difference.

Levies: These are determined by the amount of asking against the local property valuation. This budget would generate enough to again reduce levies. The bond levy would be reduced by 2¢, and another ½¢ will come off the QPC fund giving back 2 ½¢ to taxpayers. A history of valuations and levies was discussed showing the reductions over the last several years. It has been a goal of the board to budget wisely and be able to give back.

-Board of Education Comments: Josh Christensen thanked all for their hard work; Mike Bonacci reiterated that the board has made it a practice to reduce the levy; and Amanda Schrum explained how when the state changed the funding formula, Fort Calhoun no longer receives equalization aid.

-Public Comments: Ken Filbert asked what this 6% means to the individual, and President Schrum said this will be explained during the meeting. Shanna Welch commented about tightening their belts and hoping the board will too. Jenny McCoy asked more about

equalization aid and was told that land and businesses in our area were such that we couldn't generate local monies and the state equalized that, but no more. The new formula gave us only about \$143,000 but neighboring districts received much more.

-Adjournment of Budget Hearing: The president adjourned the Budget Hearing at 7:26 PM.

REGULAR SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING

REGULAR AGENDA

-Call to Order: The president called the meeting to order at 7:26 PM. There were 4 administrators and 11 visitors present. The Open Meeting Laws were noted.

-Excused Absences: There were none.

-Roll Call: Mike Bonacci, Present; Josh Christensen, Present; Cassie Kelly, Present; Amanda Schrum, Present; Kelli Shaner, Present; Ted Welchert, Present.

-Approval of Agenda: Moved that the agenda be approved as presented. This motion, made by Christensen and seconded by Bonacci, Passed. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Josh Christensen: Yea, Cassie Kelly: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea, Ted Welchert: Yea

-Public Participation: There was no one who wished to address the board.

-Claims for September

•September Claims: Moved that the claims for September be approved in the amount of \$117,785.62 from the General Fund, \$456,920.56 from the Building Fund and \$824,394.31 from Savings and Depreciation. This motion, made by Kelly and seconded by Christensen, Passed. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Josh Christensen: Yea, Cassie Kelly: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea, Ted Welchert: Yea. Mr. Green explained the regular monthly bills are being presented along with the ones for items ordered over the summer to be paid in the new fiscal. Most will be paid in September and October as they all come in.

•Claim from Abe's Trash Service: Moved that the claim from Abe's Trash be approved in the amount of \$1,565.45. This motion, made by Bonacci and seconded by Shaner, Passed. Josh Christensen: Abstain, Mike Bonacci: Yea, Cassie Kelly: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea, Ted Welchert: Yea

-Consent Agenda: The Consent Agenda includes: Approval of the Minutes, Approval of the Treasurer's Report, Approval of the Control Budget, Approval of the Food Service Report, Approval of the Transportation Report, Approval of the Receipts Report moved that consent as presented. This motion, made by Shaner and seconded by Schrum, Passed. Mike Bonacci: Yea, Josh Christensen: Yea, Cassie Kelly: Yea, Amanda Schrum: Yea, Kelli Shaner: Yea, Ted Welchert: Yea

-Standing Committee Reports: No committees met.

-Discuss, consider and take all necessary action to adopt "Resolution of Vote to Increase Base Growth Percentage used to Determine Property Tax Request Authority by up to 6%": Moved that the board of education adopt the Resolution to Vote to Increase Base Growth Percentage Used to Determine Property Tax Request Authority by 6%. This motion, made by Christensen and seconded by Kelly, Failed. Josh Christensen: Nay, Amanda Schrum: Nay, Kelli Shaner: Nay, Mike Bonacci: Yea, Cassie Kelly: Yea, Ted Welchert: Yea. Mr. Green gave a presentation showing how the state comes up with the figures they use for districts to stay within the percentages of increase. It does not increase taxes, just gives districts the leeway to increase the base amount of taxing authority. Our base is 3% and with the increase it would allow for taxing

authority in the case of an emergency. If it is not used now, the percentage would not carry over to the next year. An increase would have to be built from what the state determines and not what was voted upon the prior year. If the board does not exceed the amount, it will not be asking for it. It would give the board flexibility if needed and some local control back to the board. The board doesn't want to get to a point where they would have to use it. If not passed now a vote of the people would be necessary to increase it. This is insurance against our revenue not going up or valuations going down. Kelli Shaner said the public has supported the schools in the past. Josh Christensen said it is unknown how future boards might think and could change the direction which this board is trying to take. Public support for schools was again stated and that not all districts are voting to pass it. Pauline Pechnik thanked the board for their work agreed with Christensen's remark about future boards. It is understandable to discuss how to operate without enough revenue. Jenny McCoy asked if the percent had to be 6 or if it could be less and was told yes, it could be any number up to 6%. Possibly a compromise could be made by doing this. Rosemary Therkildsen asked for an explanation of tax statements and where levies show on them. Amanda Schrum said the current levy is \$1.23 per \$100, and the proposed one would be \$1.20 ½ per \$100.

-Board Member Reports: Members thanked the audience for coming; commented on all the good things going on in the schools especially the football field and progress on the track, and the excitement of having lots of kids in the buildings and on the grounds.

-Administrator Reports:

Mr. Wemhoff reported on completed testing, professional development; the new Math curriculum; grants for additional monies to support mental health; upcoming principals' meeting and ACT testing; class rings and graduation information; and Homecoming and Parent-Teacher conferences.

Mr. Wagner reported on assessments and health screens; PFE helping fund the preschool canopy; mental health support; 6th grade position; professional development; upcoming events and conferences, frameworks surveys for staff and students and making building level goals.

Mr. Schleifer reported on Fall activities, thanked those who worked so hard to get the field done, having hired a Drama coach with auditions underway, cameras now installed for our new live video, upcoming Homecoming parade and fireworks after the Homecoming game.

-Superintendent Report: Green reported on board goals and means in progress to achieve them, an update on the track and field noting the items still needing completion, that a public meeting of the American Civics Committee is necessary to be in line with state law, and shared upcoming dates commenting that there are short timelines for things to happen.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the president adjourned the meeting at 8:17 PM.