

**SNEADS TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL WORKSHOP
DECEMBER 13, 2022**

The Town Council of the Town of Sneads, Florida, met in a special workshop at the Sneads Assembly of God on Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Mike Weeks called the meeting to order with the following present:

Mike Weeks, Tony Money,
George Alexander, and Angela Locke, Council Members
Daniel Cox, Attorney
Lee Garner, Town Manager
Mike Miller, Police Chief
Sherri Griffin, City Clerk
Danielle Guy, Deputy Clerk

Also present were:

Jackson County School Board
Grand Ridge Town Council

And the following were absent:

Donovan Weeks, Council member

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

This was a special workshop with the combined councils/ boards of Sneads, Jackson County School and Grand Ridge to discuss the relocation/ possible closure of Sneads Elementary to Grand Ridge K-8 School. Sneads Council President Weeks opened the meeting stating his preference to be a new school be built here in Sneads where there is already infrastructure in place. He then asked for opening comments from the JCSB and GR.

JCSB Chairman Chris Johnson went over details leading to the decision for the change in location from the Four Points area to Grand Ridge, reflecting some of the problems encountered with the land purchased in the Four Points are with environmental and soil conditions, along with other additional expenses in site preparation.

JSCB Attorney Clay Milton discussed the procedures taken by the School Board and conditions from the FDOE for the funding process of the new school. He also reported that as a result of consultation with the FDEP FRDAP program, the prior suggested use of sports complex area at Grand Ridge was not feasible due to repayment of prior FRDAP expenses, or the need to construct like facilities at local expense, or not use them for the school. Due to the expense of either of the above proposals, the School Board is no longer considering use of the FRDAP improved area and will utilize land south of the school for parking and loading/unloading areas.

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Sneads Town Attorney Dan Cox made comments regarding his exploration of the funding process, demographics of school attendees, questioned transportation procedures, and discussed the fact that Sneads has a Police Department, Ambulance on site, Fire Department and could support a new school, if constructed in the Town limits, much better than Grand Ridge. He also stated that there was adequate land available from State resources in Sneads that could accommodate the new school and felt sure a plan could be worked out for the School Board to obtain already near shovel ready location.

Sneads Town Manager Lee Garner stated in his research and request for information from the JCSB; he can find no record of the School Board providing draft copies of the Tentative District Educational Facilities Plan to the Town of Sneads for review for the past five (5) years as required by state statute 1013.35(C), in which all the reported change in location of the school was contained, and the first time the Town knew of the change in location from Four Points to Grand Ridge was on November 22, 2022, when he read an announcement in the newspaper of the meeting previously held in Grand Ridge. He also stated some information on the demographics of the school attendees, apparent concern by parents of a combination of Pre-K and elementary school, with larger and older children, asked about more details of transporting the children and time spent away from home. He stated throughout his comments that from the time of his employment with the Town of Sneads which was August 20, 2020, until recently, every comment or discussion regarding the school was that it was going to be constructed on the 160 acres purchased at Four Points and never had Grand Ridge mentioned. He did say he was concerned even more to learn the land purchased was annexed into the Town of Grand Ridge in May 2020.

Mr. Garner thanked the Deputy Superintendent Cheryl McDaniel for her cooperation in providing responses to requests for records contained in a public records request and that he had received a large stack of responses tonight and had not had a chance to review this data but would soon and would determine what else might be requested.

Mr. Milton responded to some of the comments made by Town Manager, along with Chairman Johnson, with a few comments from Superintendent Benton who stated all this occurred before he came into office. All stated the FDOE funded they asked for in the initial request from several years ago was for a Pre-K to 8th grade facility and under the current agreement, that is the facility that would have to be constructed, or the Board would lose the funding.

Public Comment:

Amy Glass, Teacher from Sneads Elementary School had made a request to be heard. She read a prepared statement regarding the current situation and requested that school remain in Sneads as currently structured and the school as currently structured in Grand Ridge remain, with some needed upgrades to each school. She stated that out of the fifteen years the State of Florida has been issuing letter grades, Sneads Elementary has been the most "A" graded school and is the best school in the county. If it is not broken, why fix it? She also had comments regarding combining the two schools together and the problems this would cause with all the ages on the same campus.

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Miranda Baggett and Jason Johnson both spoke briefly.

There being no other comments from those present.

Council President Weeks adjourned the meeting at 5:55 pm, with notice to all present that the regular December council meeting of the Town of Sneads would follow in 10 minutes.

Respectfully Submitted,



Danielle Guy, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED:

MIKE WEEKS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT