

Joint Meeting:

YADKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

YADKIN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Monday, August 31, 2020

The Yadkin County Board of Commissioners met in Joint Session with the Yadkin County Board of Education on Monday, August 31, 2020 at 6:00pm in the Yadkin County Agricultural & Educational Building at 2051 Agricultural Way, Yadkinville, North Carolina. The Yadkin County Board of Education was the host for today's meeting.

Present for the meeting:

Representing the Board of Commissioners

Chairman Kevin Austin
Vice Chairman David Moxley
Commissioner Gilbert Hemric
Commissioner Marion Welborn
Commissioner Frank Zachary

Representing the Board of Education

Chairman Jennifer Hemric
Vice Chairman Sam Crews
Sharon Yale
Tim Weatherman
Lynn Allred
Tim Parks
Robert Reavis

Yadkin County Personnel

Lisa Hughes, County Manager
Tanya Gentry, Clerk to the Board
Ed Powell, County Attorney
Lindsey Cearlock, Finance Officer

Yadkin County School Personnel

Dr. Martin, Superintendent
Wayne Duggins, Assistant Superintendent
Tammy Miller, Secretary to Superintendent
Denise Bullin, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jennifer Hemric called to order the Board of Education at 6:00pm.

Chairman Kevin Austin called to order the Yadkin County Board of Commissioners at 6:00pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ITEMS

Recognition of Board of Elections 2019-2020 Student Representatives

Dr. Martin addressed those present. He recognized the 2019-2020 Student Representatives. He was glad the Student Representatives and their families could join us tonight. It was a great honor for him and the Board of Education to get to know all three of the Student Representatives. They all have such a bright future ahead of them. They are going to be successful because they are smart and they treat others with kindness, generosity, and respect. These three young people are truly well rounded. He and the Board of Education appreciates their service and will miss them. Dr. Martin called each of the students up to present them with a Certificate of Appreciation, a plaque, and their nameplate. The Student Representative for Starmount High School was Jacob Craver. Jacob Craver finished number 1 in his class and he earned multiple awards and scholarships during his four years at Starmount High School. The Student Representative for the Yadkin Early College was Samantha Anderson. Samantha Anderson graduated from the Yadkin Early College as a High Honor graduate with Associate Degrees in Arts and Sciences. The Student Representative for Forbush High School was Samuel Crews. Samuel Crews is a kind, hardworking young man who had a lot of success both academically and athletically during his four years at Forbush High School. He was well respected by the students and the teachers. These three students were chosen by their Schools to serve as Student Representatives on the Board of Education and they are the best of the best. They are going to go on to bigger and better things but they won't forget where they came from. Dr. Martin congratulated them and thanked them for their service.

Report from the County Manager & Capital Needs for Schools

County Manager Hughes addressed those present. Phase 2 of Yadkin Memorial Park will be opening up toward the end of September. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony. Phase 2 includes additional trails, a disc golf course, and primitive camp sites. The deadline for the grant for School Capital Needs is coming up. The Yadkin County School System and the County needs to work together to possibly submit an application for that funding. A School Bond may also be forthcoming from the Legislature that could possibly help meet the capital needs that the Yadkin County School System has. She asked that everyone watch for any updates

that come out that pertain to the School Bond. During Chairman Austin's year as the President of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners one of the concerns that he brought forward pertained to the number of young people who are not in school and are not working. A workgroup was put together to study that issue and a Pathways Initiative report was completed. Copies of the report were shared with those present.

Chairman Austin addressed those present. He knows that everyone here is aware of the problem with disconnected youth. Disconnected youth is statistically defined as people who are 16 to 19 years old that are not in school and are not in the workforce. As of approximately 2017, Yadkin County had the highest percentage of disconnected youth in the State at 19%. He is really concerned about the effect that COVID-19 is going to have on disconnected youth. There may be an even bigger problem on the other side of the pandemic. There are two facets to the problem. One is preventing the youth from falling into the gap and becoming disconnected. Mentoring and/or counseling programs can help keep youth from becoming disconnected. The Pathways Initiative report includes examples of programs that are working for other counties. The other facet is getting the youth that is disconnected out of the gap and into school or the workforce. With approximately 19% of our youth disconnected, that is a big problem for Yadkin County. He knows that the School System has an awful lot to do right now just trying to get the schools reopened and keep them open so he wanted to give out copies of the Pathways Initiative report tonight so the Board of Education and the School System staff can have time to read the report and think about it before the next Joint Meeting. He would love to speak with the Board of Education and the School System about ideas that Yadkin County and the School System can work on together to address the disconnected youth issue.

Reopening of Schools/Virtual Academy

Boomer Kennedy, the Director of Secondary Schools, addressed those present. The last several months were very busy preparing for the start of school in the fall. He was the head of a Reopening Task Force that was formed at the start of summer. That Task Force was made up of a big group of people who looked at a lot of different options on how to open the school year. They spent weeks coming up with plans and eventually recommended the A cohort / B cohort plan that the Board of Education adopted. They wanted to have the children in class as much as possible while keeping everyone safe. Because of the State guidelines and requirements that have to be followed, two days a week was the best they could do. All of the School System staff worked very hard to prepare the schools. New signage had to be created and put in place to promote social distancing, the proper cleaning supplies had to be purchased and new cleaning schedules had to be prepared, and they had to figure out the proper procedures to safely get the children into school and out of school while maintaining social distancing. Last week was the first week of school where children were in the classrooms and it went well. He was glad that the Yadkin County Board of Education went with a plan that put children in school because so many of the school districts around us started out with remote learning. The School System implemented a Summer Jump Start program that allowed them to test their procedures and processes prior to the start of the school year. The program had approximately 25 children who came on campus and approximately 10 children who participated remotely. They continued to serve student meals over the summer. Since March 17th they have served approximately 664,140 meals. That was made possible because the Federal Government extended the free lunch program. There has been a Virtual Academy in Yadkin County for several years but it was for high school students who needed a more flexible schedule so it was very small. One of the State requirements was that all the school systems had to offer a fully remote learning option to any student who wanted it. The Yadkin County School System was able to greatly expand their existing Virtual Academy so that it covers grades K – 12 to meet the State's requirement. The expansion of the Virtual Academy took a lot of work and coordination. Over 1,000 students are taking Virtual Academy classes. There were some bumps in the road along the way but they learned from their mistakes and overcame them. Their goal was to provide high quality education to all of the students in the safest learning environment possible and he believes that the Yadkin County School System is doing that.

Report from Superintendent

Dr. Martin addressed those present. Several committees were formed to deal with getting school started back. The Reopening Task Force was the largest one. The members did a fantastic job of getting all the things in place that were needed to reopen school. It took a tremendous amount of planning and preparation. He thanked the school leaders, teachers, instructional staff, bus drivers and all the other staff for all the work they have done since the pandemic started. He is proud of the Yadkin County School System staff. He couldn't have done it without all of their hard work and support. He is proud of the work the Board of Education has done. The Board of Education supported their recommendations and made the decision to bring students back

to school. He spoke with some of the students on the first day of school and saw how excited they were to be back. Seeing the students so happy made all the work it took to reopen the schools worth it.

Other

Robert Reavis addressed those present. He appreciates the leadership the Boards provide. He feels very blessed to be in Yadkin County and with the Yadkin County School System. He sincerely appreciates all of the work that the leadership and support staff have done. We wouldn't be going in a positive direction if it wasn't for all the hard work that everyone has put in.

Chairman Austin addressed those present. He wanted to talk a bit about the Sales Tax Referendum. The Sales Tax Referendum would benefit the entire County. There are real needs in this County and in the School System. The County and the School System does a great job of working together to do their best to meet those needs. If the Sales Tax Referendum passes the Board of Commissioners has promised the majority of the revenue from it to public safety. That is something that benefits every person who lives in the County and everyone who visits the County. There is no better way to raise additional funding for public safety. Sales tax is fair; it is something that everyone pays, whether they live in the County or not. The remainder of the revenue from the Sales Tax Referendum would go toward other needs, which would include School System needs. In the past the County has always dealt with the emergency needs the School System has had sort of on an ad hoc basis; do what we can when we can. A couple of years ago there was a need for some roof work so the County had to look at taking part of the funding from the current fiscal year and the rest of the funding from the next fiscal year. The County has had to do some scrambling and some special things to be able to meet some of the emergency needs of the School System. Having the additional revenue from the Sales Tax Referendum would take some of the pressure off and make it easier for the County to meet the emergency needs of the School System. The Board of Commissioners has shown the citizens how supportive they are of keeping taxes low and how supportive they are of the School System. He asked that anyone who has questions about the Sales Tax Referendum to please talk to one of the Commissioners or the County Manager, Lisa Hughes. The Sales Tax Referendum really is the best way to be able to meet the needs that Public Safety has. The Sheriff's Office is struggling with staff turnover and would like to have some additional staff. The Fire Departments are really struggling to get enough volunteers. They have been working really hard over the last few years and almost every one of the Fire Departments have achieved incredible ISO ratings.

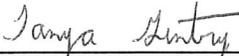
Chairman Jennifer Hemric thanked the Board of Commissioners for all of the support they give the School System. The Board of Education appreciates how well the two Boards work together.

Dr. Martin said that so many other School Systems saw budget cuts of up to 5% this year. The Yadkin County School System didn't get cut; they got approximately a 1% increase. He said he can't thank the Board of Commissioners enough for the support they have given the Yadkin County School System.

The Board of Education recessed their meeting.

Commissioner Welborn made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hemric second.

Vote: 5/0.



Prepared by Tanya Gentry
Clerk to the Board



Kevin Austin, Chairman
Yadkin County Board of Commissioners

9/21/2020

Date approved by the
Yadkin County Board of Commissioners