

Current Continuations

Zoning

been completed in 2023, with the new plan due in January, 2028. Cook reported there is no assigned format for the Comprehensive Plan, and suggested the board write the draft and then provide it to Kentucky League of Cities, KLC, or possibly Murray State University for review, prior to final approval.

He noted that the city's plan had in the past included more than what was required by statute, as topics to be covered in the Plan required only Land Use, Transportation and Community Facilities.

The Board then moved on

to recruitment of board members, as the Planning and Zoning Board is required by statute to have seven members and currently there are only five on the board. Cook urged board members to reach out to citizens regarding serving on the board, and ideally, recruiting residents of the East Fulton area would balance out the board membership, as to coverage for the entire city.

Cook suggested asking residents if they cared about their community, and if so, serving on the board would provide them with information and education as to ben-

efit the city.

Cook then provided the board with an overview of his recent attendance and participation for Legal and Ethics Training in Lexington.

Cook urged the board members to utilize the city's website, with provided a link to all city ordinances, including ordinances pertaining to ethics.

He shared that discussions at the recent training included the approach of "if it feels wrong, it is wrong"; sometimes doing the right thing hurts; never disclose confidential information; avoid nepotism; abide by the

sentiment of Henry Clay, a lawyer and statesman who represented Kentucky in both the U.S. House of Representatives and served as the ninth Secretary of State, that "government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees; and both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people."

Regarding the topic of nepotism, both Cook and Lamb agreed that in a small town, nepotism is highly possible, however in the event that circumstances for which votes are taken could benefit a board member, ab-

staining would not be sufficient, as that person would be required to leave the room during the vote.

Cook noted that the duties and responsibilities of the Planning and Zoning Board do not include dealing with money or personnel.

Board members then reviewed information provided by Lamb regarding Open Records and Open Meetings statutes. He told the board that open records requests may be made to City Clerk Laura Byrd, and cautioned board members to not use communications through text, email, or other electron-

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ic devices to discuss or communicate board business, as those correspondences could then be subject to open records requests.

Open Meetings information discussed included notifications required for public meetings and special called meetings, as well as the public being able to photograph, record or video meetings.

Board members were requested by Lamb to execute the form attached to the public records and public meetings information, designating their agreement as to having been educated on that information.

FISD

regarding test score information and data analysis for Spring 2024 testing.

She themed her presentation as Celebrating Growth and Driving Improvement: A Brighter Future for Fulton.

She categorized her presentation's agenda, covering three areas, "Where We Were" which was an overview of Spring 2024 KSA scores, bright spots and challenges; "Where We Are", current student growth at the elementary, middle and high school levels; and "Where We Are Headed", strategies and initiatives for continued improvement aimed at building a stronger future for Fulton.

Kinney explained the overall designations for performance scores combine performance on the exclusive state indicators for elementary, middle and high schools, and the ratings are reported using a color rating system to communicate performance of schools, with red the lowest rating, followed by orange, then yellow, then green and blue as the highest rating.

The board was updated regarding year comparisons, 2023 to 2024, with Carr Elementary receiving a yellow rating for 2023 and a red rating for 2024, and an overall score of 57.6 and 22.6, respectively. Middle School received an overall performance rating of red both years, however the overall score increased from 22 in 2023 to 29.8 in 2024. For high school, both years, overall performance rating was at yellow and the overall score increased from 54 in 2023 to 56.5 in 2024.

Highlighting the "Bright Spots", Kinney noted an increase in reading and math at the middle school level, from 35 to 35.7, and at the high school, from 42.7 to 47.9. There was also significant growth at the high school level in Science/Social Studies/Writing, from 55.8 to 80.7.

Another factor of note Kinney shared, was the reduction in the "Novice" designation for students in elementary in science, by 6%; a reduction of "Novice" designation of high school students in reading, 12%, in science, 45% and in social studies, 38%. No high school students were ranked as "Novice" in writing.

Kinney identified key challenges as teacher retention across all grade levels, curriculum coaching and professional development on HQIR curriculum.

Moving on to the "Where We Are" portion of her presentation, Kinney provided data reflecting elementary and middle school charts portraying growth in math and reading. Each grade displayed total number of students tested, total number of students who increased, total number of students on grade level in both Fall and Winter. In elementary, each grade, with the exception of sixth grade, showed high percentages of students who increased and expanded numbers for students on grade levels.

Supt. Sullivan said the sixth grade's data showed some were on grade level in the Fall at the beginning of the year, and now, they showed not being at grade level. He said this group would be students who were at the stage

of learning to read during Covid school shutdowns. He also said conversations would be conducted with students to explain the importance of test taking.

"I know these kids are smarter than what some of these test scores show," Sullivan said, adding that implementing ways to teach students how to be better test-takers should be considered.

At the high school level, 2025 Post Secondary Readiness data shows nine of the 14 seniors are "College Ready" or "Career Ready", five qualify for Work-Based Learning and five are both "College Ready" and "Career Ready." The 2024 Post Secondary Readiness Indicator Score for FHS seniors was 39.8, and the 2025 Score Prediction is 100, plus bonus points, Kinney said.

Concluding her presentation with "Where We Are Headed" Kinney cited Instructional Excellence, which includes individualized learning plans for students, multi-tiered system of supports for targeted and differentiated interventions; and early literacy and math foundations. Data-Driven Decisions are to include using i-Ready diagnostics, analyzing KSA results and implementing data chats with students to set and track academic goals. Student engagement and College and Career Readiness and also included in the Academic Growth Plan.

In the area of student support goals, incorporated are attendance and engagement strategies, social and emotional learning and behavior supports and community partnerships. Strengthening Community Involvement will also be a key element, encouraging parent and community engagement, creating volunteer and mentorship opportunities and building a positive narrative about Fulton Independent Schools.

Shad J. Allen, CPA, PLLC, of Richmond, Ky, was present via videoconferencing, to present to the Board, the Audited Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules for the year ended June 30, 2024.

Allen's first comment to the board and those present at the meeting was "The audit is much better this time than last time."

Allen reported there were no findings in this year's audit, as compared to the previous year's audit when three findings were included.

He explained that there are actually three audits within the one presented, as one audit pertains to the district's financial statement, another required as a governmental entity, and the third, because of the district receiving and spending federal funds.

Allen reported all financial controls within the district are designed and operating effectively, as all policies in place are designed as they should be, with two parties involved in every transaction; controls tested and followed; and anything detected corrected on a timely basis.

He reported it was a "very good audit."

"Compared to the 2023 audit, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Morris (Chris Morris, Financial Officer) have righted the ship," Allen said, adding the

2024 general fund balance had decreased, but the audit was clean.

In his report, Allen confirmed there were no significant deficiencies in internal control disclosed, no material noncompliance, no material weaknesses in internal control, nor any significant deficiencies in internal control that were not considered to be material weaknesses.

He noted he audit did not disclose findings as it relates to major programs required to be reported, no findings identified in the Financial Statement Audit, and none at the major federal award programs level.

Further, regarding findings in the previous audit, relating to the district's accounting department not having a system of internal control over financial reporting that would allow it to prevent or detect and correct in a timely manner a significant misstatement in its financial statements, in the summary included in the audit presented Jan. 21, it was noted in subsequent review, this finding was corrected.

Two other findings included in the previous year's audit, pertaining to the district not compliant with model procurement and an incorrect beginning balance for the fiscal year budgeted, were both labeled in the new audit as now being corrected.

The beginning fund balance for the district was \$3,433,959, ending balance was \$1,892,713, of which \$724,189 was General Fund. There was \$92,976 in the following restricted funds: Building Fund and construction Fund. The ending cash balance was \$904,914.23 for the District.

The General Fund revenue totaled \$4,725,076.41, which primarily consists of state program funding (SEEK funding), property, utility and motor vehicle taxes. General Fund expenditures totaled \$4,107,516.83, exclusive of their financing sources. These totals include \$1,237,750.86 of on-behalf payments from the Commonwealth of Kentucky for health insurance, life insurance and Kentucky Teachers' Retirement contributions.

Ending net position for the District was \$(350,000), a decrease of \$800,000 from 2023. Changes in Net Position, noted in millions, included total revenue, -25% and total expenses, -13%.

The 2025-2026 School Year Calendar was adopted by the board on the second and final reading. The school calendar committee presented four options for consideration by the board.

Option 3 was approved, on the first and second reading. The Option 3 Calendar for 2025-2026 includes professional development days for staff Aug. 5, 6 and 7, with first day for students Aug. 11, 2025.

Sept. 1 will be an observed holiday for Labor Day; Oct. 6-10 is Fall Break; Nov. 4 is a Professional Development Day for staff; and there will be no school in session Nov. 26-28, for Thanksgiving break.

Students and staff will be dismissed for Christmas break Dec 22, 2025-Jan. 2, 2026. There will be no school Jan. 19, in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s

birthday; Feb. 16 will serve as a Professional Development Day for staff; and Feb. 27 is designated as a snow day, as is March 2. March 12, an early release will be observed for parent/teacher conferences.

April 3-10, students and staff will be dismissed for Spring Break, May 19 will be a staff work day, May 21 will be the last day for students, May 25 classes are dismissed for the Memorial Day holiday, and May 26 is a designated snow day.

After having held a work session Jan. 21, for the purpose of discussion and review of a proposed draft budget for fiscal year 2025/2026, the board approved the proposed draft budget as presented by Chris Morris, Finance Officer, and recommended by Superintendent Terry Sullivan.

However, at that Jan. 21 meeting, the draft budget proposed, while balanced, did include a 4% tax increase for tax payers. Following the working session, Sullivan said he and Morris re-examined each line item within the draft budget presented, and revised figures which reflected the difference in student enrollment between the senior graduating class and the preschool class, with the preschool class size considerably higher than the exiting seniors. With that recalculation, Sullivan said funds became available and the tax rate increase was not necessary to keep the budget balanced. SEEK funding per student, Sullivan said, will amount to \$4,238. Sullivan said he and Morris also determined, following questions from the board, that funding is available for the Gifted and Talented program, a program which initially was going to be discontinued in the original draft budget presented. The draft budget was unanimously approved by the board.

The board reviewed the report submitted by Tracy Pulley, Coordinator for The Family Connection, FISD FRYSC, and Sullivan praised the work accomplished by Pulley, through the program.

Among monthly activities listed was Dec. 5, Parent/Youth Cafe, with 37 participants; Dec. 4, 11, Cooking Club with 13 participants; Family Reading Night Dec. 18 with 69 participants; BADD Club with 14 participants; completion of the holiday connection process for TCMO, 25 students; First United Methodist Church Angel Tree, 15 students, individual donors, 12 students; notification Kare Mobile Dental Van will reschedule dates to be on site at FISD; replacement of student's broken glasses; provision of clothing and backpack for students; participation in training for pilot vape prevention program, smoke SCREEN; provision of refreshments for FAFSA workshop; creation and distribution of Dawg Bites newsletter.

Supt. Sullivan directed the board's review of the Food Service Monthly report, commending Food Service Director Ashley Teasley for her oversight, as well as her staff, for providing nutritious food to the students. Sullivan said the meals provided to the students could be the only meals some of them consume throughout the week, and

when school is cancelled for various reasons, he has concerns in knowing the students will not receive those meals. Sullivan noted that in consideration of the city's population, and the number of students provided food service through the district, 14% of the city of Fulton is fed daily by Fulton Independent School District.

Information was provided to the board which offered statistics based on the average enrollment of the district for 2023-2024, which reflected 36,262 breakfasts provided, 42,894 lunches provided, 1,942 snacks and 1,591 suppers for 306 students and 6 staff members.

Enrollment figures were provided by Amanda LeClerc, Director of Pupil Personnel, which reflected a total enrollment of 303 as of Jan. 24. Beginning enrollment Aug. 14 was 250; Aug. 30, 287; Sept. 30, 293; Oct. 31, 300; Nov. 14, 306; and Dec. 12, 306.

Sullivan said that while from December to January, enrollment decreased by three students, that same number had enrolled in the past week.

Preschool enrollment was reported at 31, kindergarten, 27, first grade, 25, second grade, 17, third grade, 22, fourth grade 21, fifth grade, 32, sixth grade, 18, seventh grade, 20, eighth grade, 20, ninth grade, 20, 10th grade, 25, 11th grade, 13 and 12th grade, 14.

Fundraising activities approved and recommended by the Superintendent were for the Junior Class, homecoming dance, Middle School Soccer program, donations toward the purchase of each player's uniform, a trivia night/silent auction ticket sale for snacks and drinks, as well

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as baskets for the silent auction, also to benefit the Soccer team and the sale of class pictures for parent of students in grades Pre-K-sixth to pay Carr yearbook expenses.

The personnel report listed the resignation of Dave Puckett, Special Education; the appointment of Kaleigh Bynum, Special Education (Long Term Substitute); and the transfers of Alexis Bannister, to Middle School/High School in-School Solutions, Tammy Crumble to Carr In-School Solutions and Eric Kerney, to Physical Education, Long Term Substitute.

The District Wellness Policy, as prepared and presented by Ashley Teasley, Food Service Director and Ashley Kendall, FISD Nurse, was approved, which includes a nutrition and physical activity report cared and public forum on the wellness plan.

In other business, prior to the adjournment of the one hour and 45 minute board session, the board approved the acceptance of Roberts Student Insurance proposal, as recommended by Sullivan, for a renewal through Berkley Accident and Health, including a \$7.5 million catastrophic policy with Zurich American Insurance Company, and the continuation of processing claims through the plan, 100% Usual and Customary with a \$1,000 limit on physical therapy, \$10,297, for coverage of all registered students, teachers, coaches and student athletes.

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www.thecurrent.press • news@thecurrent.press

Annual Subscriptions:
Kentucky Local: Fulton, Hickman, and Graves Counties: \$41.50; elsewhere in Kentucky, \$45.75.
Tennessee Local: Obion: \$41.50; elsewhere in Tennessee: \$45.75.
All other states: \$55.00

PRINTED BY OFFSET
Published each Wednesday
Periodicals postage paid at
Fulton, Ky. 42041
USPS 211-840

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to:
The Current
P.O. Box 1200
214 Main Street
Fulton, Ky. 42041

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NOTICE TO RESIDENTS OF CITY OF SOUTH FULTON RE: CITY PROPERTY TAX

City Property Taxes are due and payable to the City of South Fulton by

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2025

For more information, contact South Fulton City Hall 731-479-2151.

