



E-AGENDA MANAGER

# Duval County Public Schools

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August 10, 2015, Board Member Meeting - City Council

Ms. Cheryl Grymes, Chairman  
Ms. Ashley Smith Juarez, Vice-Chairman  
Ms. Becki Couch  
Mr. Jason Fischer  
Dr. Constance S. Hall  
Mr. Scott Shine  
Ms. Paula D. Wright  
Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent

ATTENDANCE AT THIS JOINT MEETING OF THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD: Board Members Paula D. Wright and Constance S. Hall were present. Council Members Joyce Morgan, Reggie Gaffney, Katrina Brown, Garrett L. Dennis, Anna Lopez Brosche, John R. Crescimbeni, and Samuel Newby were also present.

Call Meeting To Order

[CALL MEETING TO ORDER](#)

Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 12:06 p.m.

Items To Be Discussed

[HOW THE SCHOOL BOARD AND CITY COUNCIL WORK TOGETHER](#)

Minutes:

Board Member Hall reviewed the highlights of what had been discussed at the previous meeting. She explained that all the data across the board

shows that School Board Districts 4 and 5 are the neediest areas of Jacksonville. Council Member Morgan said many in her district are experiencing the same issues.

Board Member Wright noted that what happens in the community is what happens in the schools and what happens in constituents' homes; it's all connected.

Council Member Gaffney mentioned that the school district's budget is \$1.7 billion while the city's budget is \$1.2 billion. We need to find ways to get businesses to the table; these are Jacksonville problems, not just certain zip codes.

Board Member Wright reminded the group that some issues are mostly in certain districts; mainly the African-American communities. Focus needs to be on the areas that need the most help. School Board Members want to see the city thrive and that can be done by strengthening the weakest link.

Council Member Crescimbeni reflected on the benefit of each group having a liaison between the two groups for better communication.

Council Member Katrina Brown noted how Dr. Vitti solved a teacher shortage need through The New Teacher Project (TNTP) and a similar program is needed to solve shortages within their communities such as parent involvement, jobs, transportation, etc.

Mr. Bob Arnold, Director, United Way 2-1-1, explained the purpose of the 2-1-1 System, how it works, and the different techniques they use to get the information out to the public. United Way will oftentimes partner with other organizations in the communities, such as Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA), to promote their programs. Council Members commented that using advertisements on buses going into targeted communities would also be helpful.

Ms. Monica Whiting, Chief Customer Officer, JEA, explained the different programs they offer their customers who are struggling to keep their utility bills paid. Programs range from educating customers on ways to conserve energy, making adjustments within their home that reduces energy consumption, and a "pay as you go" program that allows customers to pay money into their account up front and then monitor their energy usage during the month to be aware of when that money runs low. They also have marketing materials they can use in the communities at functions such as school open houses, homeowners' associations, and PTA programs. Unfortunately, they do have limited funds. Council Member Crescimbeni reminded everyone that as the community gets better at learning to conserve energy, JEA's revenue takes a hit and affects their budget, creating a "two-edged sword."

Council Member Gaffney had to leave at 1:00 p.m. but emphasized to the group before he left of the importance of learning what they can of these programs to assist their constituents.

The last speaker of the day was Mr. Bill Ferry, Senior Director of Government Affairs, Comcast/NBC/Universal, who explained that they, too, have a variety of programs to offer communities. The one they would most likely be interested in is the Internet Essentials Program that provides internet access and a computer at a drastically reduced rate to children who qualify for the Free/Reduced Lunch Program. Any outstanding balances the children's homes may have with Comcast do need to be settled before qualifying for the program.

As part of the Next Steps discussion, Council Member Crescimbeni mentioned that the Finance Committee would like to overhaul the economic policy. They have gotten rid of the enterprise zone concept and are attempting to attract potential businesses to areas where jobs are needed the most. Council Member Dennis noted that when offering potential employers incentives to relocate here, they should also understand we need their employees to volunteer in our career academy programs. Council Member Morgan would like a list of the career academies, such as Vistakon.

The Vistakon program is very successful and can now be used as a template for other business ventures. Board Member Wright feels if the community leaders all band together, the group can lean on businesses to locate where the community needs them. Board Members Wright and Hall emphasized the importance of our graduating students being properly prepared for the workforce.

Next meeting - October 26, 2015 - 12 noon - School Board Building Room 613

Adjournment

[ADJOURNMENT](#)

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

LBL

We Agree on this

Superintendent

Chairman