

**EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND, 2018– 6:30 P.M**

Members	Attendance	April 2017- APRIL 2018	
		Present	Absent
Austin Scott, chair	P	8	0
Jessica Basi	A	1	2
Matthew Dorsey	A	4	1
Maureen S. Dinnen	P	7	1
Dale Fulton	P	4	4
Thomas Harrison	A	0	1
Deniece Jones	A	4	4
Terry Large	P	4	1
Dr. Heather Munns	P	7	1
Dr. Maureen Persi	A	4	4
Betty Shelley	P	4	4
Dr. Barbara Signer	P	6	2
M. Elaine Wilson	A	4	4
Natasha Wilson	A	3	4
Dr. Allen Zeman, vice-chair	P	5	0

**Appointed Members to the Board: 15
Needed to constitute a quorum: 8**

Staff

Junia Robinson, Staff Liaison

- I. **Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – Chair, Austin Scott**
- II. **Moment of Silence for Marjory Stoneman Douglas**
- III. **Attendance by Roll Call – Chair, Austin Scott**
- IV. **Determination of quorum**
- V. As of this date, February 22nd, there are 15 appointed members to the board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum. At this time, there is a **quorum**.

MOTION by Ms. Betty, seconded by Dr. Zeman that the said minutes for January 18th, 2018 be approved. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Current Business

A. Board Discussion

Chair Scott opened the discussion and suggested that the board discuss the top 3 top goals voted on at last month's meeting. They were:

- Define the need and propose a process for establishing a City Charter School
- Conduct feasibility study of school counseling
- Expand formal schools volunteer programs across the City

The other item for discussion Chair Scott shared for discussion was "what role we can have after what happened at Douglas". Ms. Dinnen said "just a little bit of information the last day of the legislative session is March 09th". She continued by saying "there is a large bill that's passed the House it's called HB-7055 and there are things in the bill that I have great objections to but the problem I have is they have tied it to the funding". Ms. Dinnen said "if you are in favor of the funding you are kind of roped into being in favor of the items in the bill". Ms. Dinnen wanted to alert the board and encouraged members to "keep your eye on this bill".

She also announced on the March 08th there will be a meeting at Stranahan about their building progress.

Dr. Zeman proposed that the board talk about the goals and then reserve the balance of time to talk about Parkland and Marjory Stoneman Douglas.

Chair Scott asked "looking at those three goals the question would be what is the next action item to move them forward?"

Dale Fulton said "I think we need to do some ground work before we go looking at anyone else and there's a lot of research that I don't know if we've examined the research on Charters, I guess I would like a little clarification on the wording of the goal".

Dr. Zeman responded by saying “the conversation was that it’s really important for the city to define what needs there might be for a charter school”. He continued by saying “too often other cities have run a spiritual quest to get a charter school as opposed to saying we’re concerned about a city education system that lives in a county’s system mandated by the constitution of Florida, but there are strengths and weaknesses of our city program”. Dr. Zeman then said “the one step that we’re concerned about in a charter need is the important first step. Rather than saying the goal is to have a charter school, the first goal is what is it that we can improve in that small eco-system as part of the county system that would be solved by having a charter school. “In other cities/counties they have done it by defining their needs first they’ve included section of the city that is underserved, places where the infrastructure is crumbling, places where it’s very, very difficult to retain teachers like Maureen. They get teachers as good as Maureen but they only stay a few years and role on”. Dr. Zeman explained “the idea was instead of chasing the goal of let’s get a charter school in Fort Lauderdale like there are 19 others in Broward county; let’s first make sure that we study what we really want first, so that then if the idea of what a charter could do would match that need then we would be able to go forward as a board”.

Dale Fulton said “some districts are totally charter in Georgia, I ran charter in Montgomery county, I have a great background in this I was concerned about the work of that goal”. He continued by saying “in reading that I felt that the cart was before the horse”.

Ms. Maureen Dinnen said “I also think we should take a look at the Florida Charter School Law, which may be very different from the other states and also the practice that is going on and there are some changes in the legislature right now to how they are establishing charter schools and how the money is being distributed”. She continued by saying “along with Lesly Brown, who was herself was a principal of a charter school and a lady named Jody Perry who reported to the Board on charter schools and the various

rules and regulations”. Dr. Zeman asked if Ms. Dinnen recommends the board speaks to these two individuals. She replied, “Yes”.

Dr. Signer said “in addition to what was said the need and purpose, the impact on other schools needs to be specifically stated”.

Ms. Betty Shelley said “the City did look at charter schools at one time. I was on the committee; they spent a lot of time looking into it. In fact it was going to be where the Science museum is, a lot of work went into it and it was just found that it wasn’t practical at that time”. She continued by saying “so many of the teachers are anti- against charter schools right now a big portion of them , I had some meetings with them and it all has to do with money and how much money that is being given to charter schools”.

Dr. Zeman said “ the research and discussion with other people ought to allow us to take an assessment of where we are at now and where we think we have the capacity to grow what we need over the next 20 years versus what we have now and where we don’t have the capacity to grow to meet the needs. I think it will give us the chance to advocate for the students”.

Dr. Zeman explained “I think this board can actually be a highly functioning mature board to set the conditions for either proposing that to the Commissioners or deciding intentionally that it’s not a good idea for the City of Fort Lauderdale because it’s not the right tool to meet the needs that we have”. He shared “I love that part of our charter which is, we get to look at things that matter, we get to formulate an informed opinion and then go to the Commission as their Board and say: look we have spent a considerable amount of time and energy on this, we brought a lot of experts in, we’ve done our research and what we believe Charter schools will or will not fill a hole we project in the existing system”.

Dr. Zeman stated “I believe the study of innovation will be good for this board”.

Ms. Dinnen said “if we are looking at Fort Lauderdale needs, what are the holes? If we do research on that, when we find out it is good to inform the School Board and maybe they might address some of those”.

Dale Fulton said “the questions I would start with for the City in reference to the holes, by level schools in Fort Lauderdale the empty seats, the magnet programs, the special programs, the empty seats and how many people trying to get in special schools as an indication of what people are looking for in a school.

Dr. Zeman proposed “we don’t invite anyone to talk to us yet and that when we do we invite people for very specific purposes”. He continued by saying “there is a mountain of data available to us already that can answer questions like you have”.

Dr. Zeman suggested the board make a motion, that for the next couple of months we talk to ourselves in our monthly meeting, bring our own research in, try and compile almost like a legal case all of the foundation knowledge that we need to have about knowing the Fort Lauderdale school eco-system. He continued by saying “Junia told us in March we have the City Manager and the contractor that did the survey coming in. That’s going to be very valuable to us, that’s part of our foundation but I would try and reserve the second half of March’s meeting for us to talk to each other about what we have learned in the past month and set the agenda for the next month as well”.

“The limit we have”, Dr. Zeman explained, “is that the board cannot do work together”.

Chair Scott said “it’s very difficult to do and the other limit, I would mention and it’s just because you alluded to it , is that you mentioned in speaking to the School Board individually. You can individually, like we speak to our Commissioners and city schools and Principals, I’ve been told in the past we can’t represent ourselves wearing the city hat”.

Dr. Zeman replied by saying “I have an answer for that, I talked to the City Staff, we have to ask permission at the previous meeting”. He continued by saying “let me make a motion”.

MOTION by Dr. Zeman, seconded by Dale Fulton, that for the next two months we don’t invite any additional speakers so that we can focus on

building our knowledge about the demand and gain knowledge about the City of Fort Lauderdale education ecosystem.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Signer said “in our research, I think it’s important that we also gather data on students with special needs. I think that population or whether it’s true or not the perception is that charter schools take you know the cream of the crop or whatever and I think we need to see will charter schools meet the needs of students with special needs”.

Dr. Zeman asked “over the next 30 days, who would be interested in doing a little background reading research so that we can come back in a month and inform the board about what we’ve learned about the City of Fort Lauderdale education. He continued by saying “I would love to do it over the next month and would love to do it with anybody, including people Junia who are not here to join us but I can’t ask them if they are not here”. Dr. Zeman asked “would you, Dale”? He continued by saying “anyone else have some free time that would like to participate”? Dr. Signer asked that he be more specific.

Dr. Zeman explained that there’s a research group at the School Board and he proposes that “x people engage school board staff to try and find out as much as we can about the education of students in Fort Lauderdale”.

Maureen Dinnen agreed to join the group and said “I would like to have a more clear idea about the parameters of Charter schools”.

Dr. Zeman announced “so far on the team are Dale, Maureen and Allen”. He continued by asking “anyone else want to donate some time”? Chair Scott volunteered.

MOTION by Dr. Zeman, seconded by Maureen Dinnen, that Maureen, Dale, Austin and Allen be empowered by this board to represent the board in gathering data from the Broward County School Board to come back in a month and inform us about the education of students in the City of Fort Lauderdale.

Chair Scott suggested talking about the other 2 goals that were on the top of the list. Chair Scott said, “expand formal schools volunteer program across the city, most people don’t know the School board has that and so does the City and that’s why we said expand. The feasibility study, he continued “on school counseling would segue right into our topic of the Stoneman Douglas item”.

Terry Large said “my idea was making education like a community mental health, you would have the counselors and the social workers talk to faculty and students and make home visits to the families with the student at home and bring back any home or behavioral issues and bring them back to the school”. He continued by saying “I would be willing to talk to a middle school in Fort Lauderdale and find out how many students they have, if the Principal would be willing to do this, if we got the funding to do it”. Mr. Large explained by saying “create some type of proposal based on what their numbers are and how many staff it would take”. He said again that he would volunteer to do this.

Dr. Zeman asked if there would be someone who would like to volunteer to assist Mr. Large. Ms. Dinnen suggested the counselor on the Board (Natasha Wilson). Dr. Zeman stated she would be able to give good insight and provide questions, related to the topic. Chair Scott also agreed to be a part of this group.

MOTION by Dr. Zeman, seconded by Ms. Betty Shelley that Austin, Terry and Natasha be empowered by our board to represent us at a middle school and find some foundational information about this idea for improving counseling.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

In addressing the 3rd goal, Dr. Signer said she has volunteered with Take stock in children and Reading pals and “so they are very successful programs and I think we may not want to recreate the wheel”.

Dr. Heather Munns stated she would be interested in learning about the needs of the schools. She continued by saying “I would be part of that

committee over the next month trying to learn what are the other needs that maybe these volunteer programs are not supporting”.

Ms. Betty Shelley stated “the City Jorg Hruschka, has a great volunteer group and they go out and do a lot with schools”.

Mr. Large suggested sending out an email or letter to all the Principals and just asked them “what volunteer program they would like if any at their school”.

Dr. Zeman proposed to change the wording to “what programs do you have now and what needs could be met by volunteers”.

Dr. Zeman suggested Dr. Signer call or email on behalf of the board and ask “what are the programs they have right now and where is your unmet need at your school for which volunteers would be traumatically qualified”. Dr. Signer agreed to “take on the task”. Dr. Munns also volunteered to this task.

MOTION by Dr. Zeman, seconded by Dr. Heather Munns, to contact appropriate Administrators in all Fort Lauderdale schools and solicit information about existing volunteer programs and unmet needs that could be met through volunteers.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Scott said “how do we want to frame the discussion about what our role is and how we can help in a wakeup call response to last week's disaster”.

Dr. Zeman started the discussion by saying “ I was alarmed to learn that there is a pinnacle to what happened at Marjory Stoneman Douglas to every middle school and high school in the City of Fort Lauderdale”. He continued by saying “ for 2 years the school board has been ordering Principals of the Fort Lauderdale middle and high schools to not conduct active shooter training in City schools. Dr. Zeman explained, “The reason they ordered them not to do the training is that they wouldn't allow any active shooter training in a Broward county School that didn't go through a Broward county public school approved curriculum”. Dr. Zeman said “the bureaucracy is now putting our students at risk, On January 2nd, the Chief of the Fort Lauderdale Police sent a letter to every school Principal saying we volunteer to do active shooter

training on your school”. Dr. Zeman said “ today is February 22nd and there’s been zero response and zero training”.

Communication to Commission

MOTION by Dr. Zeman, seconded by Ms. Maureen Dinnen, the City of Fort Lauderdale Education Advisory Board is concerned with the safety of City students. In particular, students in Fort Lauderdale have been made aware of the active shooter threat through the tragic events at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School. We recommend the City Commission direct the City Manager and the Fort Lauderdale Chief of Police, in conjunction with Broward County Public School and the Broward County Sheriff’s Office, conduct active shooter refresher training in all Fort Lauderdale schools as soon as feasible.

B. City Staff update

Junia announced the March 08th facilities meeting at Stranahan High school at 5pm. She also announced at the March 15th EAB meeting, the Special Survey on education will be presented. City Staff and the City Manager will be in attendance for this meeting as well.

Junia read the email from Dr. Persi and it read:

*“Dear Junia,
I was wondering ,if at the EAB 's pleasure at the February 22nd meeting, they would consider having you prepare a petition sign in sheet relative to the above subject, that each board member could work on getting names, email, addresses & phone numbers due back to submit to the Commission at our March 15th meeting? These signatures from our friends, family, neighbors etc...could be passed on to those who are planning to March on Washington, DC on March 24th to honor our 17 neighbors who were massacred at Marjorie Stoneham Douglas HS.*

*Respectfully,
Dr. Maureen J. Persi*

Chair Scott said “ the last thing we want is to have anything where we can’t come to a consensus”.

VII. New/Future Business

VIII. Closing

**Next Meeting
April 19th, 2018**