Breaking News!! Breaking News!!!! School Board Extends Superintendent's Contract for One year!!! School Board Extends Superintendent's "Executive Team" Contracts for another year-On Split Vote!!! With ZERO Discussion!!! Eye Witness Report by Robert A. Williams

The Cleveland County School Board held two secret closed-session meetings at their August 9, 2021 School Board meeting. One secret meeting was held before the regular School Board meeting actually started and another secret meeting was held at the end of the regular meeting. Both of these meetings were illegal according to North Carolina law.

North Carolina law strictly regulates secret/closed meetings to a very limited scope that is clearly defined by NC General Statutes. Closed meetings have to begin in sessions open to the public by a Motion to go into Closed Session and the specific General Statute that regulates that Closed Session must be specified in the motion made to go into Closed Session. Also, all meetings of governmental agencies must include a prior notice to the public in accordance with specific notification requirements also regulated by North Carolina law. In addition, no action can be taken in Closed

Session. Anything decided in a secret or Closed session must be voted upon in open session.

The first Closed Session, started at 4:00 PM, was held before the Regularly Scheduled Open Session Meeting actually started at 6;00 PM. That meant that particular Closed Session Meeting was not opened in a “legal” Open Session, as there was no public notice at all-as required by NC Law, that the 4:00 PM meeting was going to be held in the first place.

The Second Closed Session was improperly and illegally entered into under an incorrect section of the North Carolina General Statutes. The sections of the law quoted for the purpose of the second closed session was allegedly to preserve attorney/client confidentiality. But the real purpose was to extend the contract of both the Superintendent as well as the Superintendent’s “Executive Team” contract for another year-all other terms of the contracts were the same as before. Nothing for the attorney to even speak about. Also, the NC General Statutes specifically states that just because an attorney is present in a meeting is not a basis for a closed session. Again, the actual reason for a Closed Session under the law must be met, whether or not a lawyer is present.

It was 8:35 PM. by my watch, when the School Board went into this second illegal closed-session. It was 9:24 PM when the School Board came back into Open Session. The School Board had decided that there were two things that needed action. To be approved by a vote by the School Board.

This is what the Motions were and the School Board Vote:

1.A Motion was made and seconded to extend Superintendent Stephen Fisher’s Contract for an additional year. There were no other changes to the Original Contract. The vote Passed 9-0 although Danny Blanton had some questions that were never answered by Chairman Robert “Luke” Queen.

2.A Motion, upon the recommendation by CCS Supt. Stephen

Fisher, was made and seconded to extend the contracts of the Superintendent's "Executive Team" for another year. The vote passed by an 8-1 split vote majority. Board Member Danny Blanton was the lone vote in opposition.

There was no discussion in Open Session about this vote. However, as the School Board voted to approve in Open Session what was discussed in Closed Session, by North Carolina Law the minutes of the Closed Session are immediately rendered as public records. I will make immediately file a Freedom of Information Act/NC Public Records Law request for these Closed Session Minutes as well as for copies of the original contracts that were extended. For both the Superintendent and the Superintendent's Executive Team. I will provide these records to the public as soon as I receive them.

As for the rest of the August 9, 2021 School Board meeting, I will cover that in another article.

Editor's Note: The five new School Board members elected in the 2020 Elections, Robert "Luke" Queen, Joel Shores, Ron Humphries, Rodney Fitch and Greg Taylor-all Republican RINOs-have just completed the breaking of every campaign promise that they made to get themselves elected. They are all up for reelection in 2024, if they survive elected office until then. Democrats Phillip "Poodle" Glover, Coleman Hunt and Dena Green-along with Republican Danny Blanton are up for reelection in 2022. We will talk about this aspect as election times get closer, In the meantime, I recommend Conservatives presently registered as Unaffiliated to re-register as Republican in time for the 2022 and 2024 elections. And the most conservative amongst you to plan to run for the School Board. It is unlikely that any Democrat can win a County-wide Election in 2022 or 2024 as voter turnout is likely to be at record highs and the vast majority of us are tired of the Defeated Democrats and the RINO Republicans that replaced them.