

## **SCHOOL LIAISON COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES**

**August 29, 2013**

**Members present:** Commissioners James Brummett, Carolyn Granger, Ron Berry, School Board members Rob Jago, Wade McCullough, Everett Massengill

**Members absent:** none

**Others present:** County Executive Ron Woody, Director of Schools Gary Aytes and County Commissioner Chris Johnson

**Call to Order:** James Brummett convened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Attendance sign in on the Notice of Meeting announcement: See attached

Brummett began the meeting with some brief comments about building better relationships and communication avenues between the two boards.

**Purpose of the meeting:** It was discussed that the purpose of the School Liaison Committee would be to identify how the two (2) boards could work together and to establish a tentative agenda for the scheduled September 12, 2013 meeting between the two (2) boards.

Each of the present members were asked to comment on what he/she saw as the function of the committee and what path the boards should take forward.

**Jago:** The School Board would like to have a better understanding of what information and questions the Commission would like to address. The School Board desires to provide the information that is needed to make informed decisions.

**McCullough:** The School Board would like to know how best information could be shared with the commission and public. This committee may be used to develop and ask and answer the right questions. The School Board does not want to sacrifice education programs but improve the educational product (students). Consolidation would be studied.

**Massengill:** Communication is of utmost importance. Data such as student/teacher ratio is needed by the School Board. Answering questions such as: Is consolidation good for education and the community? What are the cost factors? How does Roane County rank within the state in various statistics such as cost per student compared to other systems and Roane County's grade card. Lines of communication need to be more open.

**Aytes:** Schools are in the process of gathering information regarding aspects of cost, capacity and performance. Concerns are noted in the BEP state earning formula of why Roane County receives so much less state funds. Consolidation costs and savings are being looked at.

**Brummett:** Indicated that his thoughts were that the sentiment of Commission was not to consolidate.

**Berry:** Stated that he had served on the School Board and recognizes that both bodies have a tough job. The bodies must agree that the recommendation of any study should be seriously considered for implementation regardless of the outcome of the study. Problems have often been lack of planning and then once plans are made, not being executed. An example was the Roane County jail. Stated that this meeting was really overdue as we now have already invested \$32million (TVA monies) and we may or may not have invested in the right assets. But it is time to begin the study for the future.

**Granger:** Communication must be open between the boards as Commission supports education but research and analysis is needed to have an understanding of the program and needs. Students should be number one goal and working together should be number two.

**Woody:** Commission and the public need some type of substance in analysis. Woody recommends that the committee be the conduit for developing questions and the school administration should develop a notebook manual of data. We need to be able to point to a document instead of just verbally answering questions. The commission is accustomed to seeing written analysis and recommendation in writing. Everyone must have a document to sink their teeth into, to debate, understand and make decisions on.

**Johnson:** We must see trends of budget and analysis to be effective. Would like to see a five (5) year plan. We did not get into the financial situation overnight nor will we get out of it overnight. Education has a fundamentally good formula for success and we must continue with the formula. Revenue sources should be part of any study.

**Committee Goals:**

After discussion and comments, the committee agreed to what they see as the committee's goals:

1. Be a conduit for developing and studying the questions which should be addressed.
2. Assist in conducting the joint September 12, 2013 meeting and potential for future meeting in early spring to review and discuss information gathered during the study process.

Committee steps to accomplish their goal would be by:

1. Encouraging the County Executive and Director of Schools to meet frequently.
2. Have a monthly meeting to compile information.
3. Have the County Executive and the Director of Schools to begin formulating an agenda for the committee that would consist of the table of contents of the information book/study.
4. Adding two (2) additional members- one from Harriman and one from Kingston.
5. Noted that the September 12, 2013 meeting would be an overview of BEP and budget preparation and informing the board of the committee's goals and objectives.

**Adjournment:**

Committee adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

**Minutes submitted by:** Carolyn Granger