

**CITY OF TALLADEGA**  
**CITY COUNCIL CALLED JOINT MEETING**  
24 March 2008, 4:30 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Talladega met in a called joint meeting with the City of Talladega Board of Education on Monday, 24 March 2008 at 4:30 p.m., in the City Hall Auditorium, the regular place for such meetings. The meeting was called to order and the following were present: Councilman Eddie Tucker, Council President Horace Patterson, Councilman Donnie Miller, Councilman Lance Grissett, Councilman Jimmy Davis, Mayor Brian York, Dr. Joanne Horton and Board of Education members, James Braswell, Shirley Simmons-Sims, Mary McGhee, Joseph Hare and Bonnie Miller.

Council President Patterson thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the joint meeting and to participate in this meeting for an exchange of ideas. Councilman Davis started the discussion by stating that it is realized that the number one priority for our community to be successful is to have a successful school system.

Dr. Horton indicated that all seven schools were individually accredited and as of March 2008, the system was district accredited as well. Dr. Horton also indicated that it would need the backing of the whole community to do something about the current buildings. She also stressed that accentuating the positive things about the schools is a way to get the community to back what will be needed in the future. Dr. Horton also passed out a handout that compared all the area cities' allocations to their school systems. Board member Shirley Simmons-Sims believed that it is important to get parents involved in their children's education beyond the third grade level.

Council President Patterson asked for any comments on safety issues with the school system. Dr. Horton requested that something be done about the light at the corner of Elm Street and South Street, whether changing it to a stop sign or something so that the buses could get out in the morning and especially in the afternoon. The intersection at the high school and at Houston Elementary off of Ashland Highway is also an issue. Council President Patterson asked Councilman Grissett to get with Public Works Department Head James Swinford to go over those areas and make suggestions. Councilman Miller also asked about the speed limit signs with reduced limits during school hours for those areas.

There was some discussion as to test scores and getting that positive information out to the public, perhaps in the form of a brochure or report.

Council President Patterson then breached the topic of the school facilities and how those facilities are perceived by parents. Shirley Simmons-Sims stated that she felt the facilities are worth preserving but that a more proactive approach needed to be taken to hire more maintenance people with expertise in making the facilities more impressive from the outside-in and to make the necessary repairs to the facilities.

There was then discussion concerning the stadium. Councilman Miller indicated that the stadium is one of the oldest concrete stadiums in Alabama, second only to Crampton Bowl, and with proper maintenance it could be made beautiful. There was discussion about moving the buses and the maintenance area away from the stadium area and using that for adequate parking with the option of even moving the baseball field if more parking was needed. Dr. Horton asked if the city had land to which the school buses could be moved. Mayor York indicated that the acreage behind the Master Brand Cabinets factory in Bemiston had been discussed in the past. Joe Hare stated that the Board really wanted to get the buses moved away from the stadium also. Council President Patterson requested that Councilman Davis and Mayor York take a look at the property owned by the city and get a concrete idea that could be worked out within 60 days.

The topic of making a booklet of "success stories" of graduates of the City of Talladega school system was discussed. The main purpose would be to come up with ways to reverse the negative image of the school system. Dr. Horton indicated that when

she moved to the area the realtors were negative about the City of Talladega and the Talladega school system. Councilman Davis also asked about programs at the high school for the higher achieving students. Council President Patterson indicated that type of information needed to be added to the document or brochure about the school's "success stories." He further stated that even if a citizen does not have a student in the school system, the condition of the school system will still affect them. Industries make decisions to move into areas based on the condition of the school system for their employees. Councilman Grissett indicated that changing the perception of the school system was the greatest challenge and that somewhere you have to make a showing with the facilities that the city currently has and the stadium may be the best place to start.

Shirley Simmons-Sims stated that a segment of our population is not being properly addressed and that is in the areas of teaching Spanish and Sign Language. She also stated that a music program should also be provided.

Council President Patterson requested that area realtors and the Chamber of Commerce be contacted and asked to attend the next pre-council meeting to discuss ways to improve the City of Talladega's image. He further emphasized that there would be an active partnership between the city and the city's school system. Councilman Davis suggested quarterly joint meetings to coordinate needs and ideas. Council President Patterson finished up the discussion by asking that the board and council lift up those who are currently employed with the city and school system with something positive and to counter the negativity.

Dr. Horton indicated that Thursday, May 22nd is the City's graduation date. On June 9th the council will attend a regular Board of Education meeting, the location to be named at a later date.

#### **AUTHENTICATION**

I, Elizabeth Cheeks, Acting City Clerk of the City of Talladega, Alabama, do hereby attest that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings of the City Council of Talladega, Alabama, which met in a called joint session on Monday, 24 March 2008, at 4:30 p.m. at City Hall in the City of Talladega, Alabama.

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Elizabeth Cheeks  
Acting City Clerk