

Tuesday – October 2, 2012 - 3:00 p.m.
Hall Fletcher Elementary School

Joint Meeting – City Council & Asheville City Board of Education

Present: Vice-Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Councilman Jan B. Davis; Councilman Marc W. Hunt; Councilman Christopher A. Pelly; Councilman Gordon D. Smith; City Manager Gary W. Jackson; City Attorney Robert W. Oast Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Present: Chairman Gene Bell, Board Member Alfred Whitesides Jr.; Board Member Peggy Dalman; Board Member Jacquelyn Hallum; Board Member Precious Folston; Superintendent Allen Johnson

Chairman Bell and Vice-Mayor Manheimer called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed all officials for attending.

Superintendent Johnson reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Asheville City Schools Strategic Plan 2012-2015.

Mr. Kelvin Cyrus, Assistant Superintendent reviewed with Council a PowerPoint presentation on the graduation rate/achievement gap.

Ms. Cynthia Grady reviewed a PowerPoint on the upcoming capital projects at Asheville Middle School and Isaac Dickson Elementary School.

City Manager Jackson briefly reviewed City Council's Strategic Operating Plan and noted the number of partnerships that City of Asheville and the Asheville City School System are considering, or currently are engaged in that specifically address the goals City Council has outlined in its Strategic Operating Plan, specifically in the operating plan areas of Safe; Job Growth and Community Development; Multimodal Transportation; and Fiscal Responsibility.

Discussion occurred between the School Board members and City Council on what City Council can do to help reduce the achievement gap. Coming out of that discussion was the need to address the disadvantaged people in our community and get them back into the workforce. Some suggestions were holding a City Council meeting in a public housing development; rallying community support (churches, banks, non-profits, businesses, Chamber of Commerce, Mission Hospital, Buncombe County, City of Asheville, service providers) to hire our youth; think of solutions to break up the generational public housing occupants; apply for choice neighborhood initiatives; more funding for larger CAYLA, MAHEC, I Have A Dream (and the like) programs; work with employers who are willing to hire public housing employees to think of innovative ways to transport those employees to and from work; operate buses on Sundays and week nights; and encourage our youth to attend A-B Technical Community College for training to apply for new economic development jobs in our area.

There was a brief discussion after Mr. Cyrus responded to Vice-Mayor Manheimer when she asked for the definition of grade level achievement. The importance of pre-school education and parent involvement was stressed.

Councilman Hunt, liaison to the School Board, said that public education is a very high priority in our community. He suggested representatives of several organizations (City, County, Chamber and School Board) meet to try to address some of the concerns outlined.

Vice-Mayor Manheimer provided a timeline of the process of appointment of the School Board members whose terms will be expiring on April 1, 2013. Those consist of Chairman Bell (who has served 2 full terms), Board Member Al Whitesides (who has served 2 full terms) and Ms. Dalman (who has served 1 full term). Ms. Dalman was advised that even though she may request to be reappointed, she

would need to follow the same application process as those who will be applying. It was the consensus of all those present encourage highly qualified individuals to apply for the School Board seats.

On behalf of City Council, Vice-Mayor Manheimer thanked the School Board members for their services.

Chairman Bell and Vice-Mayor Manheimer adjourned the meeting at 5:07 p.m.

City Clerk

Mayor