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DeKalb Delegation Meeting Minutes – Approved on 2/25/2019

Wednesday, February 20, 2019, 2pm, CLOB 514

In attendance: Rep Vernon Jones, Rep Matthew Wilson, Rep Renitta Shannon, Rep Dar’shun Kendrick, Rep Karla Drenner, Rep Viola Davis, Rep Pam Stephenson, Rep Becky Evans, Rep Michele Henson

Absent: Rep Mike Wilensky, Rep Scott Holcomb, Rep Mary Margaret Oliver, Rep Billy Mitchell, Rep Bee Nguyen, Rep Karen Bennett, Rep Doreen Carter

- I. **Call to Order:** Chair Drenner called the meeting to order at 2:10pm and welcomed delegation and guests
- II. **Meeting Minutes** - Meeting Minutes from February 11 were circulated and approved
- III. **Officer Reports** - There were no Officer Reports
- IV. **Reports of Committees:**
 - A. **Special Committee on Ethics, SB 7** – Co-Chairs Jones and Stephenson reported SB 7 primarily changes the appointment process to the ethics board and they have concerns and need to review the bill in depth. They plan to meet with lawyer on Friday the 22 about a substitute bill. They are calling a meeting of the Special committee on Ethics for Friday, Feb 22 at 9am and will report back at the Feb 25 Delegation meeting. If they have a substitute, Rep Jones stated that they would not need to run an additional ad. Chair Drenner asked that Senate members be invited to the meeting. Rep Jones asked if the DeKalb Secretary would send out a meeting notice, and the Secretary agreed.
 - B. **Special Committee on Education, SB 53** – Chair Drenner reported for Committee Chair Carter. The committee met on Friday, Feb 15 at 8:30am and will meet again Friday Feb 22 at 8:30am at 216 Capitol and will vote on the bill.
 - C. **Chair Drenner: Committee Members of the Ethics Committee are:** Co-Chairs Stephenson and Jones; Rep Wilensky, Rep Davis, Rep Oliver, and Rep Carter
- V. **Special Orders:** Chair Drenner asked the Secretary to read out loud the title and opening paragraphs of both SB 7, LC 44097 and SB 53 LC 44 1042 for an official first reading of the bills and the Secretary did so. These bills are formally assigned to the sub-committees.
- VI. **Unfinished Business** – There was no unfinished business
- VII. **New business:** Rep Jones stated he plans to submit a Study Committee on Cities. Reps Shannon and Wilson reported they have new bills but will wait until Legislative Counsel finishes their bills before presenting.
- VIII. **Announcements Program.** Secretary Evans introduced DeKalb County School Board member Marshall Orson and Superintendent Stephen Greene. Mr. Orson spoke on behalf of DCSD in favor of SB 53. Orson introduced DCSD employees Mr. Bell and Mr. Drake and fellow Board members Turner, Gervertz, and DeCosta. Annexation is DCSD’s most important issue, it passed the Senate delegation unanimously, and he asks for our support for SB 53. See Addendum for notes on Orson’s and Green’s presentations.
- IX. **Adjournment:** Chair Drenner: Meeting adjourned at 2:56pm.

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Addendum for Feb 20 Meeting –

Notes on Presentations from DCSD Board Member Orson and Superintendent Green

Orson: Annexation is biggest issue facing DCSD. We understand the desire of cities to expand. We are focused on the 100K focus on Children. Emory Annexation – as large and as impactful, the cumulative effect is large. Impacts school governance. When you shift general govt service, the revenue and obligation goes to the county. It is proportional. Not the case for school annexations. Again, Emory provided a great example. 4 student and \$250 million in revenue shift. Completely disproportionate. The way we fund schools is entirely different. Vast majority of property taxes do not have school children. As we have seen, this has continued to create a series of data points to illustrate the issue. We need help with issue. Every day we find an outgoing of revenue. Our children have become donors to APS and CDS. So we are appreciative of this bill that addresses these issues.

Addresses 3 major issues:

- 1) Separate municipal from school annexations.
- 2) Introduces a notion of substantiality. Will require the school system to take a substantial # of student.
- 3) Provides protection of assets for school buildings.

Druid Hills HS stands a street width from City of Atlanta border. Reality, if the City of Atlanta were to want to annex the neighborhood right behind the school, we would lose the school building. Even if the annexation were to include DH students, 2/3 of the students would lose their school. That is unfair to the children of DeKalb County.

Colleagues from APS and CDS – if I were from those districts – the boundaries have to be co-terminus.

City of Atlanta does not agree on this analysis.

Based on local constitutional amendment in Fulton

City school district are creature of legislature. We can pass legislation that affects them.

Drenner: Rep Jones has a question

Jones: you say that SB does not affect municipal annexation. Point – annexation hurts everybody. Hurts the governing authority. It is a problem is across the board. I think the delegation should look across the board at both municipal and school annexations. When you look at police and pension does not follow the new cities. I hear you talking about school board. I would hope that the delegation will amend the bill to change to municipal annexation.

Orson – we would ask for clean bill. We are elected to address school issue.

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One other point: City of Decatur has raised the issue of bonding authority – CDS cannot issue bonds, only City of Decatur can issue bonds. So this bill could result in having residents of Decatur paying on bonds that cannot avail themselves of the school. Shannon pointed out that is already the case – people without children do not use these school services.

We share an important obligation to serve the 100K students of DeKalb County Schools. Critically important bill. We know these annexations are ongoing. Proposed annexation of 150 acres. It looks like a teacup. Another one Atlanta has proposed. Ongoing relentless challenge. Threat to serving the 100K students. Shannon? Who is sponsoring that?

Dr. Green – thank you for hearing us and entertaining this proposal. Orson has been our vanguard. We are unified on this front. We see annexation as a clear and present danger. Particularly when involving land grab. We need every penny for all of our students. If annexation goes uncontrolled and unregulated, takes away facility and financial services. He looks at it from educational viewpoint.

It is a part of our mission and vision ESSA – looking at whole child. A threat to providing those services is a threat to whole child. Creep creep creep, chip chip chip Ask for you to make a stop to this.