

## MINUTES

### SPECIAL WORKSHOP OF THE JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD Friday, March 14, 2025 (7:00 AM)

#### ROLL CALL

UPON THE ROLL BEING CALLED, THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

**BOARD MEMBERS:** Chris Johnson  
Tony Pumphrey  
Michael "MJ" Jackson  
Chephus Granberry  
Rex Torbett

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Hunter Nolen, Superintendent Schools; Clay Milton, Board Attorney; Becky Hart, Deputy Superintendent; District Directors; and citizens

#### 1.0 Call to Order

##### 1.1 Call to Order

The Special Workshop was called to order by Chairman Chris Johnson at 7:00 AM.

#### 2.0 Citizens Request

**2.1 Citizens Request:** This time is set aside for the Citizens of Jackson County to address the School Board. This is not a question and answer period, nor a political forum. Personal accusations and/or derogatory remarks will not be tolerated. Comments should be limited to three minutes or less. In the interest of time, the Chairman reserves the right to limit the number of speakers on a single topic to two individuals. Please arrive prior to the meeting to complete a "Request to Speak" card. In order to adhere to CDC social distance guidelines, building and or board room access may be limited to the speaker.

No one requested to speak.

#### 3.0 Update/Discussion of Grand Ridge PreK-8 School Construction Project

Mr. Pumphrey opened the discussion stating he requested the workshop with Culpepper Construction representatives because the project is approximately \$600,000 over budget at this time and the board was promised the school could be renovated/built for the money allocated. Ellen Folsom, Finance Director, stated the unknown was the contract amount in excess of percentage for DAG when the total contract was increased. There was discussion about change orders and contingencies. Kyle Rogers, Senior Project Manager with Culpepper Construction, stated contingencies have accrued since the job began with approximately \$75,000 put back. He stated the construction project began before DOE issued their comments, which happens all the time. Mike Scaringe, Vice-President of Operations with Culpepper Construction, stated contingency modifications are a reallocation of funds. He stated there have been no change orders on this project other than tax savings back to the project, there has been no added scope, and no difference in cost projections. Mr. Nolen asked if the mini gym is part of Phase 2 or Phase 3? Mr. Rogers replied it is in Phase 2 and it is well on its way. Clay Milton, Board Attorney, asked how much the project is over with the GMP? Mr. Rogers replied we are within the construction budget. Mr. Torbett stated the change orders are difficult and seem to lack documentation. Mr. Rogers explained the GMP is an estimate and they have debits and credits to balance out the spending. One area might go over and another area might be under the projected costs. But in the end, they try extremely hard to keep everything with the GMP. Mr. Scaringe explained the contingency is a balancing account. He also stated they will start providing copies additional documents that will help explain these situations. Mr. Milton stated the additional documentation will provide clarification for the board members.

Mr. Nolen asked when is the projected completion date? Mr. Rogers stated August 2027.

Mr. Granberry asked if areas will be cut from the project? Specifically, he questioned the fencing. Jack Baker, with DAG, stated he had no knowledge other than the fencing would meet the requirements. Mr. Scaringe stated chain link fence is provided in the contract. There was additional discussion about the fencing for this project and the fencing at Marianna K-8 School.

Mr. Paul Donofro, with Donofro Architects & DAG, state the renovation of the 5 classrooms was not included in the GMP. Mr. Milton asked if any areas will be value-engineered? Mr. Rogers stated none. Mr. Johnson stated he would clarify/summarize, there is no value-engineering on this project; we did not account for the additional expense to DAG for the increased contract; the renovation of the 5 classrooms were not part of the GMP; and there is nothing else known to date. Mr. Rogers stated a GMP does not include architect costs and the project continues to stay within the GMP. Mr. Johnson asked why were the 5 classrooms not included in the project? Mr. Baker stated the classrooms were newer classrooms and were listed as an alternate. There are always hard decisions we do not like to make.

Mr. Johnson stated this workshop has been very informative and we are 18-months out from completion. We need to work hard to look at every savings and keep the construction within the GMP.

Mr. Rogers asked to make two final comments. First, he stated to Mr. Granberry the entire campus will be fenced, the campus will be a hardened campus, and it will be secure. There will be only one entrance for public access and all staff access areas will be with button or card access. Second, he stated we at Culpepper, DAG, and Donofro all work hard to save everywhere we can. He stated it is his job every day to look at and question everything done to make sure all decisions are the best for your district. He stated we don't just go through change orders and check them off, we meet and fight to make sure we are doing everything we can, every day we work hard to spend your money wisely. We get audited, just like you get audited, and we never want to be criticized about our work. Mr. Rogers encouraged the board members to give him a call and come visit the school site, stating they will be pleased with the work being completed.

Mr. Torbett asked again about staying within the GMP and no value-engineering. Mr. Scaringe explained if we see something that can save money, we talk with DAG and discuss to see what is best for the project... this is value engineering. Mr. Baker added that value engineering gets a bad rap. It is a cost-cutting method, but we always look for the best option for the best price.


Mr. Johnson said this has been really good information today and we will end up with a very nice school. Mr. Baker said until DOE revises their formulas for education construction, we will continue to fight these battles. He added that Senate Bill 110 proposal has merit and would really help. Mr. Nolen added the bill has momentum and hopefully it will pass.

#### 4.0 School Board Member / Superintendent Announcements

#### 5.0 Adjourn

The workshop was adjourned at approximately 7:50 AM.

  
Hunter Nolen, Superintendent of Schools

  
Chris M. Johnson, Chairman of the Board