

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Educational Advisory Board
City of Plantation
Via Zoom
Held May 3, 2021

Members Present:

Andrew Dolberg
Joshua Freeman
Gregg Goldstein
Colleen Shevlin-Ramer
Michael Taussig

Members Absent:

Robin Fractenberg

Also Present:

April L. Beggerow, City Clerk
Councilmember Denise Horland
Councilmember Nick Sortal
Susanna Deutsch, Principal of Peters Elementary
Robert Schneider, Principal of Tropical Elementary

The meeting was called to order by Andrew Dolberg, Vice Chair.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 1, 2021

Minutes of the March 1, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chair Dolberg thanked Ms. Clark-Newkirk for her service and wished her well.

**NON-AGENDA
ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Motion by Vice Chair Dolberg, seconded by Mr. Goldstein, to nominate Joshua Freeman as Chair. Mr. Freeman accepted the nomination. Nominations were closed. The motion passed unanimously.

- Assignment of Schools to Board members

Mr. Taussig suggested tabling this item since this is the Board's last meeting for two months and then the vacancy should be filled.

Chair Freeman concurred.

Councilmember Horland advised that Joy Clark-Newkirk was her appointment. She has a replacement and will forward that information to the City Clerk once available.

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OLD BUSINESS

- Interlocal Agreement Update

Councilmember Horland explained the Interlocal Agreement and stated that City Councilmembers have individually agreed to reach out to School Board members to move this along.

Councilmember Sortal commented that getting the banners is probably the most important thing the City could do because it would get schools some revenue.

Vice Chair Dolberg questioned if the Council needed any help reaching out to School Board members.

In response to Councilmember Sortal, Councilmember Horland indicated that Patty Glenn was not in favor of the banners, probably because she did not know the history of the Interlocal Agreement. Lori Rich Levinson and Dr. Osgood were in agreement with the Council and they knew how long they have been trying to get the Interlocal Agreement done. Councilmember Horland wrote a letter in support of the Interlocal Agreement both as a City Council member, former Education Advisory Board member, and former PTA President. If anyone has a relationship with a School Board member, reach out and see if they can get things moving.

Councilmember Sortal commented that a concern was if the banners were allowed there would be a First Amendment issue and people could put banners all around the City, so Council wanted an Agreement with the School Board to “Defend the City from random billboards”.

Chair Freeman questioned if there was a reason why the School Board did not want to do this across the board and why a special Interlocal Agreement had to be requested between the City and the School Board.

Councilmember Horland explained that the City of Plantation has always been known for stricter zoning codes. It is a little more than First Amendment and the previous and current City Attorneys have been hesitant because it could leave the City open to legal challenges, not just with banners, but if someone wanted to put up a billboard. The Council felt the Interlocal Agreement was the proper way to go because they set some standards. She has spoken with some new School Board members and believes they will be favorable, so it is about reaching out to others to get on a School Board agenda. She urged Board members to familiarize themselves with the Interlocal agreement and make sure they are aware of the limitations prior to speaking to school members.

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Mr. Taussig suggested having an open house or something to show trades available throughout the City for high school and middle school students. This is something the School Board has taken away over the last several years and there are many hands-on jobs that are becoming a lost art form; there are good paying jobs.

Chair Freeman agreed and thinks many good paying jobs in skill trades have been lost. As far as an open house, he was not sure what the City’s involvement has been in the past.

Councilmember Sortal advised this was done a few years ago at Volunteer Park. He and Councilmember Horland will be asking Council for funds to do this. The Board has great ideas.

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Vice Chair Dolberg mentioned an idea discussed by the previous Education Advisory Board, which was to have some kind of school fair to help parents have a better understanding of things going on at Plantation schools. There are incredible vocational, language, and tech programs that are unknown. If a project were chosen over the next 12 months, in his opinion, it should be a school fair. This could be an ongoing discussion, but he wanted to mention it before going on summer break.

Councilmember Horland stated that the Board previously had two ideas. She was working on a school guide much like the one the City of Sunrise has, which was delayed because the City had to do a new ADA compliant website, but that is something she is still pursuing. With regard to Mr. Taussig's suggestion, the Broward County School Board is exposing children to careers at the High School level, so she thought something like that could be expanded if any type of open house was done. She suggested inviting the schools and City employees to talk about the different types of jobs.

Mr. Taussig commented that the open house was discussed years ago. He noted there are opportunities for internships or apprenticeships over the summer with hands on jobs that are trade related.

Chair Freeman thought both concepts made sense. He mentioned this was something his former boss, County Mayor Geller, is passionate about, and that he might like to help. Chair Freeman said this is something he is very familiar with and he thinks it is a great idea. These jobs do not incur debt; they are middle class jobs and what the economy needs to continue to grow.

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Councilmember Horland announced the City is doing another Senior drive-thru at Central Park on June 3, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Parks and Recreation will do a flyer once time slots are available for all schools, which will be sent to all Education Advisory Board members.

In response to Mr. Goldstein, Vice Chair Dolberg indicated that the past brochure was about bringing information to the Council regarding the education system. Last year there was a lot of success with Principals and Vice Principals attending the meetings and providing information. With that information, the Board can figure out what points would be helpful.

Chair Freeman questioned if it would be possible to put the brochure on the City website. He noted that he would be happy to revise the content, if needed.

Mr. Goldstein commented that he does marketing and graphic design and volunteered to revise the brochure while working with Chair Freeman.

Councilmember Horland advised that project was originally initiated by previous member Ms. Clark-Newkirk. She did not see a problem with revisions to the brochure and once complete, it should be sent to the City Clerk, who could then forward it to Administration for approval.

Mr. Goldstein thought the brochure could be condensed to a one-sided flyer.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

Councilmember Sortal spoke as a member of the public. He is hosting another Charity Virtual Concert, Plantation Palooza 2, and wants all music teachers to record a performance; let's give them the stage and honor them. This will be released the night before Memorial Day to raise money in "Take Stock in Children", which gives scholarships for kids. This will be Plantation driven and is available to all public and private schools.

Principal Deutsch advised that Peters Elementary has been doing great things. They recently had a Virtual Kindergarten Round Up and there was a video by staff. There was not a lot of participation, but the ones who attended were happy with the one on one. She invited everyone to visit the school next year to see the murals painted by volunteer staff and parents. This year's theme was "Rise Up" and five pillars were painted with the words, "Rise Up". Because the school hosts a deaf and hard of hearing program, the words were also done in sign language to include everyone. Peters Elementary is a summer school site; they will have VPK, Pre-K, the DHH program, and a Third-Grade Reading Academy during the summer. Applications are on their website.

In response to Councilmember Sortal, Principal Deutsch indicated that about 400 out of 650 students are currently in attendance, which is well over 50%. Many students came back after spring break, so there are many gaps to work with. She is working on the Title 1 budget to put money aside for afterschool camps next year. She stated it will definitely be a challenge academically and socially.

Ms. Shevlin-Ramer congratulated Peters Elementary on the 500 sets of headphones.

Principal Deutsch stated that the headphones are from the Plantation community; they have been wonderful as far as donations. With all the donations received, they will be able to give all students who come back at the beginning of the year basic school supplies including headphones.

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Mr. Goldstein commented that he told the Central Park Principal that he is on the Education Advisory Board and her response was, "I'm really glad the Education Advisory Board is back".

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Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.