

**The Maggie L. Walker
Governor's School for Government & International Studies
Regional Board Meeting**

Attendance

January 17, 2008

9:00 a.m.

Superintendents

Present:

Janet Crawley, Charles City County
Marcus J. Newsome, Chesterfield County
Stewart Roberson, Hanover County
Fred Morton, Henrico County
J. Roy Geiger, New Kent County
Richard Layman, King and Queen
Sammy Fudge, Petersburg City (Representing
James Victory)
R. Francis Moore, Prince George County
Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Richmond City

Absent:

Linda Underwood, Goochland County
Margaret Meara, Powhatan County

Others Present:

N. Douglas Hunt, Director
Joyce H. Charity, Clerk
Barbara Marshall, Deputy Clerk
Pam Brown, Intern, Richmond Public Schools

Board Members

Present:

Barbara Crawley, Charles City County
Dianne Pettitt, Chesterfield County
Ivan Mattox, Goochland County
John Axselle, Hanover County
Lisa Marshall, Henrico County
Teresa Lindsay, New Kent County
Valarie Ayers, Powhatan County
Kevin Foster, Prince George County
Lisa Dawson, Richmond City

Absent:

Kenneth Pritchett, Petersburg City

Minutes

The Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government & International Studies Regional Board Meeting

Thursday, January 17, 2008

9:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order

John Axelle, outgoing Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order.

II. Introductions and Recognition

Each Board member introduced him or herself and stated their locality.

III. Election of Chairman

Nomination: Ivan Mattox. On motion by John Axelle, seconded by Diane Pettitt, that Ivan Mattox serves as the Board Chairman. Motion carried. Chairmanship was turned over to Mr. Mattox.

IV. Election of Vice-Chairman

Nomination: Dianne Pettitt. On motion by John Axelle, seconded by Lisa Dawson, that Dianne Pettitt serves as the Vice-Chairman. Motion carried.

V. Election of Board Clerk and Deputy Board Clerk

Nomination for Clerk of the Board: Joyce Charity. On motion by John Axelle, seconded by Barbara Crawley, that Joyce Charity serves as Clerk of the Board. Motion carried.

Nomination for Deputy Clerk of the Board: Barbara Marshall. On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Dianne Pettitt, that Barbara Marshall serves as Deputy Clerk of the Board. Motion carried.

VI. Superintendents' Steering Committee

Deborah Jewell-Sherman announced that the Superintendents' Steering Committee voted Dr. Janet Crawley to serve as Chairman of the Superintendents' Steering Committee and Fred Morton will serve as the Vice Chairman. The Superintendents' Steering Committee was interested in paring school districts that send large numbers of students to the Governor's School (GS) and school districts that send a smaller number. The committee accomplished that compliment with the appointment of Dr. Crawley and Mr. Morton.

Special Recognitions:

Outgoing Board Members: Debbie Sawyer, representing the PTSA, and Doug Hunt each presented Hugh Mumford and Lloyd Jackson with tokens of appreciation for their years of service to the GS.

Other Recognitions:

Fine Arts - Sponsors: Jeff Hall, Department Chair and Art Teacher, and Georgianne Stinnett, Photography Teacher

Jeff Hall announced that the students participated in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition. Scholastic Art Competition Gold Key Winners are: Christopher Stack (Hanover) for Photography, Sarah Thrower (Richmond) for Photography and Apparel Design, and Lucy Song (Henrico) for Photography. Also, there were Silver Key winners and Honorable Mentions.

VII. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Barbara Crawley, seconded by Lisa Dawson, the amended agenda was approved. Motion carried.

VIII. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Dianne Pettitt, the minutes of the December 13, 2007 minutes were approved. Motion carried.

IX. Public Comments

Paul Fleisher – Richmond Peace Education Center

"Good morning everybody. My name is Paul Fleisher and I am here speaking on behalf of the Richmond Peace Education Center. Our Board Chair is also here with me. I want to come and speak to you this morning because I knew there were going to be some new faces around the table and we also have some new data for the project that we have been working on over the past seven years. I want to start by talking about a student, who I have worked with when I was teaching in Richmond Public Schools. Jonathan was the top student in one of the very top middle schools. He accelerated in every class you could be accelerated in – math, science, and English and so on. He was gifted in the arts – he was a trumpet player and an actor and was a student leader – starting in the 6th grade as a volunteer at the Children's Museum and he is still a now paid staff at the Children's Museum. He is just one of many very bright, very capable young people that I have worked with over the years. Jonathan was a prime candidate for Maggie Walker Governor's School. He is not here. He did not get in. He actually should have gotten in and that is true for many of the students. That's one of the reasons that I come to this project. About five years ago, Genevieve Siegal-Hawley, one of my former students, and also a Maggie Walker Alumnus, did a study for her Master's Degree at Harvard on diversity at Maggie Walker. And, since then we have continued to gather data on diversity at the school among the student population. You have before you the latest of that series of data, which includes this current freshman class. I think you will see that across the Board, over the years, if you will look at the percentage of applicants from various racial groups, particularly Black students, the school gets a large pool of applicants. However, when it comes to students who are actually accepted, the school has not done well over the years. And this Board has recognized that. This year is slightly better than several of the previous years. But there is no reason to think that that's not any thing but a statistical blip because nothing different has been done in terms of process. And you will notice, as you go across the years, the numbers go up and down a little bit. But there are consistently Black students underrepresented among the Maggie Walker population. The following sheets you will see have the numbers for your individual school districts and I am not going to go over those, which you probably will be interested in looking at how your school district is doing. With the smaller school districts, it is hard to make a generalization other than looking at the school- wide numbers because you are working with such a small pool of people. But this Board has recognized on its face, there is a problem with getting a diverse student population and most specifically, getting a representative number of Black students into the student body. People in the Black community, entering into the Richmond area recognize this. I can testify to that to my own family who had a very bright student and they chose not even to apply because they didn't feel this young man would get the kind of attention and recognition of his specific needs that they wanted for him. Although he would have been a good applicant for this school, they chose not to apply. I am concerned that this may be true with many other families as

well. The school has made some strides in addressing this issue. One of the things that has happened is that the number of Black faculty has increased. When we first started the project four years ago, there was one full-time Black faculty member. There are now three. You have a way to go yet but there has been some progress. But this is an issue that still has to be addressed. You put out a request for a proposal to have an outside agency study the problem and I would urge you to move that process as quickly as possible. There is another group of students - this year's juniors who will be affected by what that committee looks at and decide and what you choose to do with that. So, I encourage you to be expeditious. Don't let this fly for another year – you recognize that there is a problem, please push forward until you can make the changes that will move towards rectifying the problem. Thank you very much!"

X. Director's Report

a. Coming Events - See page 10 in the meeting packet.

b. Comments – None

Mr. Hunt reminded the Board that a few months ago he announced the property across the street was up for sale, has been offered to the GS for \$550,000, and will be auctioned off on January 31. The GS former Board Chair, David Ballard, has been proactive and he, along with Bob Mooney, has actively spoken to the bank holding the property's note and the individuals in charge of the auction to see what kind of offer will be accepted prior to being auctioned. It is accessed at \$360,000 - \$130,000 is for the structure on the property and \$230,000 for the land. This property, which is a little over 1.3 acres, is an ideal situation for the GS to have a softball field, physical education fields and things of that nature. Mr. Hunt noted that today he is bringing a request from Mr. Mooney, Mr. Ballard, and others interested that if they are able to secure the money to purchase the property, would the Board be agreeable to accept it? They are not asking for financial support from the Board; they only want an agreement to accept it as a gift. This purchase would create some situations for the Board, i.e. clearing the property and hopefully parents in the construction field could help with demolition. Various ways to develop the land has been discussed. One suggestion: Approach Richmond City's Recreation and Parks to see if they would be interested in putting a softball field in for their use during the summer and for the GS use at other times.

The Chairman asked for a consensus of the Board members, rather than voting, if they were in agreement to proceed and to accept the offer tentatively until more details are received (pros and cons). Dr. Robertson urged the Board to use caution in the degree of enthusiasm displayed publicly due to the potential liability associated with volunteers taking structures down. There are questions regarding the Board's potential liability, unless the developers of the property are willing to hand it over "free and clear" of any impediments. He stated that since this discussion came under the director's report, he did not perceive it as a call for action at this time.

Dr. Morton stated there are added questions such as what the tax implications are in relationship to Richmond and those kinds of connections that warrants an answer. He concurred with Dr. Robertson that caution needs to be taken and some things need to be worked out in more detail. He noted that in the past, when the GS worked on the playground, Henrico County helped GS volunteers with moving dirt, etc. and if the GS gets to the point that help is needed with hauling, Henrico County is close by and have individuals with professional training that could help out, rather than using volunteers. There are liability issues when it comes to clearing land. Mr. Hunt noted that it appears that from the ground up, it is an easy job. However what concerns everyone is what's from the ground down – what kind of disposals and where is the oil that was used on the property? He stated that Mr. Tharp, Coordinator of Administration, has already gone over the property in the back that was offered to the GS as a donation, free and clear, and found some problems. Mr. Tharp added that they plan to do the level one

environmental study so they can see what is in the soil as the GS does not want something donated and have a problem. If the GS is given the indication that this property is a good idea to explore, the preliminary investigation will be done to make sure the property is something suitable for GS use. Mr. Morton stated that if there is an indication of a consensus of the Board it helps to move things ahead without the Board having to take action until the other information is received. Mrs. Dawson stated she was unsure as to how the financing will work, but if this is something the Foundation undertakes, it needs to be taken in consideration that it will be a huge undertaking for them and they may not be able to do other things the Board would like them to do. Mr. Hunt stated \$150,000 is currently committed and a major donor has stated they would like to do something for the GS apart from the \$150,000. The GSGIS Foundation would be involved as the Renovation Foundation no longer exists. Hopefully the property would be "free and clear" of taxes as it would be owned by the Regional Board eventually. There is a two-week turnaround before the property goes public and is auctioned off January 31, 2008. The Chairman asked if a consensus is given by the Board that there is interest in proceeding forward, will this give the "go ahead" to explore options and, if more time is needed and the Board needs to meet for approval, can the process be started without having to meet prior to the next Board meeting. Mr. Hunt stated he can communicate with them that there are concerns that have been expressed at the Board meeting about soil conditions and other things involved. The Board is not agreeing to accept liability and that the appropriate things need to be done to test the soil to be sure that it is usable for students. There was concern about the amount of time involved and will this give Mr. Ballard and Mr. Mooney time to do what needs to be done? Currently one is working with the realty company, one is working with the bank holding the note, and their involvement has been approximately one week. Plans are to proceed unless the Board instructs them otherwise. Dr. Geiger's concern was that the property might be purchased and the Board decides it is not interested, is there alternate use for the property? Mr. Hunt noted this will be communicated.

Mr. Tharp reported the GS has access to the environmental company that did the study on the property and City of Richmond records will have the previous owner's purchase price. Mr. Tharp noted worst case scenario is that, if the property is purchased and it is not suitable for an athletic field, the GS needs additional parking spaces as overflow parking and it is one of the things being looked at as a possibility. Dr. Geiger mentioned that since the street is very busy, has any thought been given to access to the property? Mr. Hunt stated he has given great concern as to how it would be accessed. It would be ideal to commit someone to install a walk over, which will happen later. Mr. Axelle suggested that if the property is acquired and can't be used as intended, it could be sold later and put funds back into the GS. The Chairman asked all Board members, by show of hands, if they were willing to proceed with the receiving of the gift, understanding that there are precautions/concerns, and the Board would proceed as necessary. It was understood this was not a formal vote, just a consensus that Board members wanted to move forward with it. It was unanimous.

Announcement by Mr. Hunt: He noted that he mentioned before the possibility of the GS and the GSGIS Foundation sharing a full time employee. Money has been appropriated and the Board and Finance Committee notified. An individual will be hired as an 11 month GS employee (beginning August 1) and will handle the public relations aspects of the school. This individual will also take leadership with the GS Foundation raising moneys. By the end of January, a Manager of Community Relations and Development position will be advertised. Hopefully, years down the road, the position will become a full time Foundation position. This position is needed to work with Alumni, who are ready to donate funds into programs for the GS as they are moving into areas of their careers. Mrs. Patricia Taylor, Coordinator of Curriculum, commented that the new position would take the GS to a level beyond the contributions and small grants the GS

has been doing. The GS would now be looking at estate planning, endowments to take care of future building needs, and significant reports that have to be made back to the Community Foundation and some of the other groups. The GS had a foundation to step up this year and give a significant donation to help kick off this development-type of move to help the GS to move to the next stage. Mrs. Taylor is chairing a committee that is developing the job description and advertising the position. This partnership will benefit the GS by providing public relations services as well as raising moneys for the school.

Currently, the GS is observing ECO Week. ECO was kicked off by one of the GS Alumnus, Chad Ellis with approximately 150 in attendance on Monday night. Also, Chad spent time talking with students. The movie "*The 11th Hour*" will be shown. Mr. Hunt directed the Board to preview the coming attractions on page 10 of the meeting packet. He reminded Board members the next Board meeting is February 14.

XI. Action Agenda Items

a. Calendar of Meetings

On page 12 the Board was asked to correct the January 3, 2008 meeting date (second from the bottom) to January 8, 2009. On motion by Lisa Dawson, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the Board approved the Calendar of Meetings with the change. Motion carried.

b. New Clubs/Activity

On motion by Valarie Ayers, seconded by Dianne Pettitt, the Board approved the New Clubs/Activity as presented. Motion carried.

c. Personnel Action

Mr. Hunt announced that two GS teachers (one a Math teacher; the other an English teacher) have expressed an interest in teaching abroad. On President's weekend they will travel to Boston to participate in a series of interviews. If these teachers are selected, they will need to take a leave of absence to teach abroad. Mr. Hunt stated, considering the nature of the GS, it would be advantageous for the GS to have its teachers have this type of experience. According to policy, the Board could approve them taking a leave of absence for one year and they could reapply for a second year. At the end of the second year, they would have to return to the GS or resign their position. On motion by Lisa Dawson, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the Board approved the personnel action with the correction of Math Department instead of Science. Motion carried.

d. Approval of Fee Waiver – Read Center

On motion by Dianne Pettitt, seconded by Lisa Dawson, the Board approved the fee waiver for the Read Center to use the GS. Motion carried.

XII. Materials for Board Review

Update on RFPs

The Chairman gave the following update: A committee was comprised of the following individuals - two students, two parents, three school board members, two superintendents, two planning committee members, two Henrico County purchasing

personnel, along with Mr. Hunt and former Board Chair, John Axelle, to review the RFPs submitted. The RFP process was to evaluate the admissions' policy of the GS pertaining to the ethnic/diversity concerns that have been presented to the Board. Through the RFP process, a RFP resulted and was submitted. Three consultants applied, two were selected for interviews, and on the 9th of January the interview questions were developed. On the 1st of February the consultants will be interviewed. Mr. Hunt added that the goal of the interview process is to bring a recommendation to the Board on the 14th of February. Mrs. Ayers expressed her concern was, as a result of the interviews, what if the panel was not 100% comfortable with the two consultants. She noted her assumption was that another RFP would be submitted and a search would continue. The Chairman concurred and noted that the panel was very capable and he was confident that they would have an assessment to bring to the Board whether they select a consultant or choose not to. Lisa Dawson added that the Committee was too late to affect next year, so they have some time. Mr. Axelle stated the Committee is strong, diverse, and will be very effective during the interview process. Mr. Pettitt inquired when the Board would see the questions that included their input. Mr. Hunt informed her they were being worked on and should be received by Friday. The Chairman stated that due to confidentiality, the information would be mailed to Board members.

XIII. Closed Meeting

None

XIV. Certification of Closed Meeting

None

XV. Adjournment

On motion by John Axelle, seconded by Barbara Crawley, the meeting adjourned.
Motion carried.

XVI. Next Meeting: February 14, 2008
MLWGS Board, 2nd Floor


Ivan Mattox, Chairman


N. Douglas Hunt, Director