

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
October 22, 2024

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors convened a special joint meeting with the School Board at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2024, in in the County Manager's Conference Room, Administration Building, Henrico County Government Center, Parham and Hungary Spring Roads, Henrico, Virginia.

Members of the Board Present:

Tyrone E. Nelson, Chair, Varina District
Daniel J. Schmitt, Vice-Chair, Brookland District
Roscoe D. Cooper, III, Fairfield District
Misty D. Roundtree, Three Chopt District
Jody K. Rogish, Tuckahoe District

Members of the School Board Present:

Alicia Atkins, Chair, Varina District
Marcie F. Shea, Vice-Chair, Tuckahoe District
Kristi Kinsella, Brookland District
Ryan E. Young, Fairfield District
Madison T. Irving, Three Chopt District

Other Officials Present:

John A. Vithoukas, County Manager
Dr. Amy E. Cashwell, Superintendent of Schools
Holly Coy, Chief of Staff, Schools
Andrew R. Newby, County Attorney
Tanya N. Brackett, CMC, Assistant to the County Manager/Clerk to the Board
W. Brandon Hinton, Deputy County Manager for Administration
Monica Smith-Callahan, Deputy County Manager for Community Affairs
Cari M. Tretina, Deputy County Manager/Chief of Staff
Steven J. Yob, Deputy County Manager for Community Operations
Ben A. Sheppard, Director of Public Relations

Mr. Nelson thanked the members of the School Board for attending.

HCPS Update by Dr. Amy Cashwell

Dr. Cashwell thanked the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to present. She recognized Holly Coy, Chief of Staff for HCPS, who gave the presentation on collective bargaining. Ms. Coy provided a slide show with an overview of the information collected by HCPS staff about collective bargaining at the request of the School Board. Specifically, she provided information on 11 school boards that have pursued collective bargaining in Virginia, HCPS's unique relationship with general government, and feedback from HCPS employees through surveys and focus groups. She also discussed potential impacts of collective bargaining on staff and budgets and the paucity of data on student impacts.

Ms. Roundtree asked for additional information about HCPS employee contracts. Mr. Cooper thanked the School Board for providing the information and asked for additional information about survey responses from HCPS employees, some of which could not be provided because of anonymity. Mr. Nelson asked about the differences in the timing of the various HCPS surveys. Mr. Rogish asked about localities that had rejected collective bargaining and whether we could develop a more precise estimate of the potential costs of collective bargaining. Dr. Cashwell explained that a more precise estimate could not be developed because it would depend on how the School Board approached collective bargaining, but that most localities experienced increased costs for human resources and legal resources. Mr. Rogish also asked about the trend of declines in student population and how that factored into the discussion of collective bargaining.

Ms. Atkins expressed appreciation for the opportunity to have the dialogue and expressed her thanks to Dr. Cashwell and Ms. Coy in gathering the information. Ms. Shea stated she appreciates the opportunity to be here and stated what makes Henrico so unique is the willingness for both Boards to have open dialogue and discussions. Ms. Kinsella noted her appreciation of the process and how valuable it has been to hear from HCPS employees, particularly with the focus groups and surveys. Mr. Irving stated he looked forward to moving the County forward.

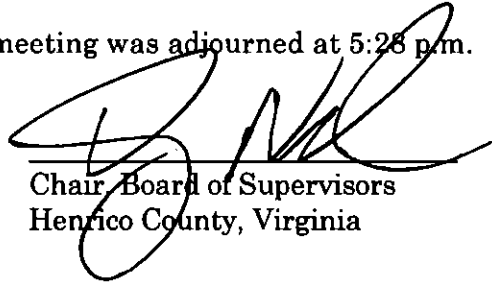
Ms. Roundtree asked for additional information about the response rates for the two surveys and HCPS employee contracts. She recognized the need for uniformity in contracts across the district and that some of the requirements in the contracts are mandated in state code. Dr. Cashwell explained the contracts were an element of concern, based on employee feedback, though most of the feedback was directed at compensation. Ms. Roundtree explained HCPS represents the majority of the County's budget and wanted to know if collective bargaining will require more funding. Dr. Cashwell explained the cost is an important part of the puzzle, but right now they can only rely on the information they have received from other districts that shared the cost increases from hiring additional human resources staff and attorneys. Ms. Roundtree asked if HCPS decides to approve collective bargaining would their staff be removed from the unified pay plan. Dr. Cashwell answered affirmatively.

Mr. Nelson asked for confirmation about the number of Virginia school divisions with approved collective bargaining agreements (five) versus the total number of school divisions in the Commonwealth (133). Mr. Nelson also asked for clarification on the HCPS employee surveys and what they included. Mr. Nelson explained he feels collective bargaining will have a major impact on the community and the County, and also expressed that he has not had any residents speak to him about collective bargaining. He also shared that the County is in a unique position with additional funding and resources and that the two Boards should work together on ways to put that funding to good use in our schools. There was further discussion from Mr. Nelson and Mr. Schmitt regarding the focus groups and the surveys with Dr. Cashwell.

Mr. Nelson voiced concerns about the ability to discuss the use of discretionary funds with administrators at schools in his district. Mr. Schmitt shared a similar concern, though Mr. Cooper noted he has not experienced any issues. Dr. Cashwell explained that HCPS is always grateful for additional funding, though they strive to maintain equity among schools and address systemic needs district-wide, as opposed to ad hoc.

Mr. Nelson once again thanked Dr. Cashwell, her staff, and the School Board for the continued conversation and looks forward to continuing to work together on making sure all of our schools are great and have what is necessary.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.



Chair, Board of Supervisors
Henrico County, Virginia