

MINUTES
Joint City of Sarasota Commission and Sarasota County School Board Workshop

MEETING: May 8, 2018

School Board: Bridget Ziegler, Chair; Jane Goodwin, Vice Chair; Shirley Brown, Eric Robinson; Caroline Zucker

City of Sarasota: Shelli Freeland Eddie, Mayor; Liz Alpert, Vice Mayor; Jen Ahearn-Koch, Commissioner; Hagen Brody, Commissioner; Willie Charles Shaw, Commissioner

LOCATION: Sarasota City Hall – City Commission Chambers

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
Welcome and Introductions	Mayor Shelli Freeland Eddie welcomed the Sarasota County School Board Members, Superintendent, and in the audience, members from Sarasota High School.
Explanation	<p>The Sarasota County School Board and City of Sarasota Commission requested the scheduling of a Joint Sarasota County School Board/City Commission Workshop to discuss the closure of School Avenue. At the April 16, 2018 City Commission meeting, the Mayor and City Commissioners also requested the inclusion of additional items for discussion. These included school security, vocational/technical training program in north Sarasota, and other matters.</p> <p>Based on discussion between School Board staff and City of Sarasota staff, the items will be discussed as follows: 1) School Avenue; 2) The SRO Program; and 3) Suncoast Technical College presence in North Sarasota</p>

	Based on the above, any action required by the School Board will be placed on the May 15, 2018 School Board Meeting for consideration, and any action required by the City Commission will be placed on the May 21, 2018 City Commission Meeting.
Agenda Items	Presentation and Discussion Re: Closure of School Avenue, School Security, Vocational/Technical Program
Presenters	<p>Marlon Brown, Deputy City Manager (City of Sarasota) Scott Lempe, Assistant Superintendent/Chief Operations Officer (School Board) Kathie Ebaugh, Planning Director (School Board) David Jones, Principal – Sarasota High School Ryan Chapdelain, General Manager (City of Sarasota) Todd Bowden, Superintendent</p> <p>Marlon Brown presented the topics to be discussed to the Commissioners and Board Members: Closure of School Avenue, the SRO Program, and Suncoast Technical College presence in North Sarasota. Materials had previously been distributed to the School Board Members and Commissioners for the meeting.</p>
Closure of School Avenue	<p>Marlon Brown presented the first topic – Closure of School Avenue – regarding the Interlocal Agreement between the City and the School Board and the current security around Sarasota High School (SHS).</p> <p>Kathie Ebaugh thanked the City Commissioners and School Board Members for allowing the District to present on this topic. She explained the background information leading up to the current Interlocal Agreement. In the late 1980s/early 1990s, Sarasota School District sought to provide for the growth of SHS, Sarasota Middle School, Pine View School, Alta Vista Elementary, and its administrative offices. At that time, these facilities were located in between US 41 and Euclid Avenue on the properties where SHS and Alta Vista Elementary are currently located. By moving these facilities, SHS's campus could stretch across School Avenue.</p>

In 1993, Sarasota County School District and City of Sarasota agreed to jointly conduct a traffic study to determine how to address concerns of School Avenue's location in the center of SHS campus. In 1996, the District and City met to evaluate the findings and identified a set of alternatives that both jurisdictions mutually agreed to implement. In 1997, the District and City entered into an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) to manage the public use of School Avenue and public access to SHS.

Since the time this Agreement was signed, the issue of school safety has changed dramatically. Last year the District was going to bring forward changes to the Interlocal Agreement, but the City asked for a traffic study to be conducted. The *Roadway Vacation Analysis* of South School Avenue was completed and has been included in the pre-meeting materials. The consultants for the traffic study have attended the meeting to answer any questions.

The full vacation of School Avenue is being discussed, but tonight's meeting is regarding revisions to the current Interlocal Agreement. The proposed agreement will improve security for the campus, as the discussion about the future of School Avenue continues - including a community workshop regarding School Avenue has been scheduled for May 14, 2018.

The key differences between this proposed ILA and the current 1997 ILA are:

- That as a first phase, the closure of School Avenue from Hatton Street to Tami Sola Street would extend to all transportation modes and users – motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists; *(there are alternate routes for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists to be used; the District will improve the walking conditions for the roads around the school campus, ADA conditions, and signalization)*
- The temporary road closure hours would extend two additional hours from the current 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to the proposed 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.;
- Additional signage is required to be installed by the District; and

- The proposed ILA acknowledges that, as a second phase, the District will apply for the permanent vacation of School Avenue through the City's development review process.

Scott Lempe discussed the comparison of how the different generations view safety and security on campus. The current perspective of the students the District serves every day is different than the perspective of those out of school for many years. The current challenge is how does the District get all the schools to a security standard, and how does the District accomplish this by the start of school (August 2018). The School Board approved that all the security monies in the five-year plan be moved into year one to accomplish the hardening of the schools. The security benchmark includes: upgraded security systems, upgraded camera systems, the infrastructure to support all of this, classroom door locks that lock from the inside, strategically placed panic buttons, and single-point visitor access controls. He gave an example of Booker High School and then compared their secure campus to that of Sarasota High School. These security benchmarks can be accomplished at SHS except for one problem – the access of School Avenue to the public. We all have the moral obligation to do the right thing for the safety and security of our children.

David Jones thanked the City Commissioners and School Board Members for the opportunity to address this issue. He discussed the day-to-day reality of his students and that every single student should feel safe and secure at school every day. He gave just a few examples of unsafe activities that have happened on SHS's campus: just today, a motorcyclist sped through School Avenue while students were walking across the road between classes; non-SHS students being on campus; students leaving/ entering campus without checking in/out. The school has multiple entry points which makes it very difficult to keep track of the whereabouts of students. The SHS campus allows for a 24/7 legal pathway for anyone to walk onto campus at any time. Within two days of his arrival as Principal of SHS, he was making contacts on how to close School Avenue because every one of his students is entitled to feel safe at school.

Kathie Ebaugh discussed the proposed Interlocal Agreement that is being presented tonight. The agreement proposes: 1) Close School Avenue to all users from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – 2 hours later than the current Agreement. The users would include all pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. The road would only be open to those who belong on the SHS campus; and 2) Establishes and recognizes the School District's desire to have a full vacation of the roadway.

The ILA does not give the District full vacation of the roadway now. The proposed agreement will improve security for the campus, while the discussion about the future of School Avenue continues. The District is having the first of the City required meetings of the SHS and Sarasota communities on Monday at 6:00 p.m. at SHS. A second meeting is scheduled for June to continue this discussion. The District wants to build a better school community.

Tonight's workshop is an opportunity to hear from/discuss this topic with the staff. The District is asking for this matter to be brought forward as soon as possible at each of their meetings so that the work may be started. This topic has a placeholder on the School Board May 15th Agenda, and the District hopes the City Commission will place this item on their meeting agenda as soon as possible.

As a closing, Kathie asked for the Commissioners and School Board Members to arrive at some agreement - for the students. Many SHS students are in the audience and will speak tonight; try to vision their world through their lens, not ours.

Marlon Brown said this was the conclusion of the presentation. There are several speakers.

Board Member Shirley Brown had a question about the Traffic Study. What are sharrows?

Kathie Ebaugh explained that it is a sign that has a bicycle with two arrows above it – this sign is on the roadway. It means the road is to be shared with those on bicycles. The District will do all that is needed for the pedestrians and bicyclists.

Mayor Freeland Eddie inquired as to why information regarding the permanent vacation of School Avenue with regards to an underpass, an overpass, and other options has not been provided. The Commission is receiving many questions regarding this topic. She also inquired as to why no termination date was listed on the revised interlocal agreement.

Kathie Ebaugh responded that the material will be in the staff report when the District applies for the vacation of the roadway. Scott Lempe said that a summary of the overpass/underpass would be available by Monday due to it not being a viable solution. No termination date was listed in case the District does not go forward with the full vacation of School Avenue, then the interlocal agreement will stay in place.

Chair Ziegler thanked the City Commission, the City staff and the District staff for all of the challenging work involved with this topic due to the importance of this situation.

Board Member Shirley Brown spoke of the option of a pedestrian/student overpass. A pedestrian overpass is out of the question due to it giving the pedestrian (not students) a clear view of the school campus. There are many safety and security dangers with a pedestrian (public) overpass.

Kathie Ebaugh spoke of the many options the District has evaluated.

Board Member Jane Goodwin asked Principal Jones if the 4:30 p.m. time is enough for the activities of the students. There are many activities the students attend after that time. Principal Jones responded that no, 4:30 p.m. is not enough time for the street to be closed. The school's day does not stop at 4:30 p.m.

	<p>Board Member Eric Robinson echoed Jane Goodwin’s concern. As long as the students are on campus, we have an obligation to keep them safe.</p> <p>Kathie Ebaugh explained how the 4:30 p.m. time was chosen.</p> <p>Board Member Caroline Zucker agrees that the end of the day time needs to be decided on today.</p> <p>Board Member Shirley Brown asked how do people get on/off campus if the single-point entry is not there after hours? Principal Jones explained the current system.</p> <p>Mayor Freeland Eddie thanked the presenters and moved onto the Citizens Input. Groups of 5 people will be called.</p>
<p>Citizens’ Input Concerning City Topics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linda Kitch - School Avenue • Susan Ashby - Closure of School Avenue • Joanna Tomlinson - Closure of School Avenue • Michelle Hermey - Closure of School Avenue • Candy Spaulding - School Avenue • Mary Anne Bowie - School Avenue Closing • James Portman - School Avenue Closing • Larry Silvermintz - School Avenue Closing • Shawn Cacciola - School Avenue • Colin Schoening - Student Safety • Mike Lasche - Closure of School Avenue • Shannon Snyder - School Avenue • Matt Wooddall - School Avenue • David Guinart - School Avenue • Gerry Morgan - Closing School Avenue

	<p>Mayor Freeland Eddie remarked that all the citizens wanting to comment on the Interlocal Agreement have spoken. There are citizens that would like to speak on other issues, including the School Avenue closure. The Mayor commented to the Commissioners and School Board Members that due to the meeting time being noticed from 6:00-8:00 p.m. and there are still citizens that want to speak, the topics of school security and the vocational/technical program be moved to the next planned joint meeting. The Mayor continued calling on the citizens to speak.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joyce Garcias - Close School Avenue • Jason Richards - Closure of School Road • Alana Hodge - School Avenue Closure • Emma Hutchinson - School Avenue Closing • Mary Margaret Steber - School Avenue Closing • Martin Hyde - School Avenue • Austin Dunk - Closure of School Avenue • Virginia Haley - School Avenue <p>Deputy Marlon Brown commented that there are no more citizens to speak.</p>
Closure of School Avenue	<p>Kathie Ebaugh commented there will be no building on School Avenue due to the utility lines underneath the roadway.</p> <p>Chair Ziegler thanked everyone for their input and the safety and security of our students is paramount. Any way in which we can work together as a community to ensure their safety is our goal. The timeline is tight to maximize this opportunity. The interlocal agreement is a legal document. The decision of the extension of the closure time is important for the Board to adopt at the next School Board meeting.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding the two-step process for the full vacation of School Avenue. It was reiterated the agenda for tonight is only for the interlocal agreement.</p>

After the adoption of the ILA, the District can then proceed into an application for the full vacation of School Avenue.

Vice Mayor Alpert asked what the closure extension would be for SHS. Principal Jones responded 10:00 p.m. would be adequate.

Mayor Freeland Eddie asked if this would be for the school days only. Principal Jones asked if he could analyze the data more and then respond due to the number of weekend events. The Mayor wants to make sure both Boards are discussing the same terms.

Board Member Shirley Brown inquired when games and plays are in the evening and weekends, people are all over campus. Principal Jones said this is a tough situation and gave examples of activities/people on campus.

Discussion ensued on what language is appropriate for the interlocal agreement and what language is appropriate for the vacation application.

Kathie Ebaugh asked for clarification of the question being asked. . .what hours of the day for this interlocal? For this first interim step, the time would be 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for the days school is in session, Monday-Friday. This does not include weekends or the days school is not in session. The information will be analyzed for the full vacation application process.

Commissioner Hagen Brody agreed totally with closing School Avenue and getting it done quickly. As a citizen said, "This is about convenience versus safety." The Commission's responsibility is to balance competing issues – convenience versus safety. When we look at the import of protecting our students, the government is responsible for these students while they are on SHS campus. The safety of the students is paramount. Our interests are not competing – different boards but do not have competing interests. We should all be working towards the safety of the students.

Mayor Freeland Eddie commented action will not be taken at this meeting due to it being noticed as a workshop session. This item is to be on the agenda for the May 21st Commission Meeting so action can be taken at the next available time.

Chair Ziegler stated this ILA is on the Agenda for the May 15th School Board Meeting. To not slow the process down, since the current language is 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., the Board will amend the time to 10:00 p.m. at the May 15th meeting, and at which time the ILA will be sent to the City of Sarasota Commission to review.

Board Member Shirley Brown commented that Sarasota High School wants to be a good neighbor, but we must secure the perimeter to keep the students safe.

Mayor Freeland Eddie requested language to be included for an internal review of the ILA. She had asked if there was a termination period, and thinks it is appropriate in order not to have to resort to another meeting to review a document. A timeframe is necessary due to the community changing and to evaluate the document if changes are needed in the future. It is being requested that language for the full vacation of School Avenue not be built into the ILA document. The intent is to move forward with the vacation process, but the language does not need to be built into the interlocal agreement. The ILA and vacation are two separate applications; two separate conversations. Also, the ADA process not be included in the ILA but into the vacation application. The staffs from both the City and School District need to look at these issues for a final draft.

Chair Ziegler clarified the intent of the vacation information into the ILA. Kathie Ebaugh confirmed the Chair's comments of transparency.

Vice Mayor Liz Alpert doesn't have a problem with the vacation being mentioned in the ILA. She also commented having no problem with the extension to 10:00 p.m.

Commissioner Hagen Brody agreed with the extension time to 10:00 p.m. The language in the agreement should be clear of the intention to apply for the vacation.

Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch prefers there to be two separate conversations regarding the ILA and the vacation. As far as the extended hours, more information from the principal would be appreciated.

Kathie Ebaugh clarified the revised agreement will be attached to the May 15th Agenda.

Scott Lempe commented that the School Board agenda and the City agenda must match the Board's and Commissioners' expectations.

Commissioner Willie Charles Shaw interjected that a consensus cannot be made at a workshop.

After a lengthy discussion, Superintendent Todd Bowden told Board Members and Commissioners the language in the ILA regarding a permanent vacation was just to make sure the District was transparent with its actions. His recommendation is to present a clean interlocal agreement closing School Avenue from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on school days, with the understanding the District will continue to move forward with the full vacation process. The language serves no purpose in the interlocal agreement. The conversation tonight serves notice to the Board and the community the District intends to pursue the full vacation process.

Commissioners Shaw and Brody agreed a decision will be made at their next Commissioners meeting; no decision to be made at this meeting.

Mayor Freeland Eddie commented that no action will be taken now. The District staff has indicated a revised interlocal agreement will be presented to both Boards and will be reviewed separately. The Boards will wait to receive direction at that time.

	Commissioners and Board Members agreed on a future meeting to discuss the SRO Program and Vocational/Technical Program.
Citizens' Input Concerning City Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed Deus - Traffic on Wood Street • Martin Hyde - School Board Record
School Security	Topic moved to the next joint meeting.
Vocational/Technical Program	Topic moved to the next joint meeting.
Adjourn	<p>Deputy City Manager Marlon Brown thanked Mayor Freeland Eddie and Chair Ziegler for allowing the meeting to be held at the Commission Chambers.</p> <p>Mayor Freeland Eddie thanked everyone for meeting, and thanked the students for showing bravery by speaking; their comments did not go unnoticed.</p> <p>Chair Ziegler thanked everyone.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.</p>

We certify that the foregoing minutes are a true account of the Joint Meeting of the School Board of Sarasota County and the City of Sarasota Commission held on May 8, 2018, and approved at the regular Board meeting on June 5, 2018.

Secretary
Todd Bowden

Chair
Bridget Ziegler