

Republican Club of Southwest Florida

April 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Lions Club of Bonita Springs, FL

Meeting Called to Order: President Bill Ribble called the meeting to order at 5:55

Officers Present: President Bill Ribble, Secretary Larry Fiesel, Treasurer Jim Sido, Directors Joanne Ribble, Carolyn Forbes

Recognition of Elected Officials: Ray Sandelli, Lee County Commissioner, District

Recognition of Sponsor: Engel & Volkers - Jim and Ellen Hollars

Invocation: Secretary Larry Fiesel

Pledge of Allegiance: Secretary Larry Fiesel

Recognition of Elected Officials: Brian Farrar, Lee County Mosquito Board, Joanne Ribble, Vice-Mayor, Estero Council Member District 1, Larry Fiesel, Estero Council Member District 2, Jon McLain, Mayor, Estero Council Member District 3, Lori Fayhee, Estero Council Member District 4, Rafael Lopez, Estero Council Member District 5, Jim Ward, Estero Council Member District 6, George Zalucki, Estero Council Member District 7, David Klein, Lee Health Board Member

Order of Business & Introduction of Guest Speaker: Christopher S. Bernier, Ed.D., Superintendent Lee County Schools



Dr. Christopher Bernier was sworn in as Superintendent of Schools of the School District of Lee County on May 16, 2022. With nearly 100,000 students and 13,000+ employees, Dr. Bernier will lead the 9th largest school district in Florida and 32nd largest in the U.S. His priority as Superintendent is to lead with a student-centered philosophy and ensure that the district's strategic plan will meet the academic and social emotional needs of our students. Dr. Bernier also plans to prioritize the district's budget to ensure that the district is being fiscally responsible and good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

The district's core values will guide Dr. Bernier's leadership:

- Excellence
- Integrity
- High Expectations
- Accountability
- Belief in Students
- Professionalism

Prior to Lee County, Dr. Bernier served as the Chief of Staff for the Clark County School District (CCSD) in Las Vegas, Nevada, the fifth largest school district in the country. For three years, he helped to execute the student-centered vision of the Clark County District for the over 300,000 students and 42,000 employees, investing an annual budget in excess of \$5 billion. As an Executive Cabinet leader, Dr. Bernier led many projects, including a few below:

- Emergency Operations and COVID Response Commander
- Lead Member of District's Negotiation Team
- Chairman of the Diversity Inclusion and Equity Committee for Goals and Objectives
- Chairman and Digital One to One Project Lead
- Chief Facilitator Superintendent's Student Advisory Committee
- Chairman of the Community and School Safety Committee

Before being recruited to Las Vegas, Dr. Bernier served Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) from 1987 until 2019. He was a devoted classroom teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal at middle, high and virtual schools, Director of Professional Development and Associate Superintendent. His final promotion with OCPS resulted in Dr. Bernier leading the Office of School Choice where he was responsible for all choice options including Alternative Education, Charter Schools, Orange County Virtual School, K-12 Magnet Programs, School Age Services, Student Enrollment, Teen Parent Program and Home Education. These responsibilities supported the vision and mission of OCPS and influenced the trajectory for more than 200,000 students, 25,000 team members and a budget in excess of 2.2 billion dollars.

Dr. Bernier has received numerous recognitions for his work including being named Florida Principal for the Year by The Florida PTA. Throughout his career, he has remained a devoted student advocate and has fostered, nurtured, and maintained safe and positive learning environments wherever he has the opportunity to serve. Dr. Bernier has a proven capacity for developing and implementing equitable educational improvement efforts, advancing access for

all, and raising student achievement through shared leadership with school leaders, educators, students and community members.

Dr. Bernier earned his undergraduate degree in History and Education from Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York, a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Nova Southeastern and his doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Central Florida.

- Transitioning to new job and new location was tough
- Build investments in relationships with new people
- Spending time listening to student voices
- Has cleaned up the budget
- Teachers and bus drivers are leaving due to the lack of insurance
- Plans to put \$4,000 more in their pockets without raising salaries
- Lee County is the 64th least efficient transportation system out of 67 school districts in Florida
- Has a goal to move to 50th (from 64th) which will save the district \$10-20M
- New school buses come with a 5-year warranty which expires after 2-years due to excessive mileage
- Fund schools first
- Integrity is top priority, truth will be the answer even if not pleasant
- Considers himself a servant leader
- Educate children is most important goal with Reading; Writing, Math and Graduation Rate
- All students are tested in second grade to identify gifted students
- All Seniors will write a letter back down the system to address someone who was influential in their education, principal, teacher, bus driver
- Parents should always be involved in their children's education
- HB1 - parents deserve choice of school where their student will attend
- Guardian Program is going forward in Lee County Schools
- Safe schools must be run by students and staff
- Population of Lee County is getting younger
- Improve the recruitment process by having a better HR process and can fix HR when the 'H' stands for Helpful and the 'R' stands for Responsive
- Nationally there s a teacher shortage - 50% less enrolment in colleges of education. there are less people to choose from

Approval of March 02, 2022 Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve by Ed Weil, Seconded by Fred Shaw. Motion was unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: April 13, 2023, by Treasurer Jim Sido

Disbursements: March 2023

03/06	Ck 135	Lions Club Deposit	\$100.00
03/17	Ck 9011	Cynthia Torres	\$ 50.00
03/20	Debit Card	Miklas Social Media	\$385.00

03/20	Debit Card	FL Sunbiz.org Business Registration	\$ 70.00
03/30	Debit Card	GoDaddy.com	\$ 40.34
		Total Expenses	\$645.34

Income: March 2023

03/03		Cash & Checks	\$175.00
		Mullin, Chen, Kiraly, Fullick, Sasser	
03/08		Cash & Square	
		Nystrom, Wilgosz	\$121.80
		Total Deposit	\$296.80

Summary:

Beginning Balance	\$1,399.32
Income	\$ 296.80
Disbursements	\$ 645.34
Ending Balance	\$1,050.78
Business Savings Account	\$ 967.47

Approval of, 2023 Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve by George Zalucki, Seconded by Fran Mainella. Motion was unanimously approved.

New Business: There was no new business.

Announcements:

Next meeting will be May 04, 2023 at the Lions Club, Bonita Springs, FL with guest speaker Noelle Branning, Lee County Tax Collector.

June 01 meeting with Sheriff Carmine Marceno

September 07 meeting with Amira Fox

Motion to Adjourn: Motion by Rafael Lopez, Seconded by Fran Mainella, meeting was adjourned at 6:48