

## APPROVED MINUTES

### BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

Tuesday, May 25, 2004

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, Maryland, met in open session at 4:37 p.m. at Greenwood. President James R. Sasiadek and the following Board members were present: Miss Francesca Cirincione, Mr. Thomas G. Grzymiski, Mr. John Hayden, III, Dr. Warren Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Janese Murray, and Ms. Joy Shillman. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, and staff members were present.

President Sasiadek reminded Board members of upcoming functions for May and June 2004. He also announced the NFUSSD Conference, which would be held in October 2004. Board members interested in attending are to contact Ms. Stiffler.

Mr. Hayden entered the room at 4:42 p.m.

Ms. Ettinger entered the room at 5:06 p.m.

At 5:18 p.m., Mr. Kennedy moved the Board go into closed session to discuss personnel matters and to conduct matters related to the negotiations pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, §10-508(a)(1) and (a)(7). The motion was seconded by Ms. Murray and unanimously approved by the Board.

### CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Mr. Nevett Steele, Jr. provided information to Board members on a matter dealing with contract language.

Mr. Arnold entered the room at 6:03 p.m.

Mr. Randy Grimsley, Executive Director of Human Resources, reviewed with Board members personnel matters to be considered this evening.

At 6:44 p.m., Ms. Murray moved the Board go into executive session to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation, a personnel matter pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, §10-508(a)(1). The motion was seconded by Mr. Hayden and unanimously approved by the Board.

At 7:08 p.m., Mr. Grzymiski moved the Board adjourn for a brief dinner recess. The motion was second by Ms. Shillman and approved by the Board.

### OPEN SESSION MINUTES

The Board of Education of Baltimore County, Maryland, met in open session at 7:48 p.m. at Greenwood. President James R. Sasiadek and the following Board members were present: Mr. Donald L. Arnold, Miss Francesca Cirincione, Ms. Phyllis E. Ettinger, Mr. Thomas G. Grzyski, Mr. John A. Hayden, III, Dr. Warren Hayman, Ms. Jean M. H. Jung, Mr. Michael P. Kennedy, Ms. Janese Murray, and Ms. Joy Shillman. In addition, Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent of Schools, and staff members were present.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The open session commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, which was led by Spencer Schultz, Cockeysville Middle School student, followed by a period of silent meditation for those who have served education in the Baltimore County Public Schools.

Dr. Hairston requested clarification on the public comment process for this evening's meeting. Due to the number of speakers for tonight, Mr. Sasiadek stated that both constituent groups and public speakers would be allotted three-minutes to address the Board. He also noted the change of order regarding public comment. Those individuals who signed up on the "public comment" sheet would speak first, followed by the public comment, or second reading, on the 2005-2006 Proposed School Calendar.

### MINUTES

Hearing no additions or corrections to the Open and Closed Minutes of April 20, 2004. Mr. Sasiadek declared the minutes approved as presented on the website.

Mr. Sasiadek informed the audience of the previous sessions in which Board members had participated earlier in the afternoon.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hairston announced that on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Office of English and Reading in collaboration with the Community College of Baltimore held their 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Creative Writing Forum. Nationally recognized poet this year was Mr. Greg Williamson from Johns Hopkins University. Students participated in creative writing workshops, open microphone reading, and poetry reading and book signing by Mr. Williamson. Dr. Hairston acknowledged Board member Michael Kennedy, who attended the forum.

Dr. Hairston also reported that on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the English Department held its annual reception at Cockeysville Middle School to honor those who won the annual writing contest. This event is sponsored by The Baltimore Sun. The reception honored student winners from 11 high schools.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (cont)

Dr. Hairston announced that on May 22<sup>nd</sup> the first annual BCPS Elementary School Science Fair was held at New Town High School. Dr. Hairston recognized Dr. H. B. Lantz and the Office of Science for their support. He also commended parents for their enthusiasm and support of the children.

Finally, Dr. Hairston shared with the Board that as a result of the legislative act, the Master Plan would be updated to be fully aligned with accountable measures with regards to funding. The review would be a five-year comprehensive analysis to determine how boards of education and their budget align with the goals and objectives and strategies for improving student achievement, established processes and procedures to collect budget information. Dr. Hairston stated the expectation is to ensure funds are used to meet the goals, objectives, and strategies. He noted updates to the Master Plan are needed to include the required information. Revisions to the Master Plan including full accounting measures must be completed by August 2004.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

On motion of Ms. Ettinger, seconded by Mr. Hayden, the Board adopted a Resolution honoring Miss Cirincione for her service as student member of the Board for 2003-2004. She was presented with the Resolution and flowers from her colleagues on the Board. Francesca's parents were present for the recognition.

OLD BUSINESS

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Ms. Jung, the Board approved the Special Education Plan for 2004-2005.

Dr. Hayman raised concerns regarding the disproportionate number of African-Americans in general, in particular African-American males, who are in the Special Education program. He noted this disproportionate number could be the inability to differentiate between behavior and special needs. He noted the need to address the issues in this area to reduce the disparity.

Ms. Ettinger inquired about staffing needs in areas where there is an increase in population. Mr. Boone responded the staffing plan is a set of recommendations that is based on a snapshot of enrollment from October 31. He briefly reviewed the process, which is similar to the population issues process used in regular education. Ms. Ettinger asked what happens when resources are limited and the need still exists. Mr. Boone responded that leadership has made available those resources when needed for special education classes. Ms. Ettinger expressed the importance of communicating to parents so they understand the system's approach and process. Mr. Boone indicated a meeting has been scheduled with citizen advisory groups to discuss the special education staffing plan.

When asked about staffing needs in special subject areas, Mr. Boone stated the process is similar to regular education.

## REPORTS

The Board received the following reports:

- A. **Report on Special Education** – Dr. Lou Barber of Lou Barber and Associates commended Dr. Hairston and his staff for undertaking this study. Dr. Barber provided a brief summary of the independent evaluation of Baltimore County Public Schools' Special Education Program. He noted that site visits were made at 20 high schools, middle schools and elementary schools, as well as the four special education sites. Approximately 40 focus groups were held, 4 parent input meetings were held, and approximately 100 documents were reviewed. The report includes a comprehensive listing of commendations and recommendations related to the areas of inquiry.

Various commendations from Dr. Barber included:

- Providing a high level of staffing in the areas of support from school psychologists, school nurses, and counselors.
- Development of an excellent Staffing Plan, which details the programs to be provided by the school system.
- Excellent communication with parents.

Dr. Barber highlighted various areas of recommendations:

- Align special education with general education -- special education should be part of general education and not a separate system.
- Compliance issues -- over-representation of African-American males in special education classes; and the use of cluster programs to provide services to children with disabilities in placements outside of the home school.
- Implement strong accountability for carrying out school-based plans.
- LRE Supports and Services – Develop and systemically implement a Comprehensive LRE Implementation Plan across the school system.
- Certain schools did not meet AYP because of special education – BCPS needs to bring about aggressive changes to improve the achievement outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Professional development activities are based upon a comprehensive needs assessment of all personnel.
- Foster home placements – Changing demographics and an influx of children living in foster care. Study the impact of foster home placement and develop recommendations on how these students should be made to feel welcome within their home school. Foster placement could require more time, more resources, and is costly.
- Continue to improve the recruitment process for employing highly qualified special education personnel.

REPORT (cont)

- Records do not follow students
- Although the school environment at many schools was clean, neat, and inviting, other schools exhibited an environment that was not welcoming.

Ms. Ettinger expressed appreciation to Dr. Barber for the time taken to speak with parents and staff to complete the study.

Mr. Grzyski inquired about the number of outside placements and monies spent on those placements. Since there are control agencies beyond BCPS who control staff, Dr. Barber recommended BCPS project the needs of children who's IEPs may change during the school year. He suggested conducting a trend analysis on resources and develop a report based on those analyses. BCPS has 509 students in non-public placement as of October 31, 2003. Mr. Grzyski asked in what particular areas the school system should focus. Dr. Barber responded autism looks like an area that could grow and expand. He commended BCPS on its Infant and Toddlers Program.

Mr. Kennedy asked whether some students in special education classes could not be mainstreamed. Dr. Barber responded some children may need more support than in a general education classroom.

Mr. Kennedy expressed his concern that movement to mainstream schools could have an affect on safe school environment. Dr. Barber responded the first item that must be provided to students is a safe school. He emphasized that real data is key to learning the concerns and addressing those concerns.

In regards to group homes, Dr. Barber recommended taking a look at matching the student to the staff support, program, and counselor when determining which school to place children from group homes. Dr. Barber suggested BCPS get some assistance from the legislature.

Mr. Hayden inquired of Dr. Barber the cost associated with changing the structure from cluster focus to home schools. Dr. Barber responded the school system should not move children without adequate preparation and planning. He stated there would be some initial higher cost in the beginning; however, it would be more cost effective in the long run. The school system needs to look at those programs that are successful and maintain those successes.

Ms. Ettinger asked Dr. Barber his perspective regarding class size. Dr. Barber responded BCPS resources are scarce. He noted the system needs to use its resources wisely; for example larger class sizes for core programs. Dr. Barber stated teachers need to be prepared to handle the children with whom they are working.

REPORT (cont)

Dr. Hayman summarized the recommendations discussed this evening:

- Over-representation of African-American males as well as over-representation of white males.
- Systemic issues with special education as well as general education
  - Change needed in culture and attitude
  - Demographic changes
  - Professional development program does not meet the needs of teachers and students
  - Records do not follow students
  - Group home issues

Dr. Hayman asked the Board where we go from here. He commended the special needs community for bringing the issues to the table and advocating for all the children. Dr. Hayman stated the Baltimore County Public Schools is a great school system for some students but a terrible system for a lot of students. Dr. Hayman also thanked Dr. Barber for echoing his concerns. Dr. Barber responded that BCPS has a great system and the leadership and staff to succeed.

- B. **Report on Proposed Policy 1270 (First Reading)** – Ms. Arlene Fleischmann, Director of Professional Development, noted the policy revisions bring the language in alignment with State requirements that all schools have a parent/guardian/family involvement policy, and federal regulations under *No Child Left Behind* require schools to have a parent/involvement policy for Title I funding. She also noted the changes are aligned with goals 6 and 7 of the *Blue Print for Progress* and the Master Plan. Ms. Fleischmann recognized parents, citizen advisory group members, and staff that worked on the revisions.

Regarding item 5 under the guidelines, Dr. Hayman would like to amend the words “schools decision-making” to include more than involvement on school improvement teams. He also recommended separating decision-making and advocacy.

Dr. Hayman asked if there was an Office of Parent and Community Involvement. Ms. Fleischmann responded the Department of Professional Development has parent/support services, which is a parent development component of professional development. Dr. Hayman suggested the system consider an Office of Parent and Community Involvement for a direct line of communication.

- C. **Report on Proposed Policy [4144] 3143 (First Reading)** – Ms. Barbara Burnopp, Executive Director of Fiscal Services, noted the policy revisions bring the language up-to-date and placed the policy in the correct section of the manual.

REPORTS (cont)

- D. **Report on Proposed Changes to Policy 5550 (First Reading)** – Ms. Jean Satterfield, Executive Director of Student Support Services, noted two changes to the policy: moving bomb threat from a Category II to Category III, and added “exchange of money for counterfeit purposes” under Category II entitled “Offense.”

PERSONNEL MATTERS

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Ms. Ettinger, the Board approved the personnel matters as presented on Exhibits G, H, I, and J. (Copies of the exhibits are attached to the formal minutes.)

CONTRACT AWARDS

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Dr. Hayman, the Board approved items 1 - 14 (Exhibit K). Mr. Kennedy pulled item 15.

1. Consultant for EEO and Employment Law Professional Development
2. Contracted Services – Auctioneering Services
3. Contracted Services – Interpreter For The Deaf and Hard of Hearing
4. Contracted Services – Lease Renewal for Pulaski Park Drive
5. Contracted Services – Programming Services (extension)
6. Audio-Visual Equipment
7. Financing – School Buses
8. Food Service – Food Products
9. Food Service – Paper Products
10. Food Service – Small Wares
11. Food Service – Uniform Shirts
12. Printing – School Calendars
13. Snack Vending
14. Software – Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS)

CONTRACT AWARDS (cont)

Item #15

Mr. Kennedy asked for clarification of this item. Mr. Fannon responded the contract is for replacement and repair of telephone equipment in administrative offices in schools. Mr. Kennedy suggested conducting a study of the number of phone lines in the schools. He voiced his concern about not having phones in each classroom.

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Dr. Hayman, the Board approved item 15.

15. Telephone Supplies and Equipment (extension)

BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee, represented by Mr. Kennedy, recommended approval of items 1-8 (Exhibits L through S). The Board approved these recommendations.

1. Award of Contract – Science Room Renovations at Loch Raven High School
2. Award of Contract – Science Room Renovations at Perry Hall High School
3. Award of Contract – Science Room Renovations at Pikesville High School
4. Award of Contract – Science Room Renovations at Woodlawn High School
5. Award of Contract – Roofing Replacement and Masonry Repair at Food Services Warehouse
6. Award of Contract – Boiler Replacement at Western School of Technology
7. Award of Contract for the Hazardous Material Abatement at Sparrows Point Middle/High Schools
8. Award of Contract – Fire Alarm Systems Upgrades at Cockeysville Middle School, Loch Raven Academy, and Western School of Technology

Regarding the new road at Featherbed Elementary School, Dr. Hayman expressed his disappointment that construction had just begun and the work would not be completed this school year. Mr. Cassell stated the project would be completed when students return in the fall. Dr. Hayman requested an update on major construction projects.

### DELETION OF POLICIES 6164.6 AND 6164.7

Mr. Boone noted that both policies were adopted on November 21, 1968 and the language is antiquated. It is very important to note that the deletion of these policies in no way implies or involves any change in the level or quality of hearing and speech services to our students. In fact, these services are guaranteed in other more current BCPS policy and/or in federal and/or state laws, making policies 6164.6 and 6164.7 redundant and unnecessary, as well as outdated.

On motion of Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Ms. Ettinger, the Board approved the deletion of Policies 6164.6 and 6164.7, INSTRUCTION: Speech and Hearing.

### INFORMATION

The Board received the following as information:

Revised Rule 1270 – Community Relations: Parent/Family Involvement

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Sasiadek made the following announcements:

- The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education of Baltimore County will be held on Tuesday, June 8, 2004, at Greenwood. The meeting will begin with an open session at approximately 5:00 p.m. After the Board adjourns to meet in closed session, followed by a brief dinner recess, the open meeting will reconvene at approximately 7:30 p.m. The public is welcome at all open sessions.
- The Baltimore County Board of Education will meet for a public hearing to seek public input about FY2006 Capital Budget needs in Baltimore County Public Schools on Thursday, June 10, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. Sign-up for the public to comment will begin at 6:00 p.m.

### STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Mr. Sasiadek reminded speakers to refrain from discussing any matters that might come before the board in the form of an appeal, as well as any personnel matters. Mr. Sasiadek clarified that all speakers will be allotted three minutes to speak.

Ms. Maggie Kennedy, Chair of the Baltimore County Education Coalition, shared with the Board the number of students who will be attending college in the fall. The coalition will host a summer retreat to develop the goals and plans for next year.

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS (cont)

Mr. Michael German introduced himself as the new President of the Baltimore County Student Council for the 2004-05 school year. Michael is a junior at Perry Hall High School.

Ms. Kelli Nelson, Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Special Education, expressed her objection to the allotted time difference without prior notice. Ms. Nelson introduced newly elected Vice Chair, Mr. Carl Bailey, and newly elected chair Ms. Jasmine Shriver beginning in September 2004. She noted there was nothing surprising in the special education report presented this evening. Ms. Nelson expressed concern over the LRE information and the support needed to meet federal compliance. She commented the recommendations must be embraced by everyone in the system.

Ms. Vicki Schultz-Unger, Coordinator of the Area Educational Advisory Councils, announced her attendance at the meeting last week at Randallstown High School. She commended the principal for an excellent job in presenting the challenges and assets of that school. Ms. Schultz-Unger noted the joint area educational advisory councils met to discuss the issues brought out in the special education audit. Finally, she noted the June meetings would involve elections and planning for next year. Ms. Schultz-Unger recognized Meg O'Hare and Boyd Crouse who would be stepping down from their job as chairs.

Mr. Michael Moore, Chair of the Central Area Educational Advisory Council, noted his attendance at the Randallstown High School meeting. He trusts that something practical and long term comes out of the meeting. Mr. Moore shared his concern over the achievement gap that exists in the central area.

Mr. Boyd Crouse, Chair of the Southeast Area Educational Advisory Council, thanked Mr. Crum for representing the Southeast Area throughout the year. He shared with the Board themes that came out of the recent area educational advisory council meetings. One theme was the revitalization of the Southeast area communities. Mr. Crouse stated the school system needs to maintain the quality of service while the communities are going through change. The second theme was overcrowding of high schools. He stated the community is concerned and is looking for a resolution that would maintain integrity of schools and programs. Mr. Crouse asked the Board for guidance and help in approaching this issue.

Ms. Meg O'Hare, Chair of the Northeast Area Educational Advisory Council, stated she has enjoyed serving the children of Baltimore County as chair. Ms. O'Hare noted she would continue to serve as a member on the advisory council. She stated there has been positive growth in Baltimore County.

Dr. Ella White Campbell, Chair of the Minority Achievement Advisory Group (MAAG), applauded the school system for its support at the meeting held at Randallstown High School. She stated additional support for the schools in the Randallstown area would fall under the umbrella of the UDAT Education Steering Committee. This committee would involve Baltimore County, BCPS, and Northwest Hospital.

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS (cont)

Dr. Campbell announced the next meeting of MAAG on May 27<sup>th</sup> with the topic of discussion being agency-placed students. Dr. Campbell introduced Mr. Nick Aquino, member of the Minority Achievement Advisory Group, who thanked the Board for working with all communities. Mr. Aquino is working with children all over the United States through JOBCORP.

Mr. Michael Franklin, President of the PTA Council of Baltimore County, recognized various schools and staff members who received awards at the PTA Council's Annual Awards Ceremony. On behalf of the PTA Council, Mr. Franklin thanked these schools for their participation and hard work.

Ms. Cheryl Bost, President of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County, noted the special education report was very informative. She was pleased to hear that Dr. Barber spoke to teachers and brought to light some of the areas of concern teachers have placed continually. In regards to new appointments and transfers, Mr. Bost noted teachers set high expectations for leaders. A leader engages teachers and parents and shares decision making; works with teachers and parents to maintain consistent behavior expectations; provides teachers with adequate resources to perform their jobs; seeks input to design appropriate professional development; treats all staff members with compassion, respect and a sense of professionalism; utilizes the talents of the professionals and staff in their community, and seeks parent involvement. Teachers are eager to work with their new leaders. She also congratulated Francesca Cirincione for an excellent job this past year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Gordon Watkins, a Baltimore County resident and a Baltimore County Community College teacher in the continuing education department, stated racist attitudes with BCPS staff have occurred five times in a three-year period. He noted these attitudes handicap his ability to complete his task of educating the students. Mr. Watkins stated no action has taken place to correct this issue. He stated that unless action is taken, a lawsuit would be filed.

Ms. Cheryl Vourvoulas, a teacher at Norwood Elementary School, addressed the Board about schools not having air conditioning. She noted students have valiantly endured the heat by working in the dark with shades pulled shut and completing work by sitting on the cool floors. Ms. Vourvoulas stated her classroom registered 89° before noon with the heat index being 95°. For security reasons, the new school's windows can be opened only four inches and ground level doors must stay closed. Ms. Vourvoulas requested the Board formulate a reasonable heat index policy that is healthy for teachers and students.

Ms. Jan Thomas, a representative of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Special Education, noted the Special Education Staffing Plan references the *Blue Print for Progress* and Master Plan. It assumes knowledge by the reader that may or may not be there. She requested a synopsis be placed in the appendix of the staffing plan to help guide individuals to the specific pages within the Master Plan. She voiced her concern that the special education staffing plan

PUBLIC COMMENT (cont)

does not reflect occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech language, hearing impaired, cluster leaders, and central office. Ms. Thomas noted there are 1800 employees in the operating budget for special education; however, only 1600 are reflected in the plan. She is dismayed this plan does not reflect as much data as in past plans. Ms. Thomas also stated the plan is missing a year-to-year analysis of the success of previous plans.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED SCHOOL CALENDAR 2005-2006  
(Second Reading)

Ms. Mary Pat Kahle, a member of the calendar committee, stated she was not in favor of the proposed school calendar. She voiced her opinion that BCPS should not continue its practice of countywide days off in honor of the Jewish holidays. These days are not state holidays or state school holidays. Ms. Kahle noted it was reported to the calendar committee these two holidays are not in Baltimore County policy. As the diverse immigrant population increases in Baltimore County, Ms. Kahle stated it behooves BCPS to remain faithful only to those holidays designated by the State of Maryland. She noted there should be great tolerance and a liberal attendance policy for any student who feels compelled to be absent in order to celebrate their religious holidays. Ms. Kahle also expressed her concern over the number of half days for elementary and middle school students and the interruption of instruction time. In her opinion, these half days exist only because they can. She stated continuing this practice is foolish and that parents are tired of it. In closing, Ms. Kahle suggested that the calendar committee be ongoing throughout the year.

Ms. Rushdam explained the two Muslim holidays to Board members. These days would help children in their spiritual and moral development. She requested the Board recognize these holidays so students would not miss tests or be marked absent.

Ms. Nagat reiterated what the previous speaker had stated. She stated if other religious holidays are identified on the calendar then Muslim holidays should also be recognized.

Mr. Nael Al-Abdulla believes strongly in the importance education. He requests on behalf of his children that the Board consider placing the two Muslim holidays on the school calendar as official holidays. As individuals the community needs to work together to build a peaceful and wonderful society. Recognizing Muslim holidays is how we start.

Mr. Mustafa Shabazz stated a benefit for moving from Howard County to Baltimore County is the diversity of people in the community and within the school system. Ms. Shabazz stated that adding the Muslim holidays could help teach children about diversity. In regards to calendar scheduling, Mr. Shabazz referenced an article that appeared on the Anti-Defamation League website. He noted there are miscellaneous days on the calendar and suggested scheduling and coinciding these miscellaneous days with the Muslim holiday.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED SCHOOL CALENDAR 2005-2006 (cont)

Ms. Nabiea Rahamar, a student at Johns Hopkins University, questioned why the Muslim holidays cannot be considered an official holiday on the school calendar while other religious groups are recognized. She is asking the Board to consider placing the two Muslim holidays on the calendar.

Dr. Bash Pharoan stated the issue is of fairness and equity. Dr. Pharoan voiced his opinion that the decision made under a previous administration was wrong and needs to be corrected. He requests the Board to treat both communities fairly and equally. Dr. Pharoan asked the Board to vote "yes" to return the calendar back to the calendar committee and add the Muslim holidays.

Ms. Zainab Makhzoumi, a former BCPS student, stated the decision would impact every student in the school system. She stated the recognition of religious holidays is two-fold. First you give children the day off to respect their spirituality and religion. Second, it allows other students to realize that Muslims are part of the community and society.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:20 p.m., Mr. Arnold moved to adjourn the open session. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hayman and approved by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joe A. Hairston  
Secretary-Treasurer

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