

TANGIPAHOA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD PROCEEDINGS

January 20, 2005

The Tangipahoa Parish School Board met in special session on Thursday, January 20, 2005, at 6:00 p.m., in the School Board Meeting Room, School Board Office, 59656 Puleston Road, Amite, Louisiana, with President Leonard "Tank" Genco, presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Leonard "Tank" Genco, Al Link, Maxine Dixon, Sandra Bailey-Simmons, Carl Bardwell, and Robert Caves

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jimmy Richardson, and Donnie Williams

Mrs. Sandra Bailey-Simmons, Board Member District H, gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no requests for public input.

President Genco stated that the Board will now conduct a tenure hearing in accordance with L.R.S. 17:443 for Mrs. Romeekia Richard, Teacher at Hammond Westside Upper Elementary School.

Mr. Robert Hammonds, Attorney, indicated that the Court Reporter had not yet arrived and he would prefer to recess until the reporter arrived.

President Genco stated the hearing was now in recess.

The hearing resumed and Mr. Alton Lewis, Attorney, representing the Tangipahoa Parish School Board, indicated that the Court Reporter had not arrived and indicated that the attorney for the defense did not wish to use the services of the Board Secretary. He indicated that the meeting would be closed and rescheduled. He requested that the record reflect that the Board was present and ready to proceed along with the Board's witnesses.

Mr. Willie Nunnery, Attorney, asked that the record reflect that there was extensive discussion with Mr. Moody, Mr. Hammonds, and Mr. Reginald Johnson regarding the date of the hearing. The date was set and established approximately thirty (30) days ago. Judge Bennett issued a ruling regarding the hearing on April 19, 2004, ordering and directing the Tangipahoa Parish School Board to conduct and hold a hearing for Mrs. Richard. He indicated that he felt Board actions had frustrated Mrs. Richard's career. He found it totally inexcusable that a court reporter was not present to record the proceedings and wanted this recorded for the record.

At this point, the court reporter arrived, and a brief recess was given in order for her to set up her equipment.

Mr. Lewis indicated that Mrs. Richard had the option was proceeding either in open or closed session.

Mr. Nunnery requested that hearing be held in open session and he also waived all jurisdictional time limits regarding service or notice. There was a returned certified letter addressed to Ms. Richard. Mr. Nunnery waived all objections to service.

Ms. Cherise White, Certified Court Reporter, recorded the proceedings and testimony given.

Mr. Robert Hammonds, Attorney, represented Superintendent Louis Joseph in the hearing. Mr. Willie Nunnery, Attorney, represented Mrs. Richards. Mr. Alton Lewis, Attorney, represented the Tangipahoa Parish School Board in the hearing.

President Genco stated that the Board would now proceed with the Tenure Hearing for Mrs. Romeekia Richard, and directed the attorneys to make their appearances for purposes of the record.

Mr. Lewis indicated the manner in which objections made during the hearing would be handled, and proposed the procedure for the hearing.

Mr. Hammonds submitted exhibits - Superintendent #1, 2, and 3, which were introduced into evidence on behalf of Superintendent Joseph.

Mr. Nunnery requested that if any Board Members felt that they could not render a fair and unbiased opinion recuse themselves from voting on the issue.

Mr. Robert Hammonds made his opening statement and on behalf of Superintendent Joseph, called as a witness and questioned Ms. Brenda Johnson, Principal, Hammond Westside Upper Elementary School.

Mr. Hammonds entered School Board Exhibits 5B, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 10A, 11, 11A, 12, and 12A into evidence on behalf of Superintendent Joseph.

Mrs. Richard's attorney was given the opportunity to cross-examine Ms. Johnson, and entered Exhibits R1, R2, and R3 into evidence on behalf of Ms. Richard.

The Board recessed for five minutes.

Mr. Robert Hammonds called as a witness and questioned Dr. Leslie M. Mabry, retired Assistant Superintendent.

Mrs. Richard's attorney was given the opportunity to cross-examine Dr. Mabry.

President Genco indicated that due to the lateness to the hour, the hearing would be adjourned and continued at a later date. The meeting was adjourned. (9:25 p.m.)

Respectfully Submitted,

Leonard "Tank" Genco, President

LOUIS JOSEPH Secretary-Treasurer

Recorded By: Jo-Ann L. Frazier (1/20/05)