

**TUPELO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
MARCH 26, 2012**

The Board of Trustees of the Tupelo Public School District convened in a special called meeting of the Board held in open session at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, March 26, 2012, at the Hancock Leadership Center, 1920 Briar Ridge, Tupelo, Mississippi.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board President Eddie Prather called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

The following School Board members were present during roll call:

Members Present: Mrs. Amy Heyer
Mr. Rob Hudson
Mr. Eddie Prather
Mrs. Beth Stone

Tupelo Public School District Attorneys Otis Tims and Kelly Stimpson were also present. Also in attendance were members of the press and community members.

Board President Eddie Prather: "I see that all Board members are present, and we have a quorum."

"Pursuant to the Mississippi Open Meetings Law, Sections 25-41-1 through 25-14-17 of the Mississippi Code, this meeting was called for the purpose of allowing Mr. Calvin Ellis, and his counsel to appear, at their request, before the Board of Trustees."

"This meeting is part of a continuing personnel matter under consideration by the board. The Board will determine if this personnel matter should be taken up in Executive Session."

"Counsel for Mr. Ellis has informed Board counsel that the matters they plan to raise may include matters that by law and the requirements of Board policy can be discussed only in Executive Session. Is this correct, Mr. Tims?"

Mr. Otis Tims: "It is. Matters requiring the identification of students or providing information from which students can be identified are by law and Board policy required to be heard only in Closed Session. Similarly, matters related to the reputation, integrity and professional competence of any individual can only be discussed in Closed Session. Mr. Butts and Mr. Ellis are aware of this, since the entire hearing has been conducted in accordance with these procedures. I discussed this with Mr. Butts, he conferred with Mr. Ellis and then informed me that this morning's discussion should be held in Closed Session."

Board President Eddie Prather: “In light of this, I suggest that the Board go into temporary Executive Session to determine the need for a permanent Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. Will you please clear the room? Mr. Butts and Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, you may stay.”

III. Executive Session

On a motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Hudson, the Board voted unanimously to enter temporary Executive Session for the purpose of determining a need for permanent Executive Session. The room was cleared, leaving the following persons present: Mrs. Amy Heyer, Mr. Rob Hudson, Mr. Eddie Prather, Mrs. Beth Stone, Mr. Otis Tims, Mrs. Kelly Stimpson, Ms. Regina Russell (court reporter), Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Ellis, Mr. David Butts and Ms. Patrice Tate.

Mr. Prather called the temporary Executive Session to order and made the following comments: “We are here to discuss whether to go into Executive Session to hear statements from Mr. Ellis and his counsel, Mr. Butts, pursuant to the statute giving Mr. Ellis the right to a hearing concerning the termination of his employment.”

“In discussing their appearance today, our counsel informed Mr. Butts that as in the testimonial portions of Mr. Ellis’s hearing, any references to students or to information that could be used to identify students would have to be heard in Closed Session, as would any discussion of matters related to the reputation, integrity, or professional competence of any persons other than Mr. Ellis himself.”

“After considering this matter, Mr. Butts suggested that a Closed Session would be in order. I will entertain a motion that the Board go into permanent Executive Session for the purpose of hearing their statements.”

On a motion by Mrs. Stone, seconded by Mr. Hudson, the Board voted unanimously to remain in Executive Session for the purpose of hearing statements by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Butts. The President of the Board declared the motion passed.

Mr. Prather announced to those outside waiting that the Board has voted to go into Executive Session to hear this personnel matter.

Mr. Prather: “We are in Executive Session. The transcript of this portion of the meeting will be sealed and placed with the Closed Sessions portions of the record of the Ellis hearing.”

Mrs. Stone moved to come out of Executive Session. Mr. Hudson seconded the motion and upon motion duly made, seconded, and carried unanimously, the President of the Board declared the motion passed and the Board in open session.

Board President reopened the meeting to tell all in attendance that the Board was back in Open Session. Everyone waiting reentered the meeting.

Mr. Prather: “The Board is back in Open Session. In the Executive Session, Mr. Ellis and Mr. Butts addressed the Board. The Board took no action.”

“The Board will again take up the Ellis personnel matter at a Special Called Meeting to be held at 10:00 a.m., at the Hancock Leadership Center, 1920 Briar Ridge, Tupelo, Mississippi.”

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Prather entertained a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Heyer made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Stone, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was adopted unanimously, and the meeting stood adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

TUPELO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Eddie M. Prather, President

Rob Hudson, Secretary