

CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL
Joint Work Session with Charlottesville City School Board
February 2, 2022
Virtual/electronic meeting via Zoom

5:00 PM WORK SESSION

The Charlottesville City Council met on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. for a joint budget work session with the Charlottesville City School Board. The meeting was held electronically pursuant to a local ordinance amended and re-enacted on October 4, 2021, to ensure the continuity of government and prevent the spread of disease during the coronavirus pandemic.

Lisa Torres, School Board Chair, called the City of Charlottesville School Board meeting to order.

Mayor Lloyd Snook called the Charlottesville City Council meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. and acknowledged that all Council members were present; including: Mayor Snook, Vice Mayor Juandiego Wade, and Councilors Magill, Payne and Pinkston.

Clerk Julia Green conducted the School Board roll call.

Dr. Royal Gurley, School Superintendent, and Kim Powell, School Chief Operating Officer, presented information on the Charlottesville City School (CCS) system and its FY2023 budget. Mr. Wyck Knox, Project Manager at VMDO Architects, also gave a presentation on the school reconfiguration project.

During the discussion, School Board members and staff proposed that reconfiguration will address concerns of equity and lower the achievement gap by improving the delivery of services, creating a comprehensive learning program model for K4 through 5th grade, addressing developmental needs at key transition points for students, provide a comprehensive Early Childhood Center which will help to meet a variety of the needs of students and their families, address issues of capacity, and aid the distribution of resources. The School Board staff was not aware of research studies that analyze the impact that school reconfiguration has on the achievement gap, but noted that the needs of the CCS is unique in regards to finding a comparable study. A School Board member referenced research studies which prove that certain elements of a learning environment, such as walls, lighting, etc., can impact a student's ability to learn. All CCS capital improvement projects for the next (3) three years are included in the schools current capital improvement plan. Additionally, the schools will utilize grant funding for all applicable projects. School Board staff confirmed that the most recent capacity study on the school system was taken into consideration within the current reconfiguration project. Mr. Knox

indicated that the alternate designs for reconfiguration that were provided in his presentation shows varying levels of reconfiguration and the cost per level; he added that reconfiguration addresses concerns of capacity in the future. The School Board explained that the cost for the reconfiguration of the Buford School does include funding to cover any expenses incurred as the preschool students use the Walker School campus during the time that reconfiguration is taking place. Dr. Gurley advised that there is an ongoing effort to minimize the achievement gap specifically in grades K4 through 3rd by addressing the issue at the instructional level. Mayor Snook recommended that any consideration of the impact that the sales tax referendum will have on school reconfiguration should be delayed until April.

Mayor Snook and School Board Chair, Lisa Torres gave final remarks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following individuals gave public comment:

1. Leah Puryear
2. Chris Meyer
3. Shymora Cooper

The School Board meeting was adjourned, immediately followed by Mayor Snook's adjournment of the meeting of City Council at 7:38 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Maxicelia Robinson, Deputy Clerk of Council