

CITY OF WESTLAKE



MINUTES - DRAFT

Education and Youth Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 6:30 PM

Westlake Council Chambers, 4005
Seminole Pratt Whitney Road Westlake,
Florida 33470

This meeting took place at the Westlake Community Center/City Council Chambers located at 4005 Seminole Pratt Whitney Road, Westlake, Florida, 33470 and publicly viewed Via Communications Media Technology.

Members of the public participated in the meeting through electronic means and may access as follows:

1. Join the Webex meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone at the following link: <https://cityofwestlake.my.webex.com/>

Meeting ID: 132 064 8992 (UPDATED MEETING ID)
Password: hello

2. Participants may also dial in using your phone with any of the following number(s):

United States Toll: +1-408-418-9388
Meeting ID: 132 064 8992 (UPDATED MEETING ID)

A meeting of the City of Westlake's Education & Youth Advisory Board was held on Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 6:30 PM., at the Westlake Community Center, 4005 Seminole Pratt Whitney Road.

As a preliminary matter, Ms. McNeil noted that Board Chair Julie Acevedo, Board Members Jennifer Bermudez, Lisa Liriano, were present physically. Board Members Robin Medvetz and Wesley Logsdon provided previous notice that they would not be in attendance. Alternate Board Member, Earle Wright, was present physically.

Board Liaison: Vice Mayor Katrina Long-Robinson is present via electronic technology communication [*arrived 6:45 PM*].

Staff members physically in attendance: City Clerk Zoie Burgess Deputy City Clerk Jomekeyia McNeil and City Attorney Pam Booker [*arrived 6:38 PM*].

Ms. McNeil identified the guest speakers on the Agenda, Attorney Ella Gilbert, Senator Lori Berman could not join us this evening and we have her staff joining us. Ms. Abby Ross and Daniel Delagrange present via electronic communication. Ms. Linda F. Edgecomb, Principal Golden Grove Elementary School and Darline Karbowski, Principal Acreage Pines Elementary present physically.

Ms. McNeil provided further instruction regarding public comments, noting that comments will be acknowledged by the Mayor and accepted at the appropriate times as indicated in the Agenda and those who wish to speak may use the "virtual" hand raise feature.

Ms. McNeil provided the disclaimer that the meeting is being recorded by both voice and video, reminding the audience that microphones are live.

Ms. McNeil further explained that microphones will be muted; audience members have the ability to unmute themselves and anyone that has called in should mute their device. Ms. McNeil noted that anyone causing a disruption or being inappropriate will be removed from the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bermudez called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present and constituting a quorum were:

Board Member Jennifer Bermudez
Board Member Julie Acevedo
Board Member Lisa Liriano
Alternate Board Member Earle Wright

Also, present:

Pam E. Booker, Esq., City Attorney
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC, City Clerk
Jomekeyia McNeil, Deputy City Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Bermudez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OATH OF OFFICE

- A. Earle Wright, Alternate Board Member

Chair Bermudez introduced item.

Ms. Burgess administered the Oath of Office for Alternate Board Member Earle Wright.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Liriano to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Board Member Acevedo.

UPON ROLL CALL:

Chair Bermudez	YES
Board Member Liriano	YES
Alternate Board Member Wright	YES
Board Member Acevedo	YES

With all in favor, motion carried without dissent (4-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

This section of the agenda allows for comments from the public to address the Board. Each speaker will be given a total of three (3) minutes to comment. Please address Board from podium, and prior to addressing the Board, state your name and address for the record.

Ms. McNeil noted that no public comment cards was received prior to the meeting.

Ms. McNeil gave the virtual participants a moment to raise a virtual hand or unmute their devices and provided a reminder to state name and address.

There being no further comments, the next item followed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. January 28, 2021 - Education and Youth Advisory Board Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

Chair Bermudez introduced the January 28, 2021 Minutes.

Motion by Board Member Liriano to approve the Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2021, seconded by Alternate Board Member Wright.

UPON ROLL CALL:

Board Member Liriano	YES
Alternate Board Member Wright	YES
Board Member Acevedo	YES
Chair Bermudez	YES

With all in favor, motion carried without dissent (4-0).

PRESENTATIONS

A. Discussion/Presentation - Education and Legislation (15 minutes)

Presented By: Ella Gilbert, Esq.

Chair Bermudez introduced Presenter Attorney Ella Gilbert.

Attorney Ella Gilbert introduced herself and presented a PowerPoint presentation on Education and Legislation.

Ms. Gilbert provided an overview of the Florida Legislature; Legislative Committees on Education; 2021 Education Priorities and Advocacy Tips.

B. Discussion/Presentation S.B. 200 - Student Retention (15 minutes)

Presented By: Senator Lori Berman

Chair Bermudez introduced Presenter Abby Ross.

Abby Ross, Legislative Assistant of Senator Lori Berman District 31 noted that Senator Berman was not able to attend to due to traveling. She provided an overview of S.B. 200 Student Retention.

Ms. Ross explained how bills come forward before the Senate. She advised that S.B. 200 was created by Senator Berman and explained the purpose of the bill. She said that the bill would only apply for students in grades K-8. She mentioned that the bill was recently revised in the Appropriations Committee to include the teacher and principal in conjunction to the decision with the parent. She mentioned that the goal is to have the student placed on a year customization plan in order to bring the student up to speed and provide a little special attention with the teacher along with extra resources. A parent would have to submit a written request to the principal no later than June 30th; then a discussion would take place.

Chair Bermudez inquired if the parent has the ultimate decision making for retention of the student.

Ms. Ross acknowledged that based on her understanding, the parent has the final decision.

Ms. Acevedo inquired if parents in high school have the same option to retain a student.

Ms. Ross responded that there were some concerns around holding back students' in high school in order to play an additional year of sports and legitimate concerns of students sticking around to play. She advised that she can find out and follow up with the Board.

Linda Edgecomb 1181 Oakwater Drive- Ms. Edgecomb inquired if there is criteria for parents to use. If so, can this information be forwarded to the schools in order to be proactive in mitigating to bring the student closer back to grade level therefore the student would not have to be retained.

Ms. Ross explained that there is no criteria, and parents would need to submit a written request.

Mr. Wright asked for clarification on the June 30th due date and wanted to know the logistics for the date as students are well in the summer by this time.

Ms. Ross advised that the reason for this choice is due to the delayed school year and school ends on June 18th. In the past, the numbers for retention are in the single digits as the goal is not to have many students need this, but we want to provide that option.

Chair Bermudez inquired if the bill supports retention in multiple grades.

Ms. Ross responded that she believes the way the bill is written it applies, but she will find out and advise the Board.

Ms. Acevedo inquired if the bill applies to students attending virtually as well as brick and mortar.

Ms. Ross responded she believes it applies to both.

Ms. Edgecomb inquired if the decision is final once made.

Ms. Ross advised that she will check if the written request can be withdrawn. She noted that there cannot be any mid-year promotions if the child catches up as the decision is final.

Darline Karbowski, 5948 Buttonbusch Drive - Ms. Karbowski commented the concerns on the education piece. She advised that it has to be looked at as a global piece.

Ms. Ross said that she will take this information back to Senator Berman. She advised that the Board could reach out to staff and Senator Berman.

C. School Update/Overview - Golden Grove Elementary School (15 minutes)

Presented By: Linda F. Edgecomb, Principal

Chair Bermudez introduced presenter Linda F. Edgecomb.

Linda F. Edgecomb, Principal Golden Grove Elementary School thanked the Board for allowing her to share the work that is taking place at the school. She acknowledged the elected officials of the City of Westlake, Ms. Marica Andrews, Regional Superintendent Dr. Long, Ms. Bishop and Ms. Karbowski and the great residents of the City.

Ms. Edgecomb noted Golden Grove's theme of Building a Stronger Bridge between Home and School. She advised that we provide all the support along with academics. She provided an overview of the Demographics; School Safety; Academic SEL; Student Celebrations; Extracurricular; Community Engagement & Communication, and District and State Recognition. She advised whatever it takes we make it happen and we have a lot going on in the mist of all that is happening. She advised the Board if they want to come by the school and take a tour they can.

Mr. Wright inquired how 83% of students are attending brick and mortar on campus as high schools are not seeing such numbers.

Ms. Edgecomb responded that if a parent says that they want their kids back into school, provisions are made for the student to return.

Further Board discussion.

D. School Update/Overview - Acreage Pines Elementary (15 minutes)

Presented By: Darline Karbowski, Principal

Chair Bermudez introduced Presenter Darline Karbowski

Darline Karbowski, Principal Acreage Pines Elementary provided an overview of Acreage Pines Elementary. She noted that there are 19 schools under one (1) superintendent; 529 students back in school that is 78% of the student population; she mentioned that the school has a total compacity of 552 students; the Choice Programs offered; the percentage of Exceptional Student Education (ESE); the two inclusive Pre-K Programs; the four (4) Autistic classes offered and stated that over 20% of students that attend Acreage Pines Elementary are from Westlake. She mentioned that the school has a full guidance team that is able to support our students; how the Penny Sales tax was utilized. She said that keeping our students safe is a priority and students have been doing a great job of social distancing. Tomorrow is "You Day" at school, it is a day in which the students are allowed to celebrate their individually and activities they are involved in outside of school.

Mr. Wright inquired if Acreage Pines Elementary is the only school in the area for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK).

Ms. Karbowski responded Loxahatchee Groves has a VPK program as well.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There being no Unfinished Business to approve, the next item followed.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Selecting a Youth Member Representative

Chair Bermudez introduced the item.

Thomas Karbowski, Student at Seminole Ridge High School introduced himself. He advised that he resides in Westlake and sees the change taking place in the community. He would like for students and parents to know that education in the right way is for everyone.

Ms. McNeil inquired if the Board would decide on the Student Representative based on the applications set before the Board. She said that it is up to the Board to extend the timeframe in order to allow for more students to apply. She advised that the Student Youth Representative Application packet was provided to the Dr. Reid- Thomas at Seminole Ridge High School to distribute to students.

Ms. Burgess noted that the Board has the option to offer fair play to other students to come in for an interview.

Chair Bermudez inquired if it can be opened up to the community.

Ms. McNeil responded yes. It can be advertised on the City website as well as sent out to the community as well.

Ms. Burgess asked for clarification as to whether the Board is seeking additional students or does the Board want to bring back the students for the applications that were received.

Chair Bermudez responded she wants branch out to the community to allow students to apply.

Mr. Wright commented that three applications is a small sample size.

Further Board discussion.

Mr. Wright advised that he was not aware that the application had gone out for students to apply.

Ms. McNeil noted that the application was sent over to Seminole Ridge High School on February 16, 2021.

Ms. Liriano asked if the application was advertised on the City website initially.

Ms. McNeil advised that it was only sent to the high school.

Ms. Liriano commented that the application should be advertised on the City website.

Ms. McNeil confirmed that it will be advertised on the City website and to the community per the Boards direction.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/REPORTS/UPDATES

Chair Bermudez opened the floor for comments, reports, updates.

There being no further comments, reports, updates the next item followed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Bermudez adjourned the meeting at 7:51 PM.

Ms. Burgess commented that the Board does not have a meeting date set for the next meeting.

Ms. McNeil advised that students will be out for spring break the week of March 15th - 22nd.

There was discussion by the Board on the next meeting date.

Ms. Burgess said that the application can be extended for two weeks to allow the students to apply after the break.

Ms. Bermudez requested for the meeting to be scheduled for April 22nd in order to allow the students time to apply.

Ms. McNeil confirmed the meeting date of April 22, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

There being no further business, Chair Bermudez adjourned the meeting at 7:54 PM.

Jomekeyia McNeil, Deputy City Clerk

Jennifer Bermudez, Chair