

I will speak on the next agenda item:

The Boundary Review process for the FY21 School Year was a lengthy, even grueling, and emotional process for those affected by the different proposals and for Board members as well. The Board developed more than 50 boundary adjustments and related motions. Each adjustment had an interdependency that was interwoven.

On November 21, 2019, the Board met to vote on the redistricting plan. After the vote on Clemens Crossing unexpectedly failed, Ms. Mallo requested a brief recess to consider the impact of that failed vote and what adjustments the Board might be required to make to address the issue. The failed vote left Clemens Crossing at a high level of capacity that would be difficult to handle and even more difficult to sustain, but the impact of the vote went beyond just Clemens Crossing due to the interdependency of the West Columbia elementary schools – something Ms. Mallo and others realized almost immediately.

During the recess, Board members at different points and at different times went to the caucus room to

look at data and/or to figure out what to do. Emotions were running high. Board members were tired and stressed and fully aware of the major impact the redistricting plan would have on the entire school community. In the caucus room, one Board member said out loud something to effect of “now what are we going to do?” Another spontaneously responded, “the whole plan for that area falls apart.” During that recess, that lasted less than 4-minutes, Ms. Coombs apparently realized more fully the ripple effect the Clemens Crossing vote had on the plan for the remainder of the West Columbia elementary schools and, she subsequently informed me that she then decided, albeit reluctantly, that the only viable option was to request reconsideration so she could change her vote.

I want to say very clearly – there was no intent to evade our obligation to deliberate on these important decisions in public or to violate the Open Meetings Act. The intent was to recess and re-assess what to do next – not to convene a closed meeting to do so. There was no real discussion, but spontaneous comments were made by different members and I think there is little question that there was a quorum

in the planning room for all or part of the brief exchange that may have impacted Ms. Coombs' decision to request reconsideration of the vote.

On behalf of the Board, I regret that our actions complicated an already complicated and tense situation and raised questions about the vote and the process.

It is my hope and my intent that this information, describing as best I can what occurred during the recess so the public better understands what happened and why, whether you support the Clemens Crossing decision or not, and that the Board publicly acknowledges and corrects what appears to us to be a violation of the Open Meetings Act, albeit unintentional.

I, therefore, move that the Board vote to ratify and to reaffirm the vote taken with respect to Clemens Crossing.

CHAIR: Is there a second? If there is no further discussion, are we prepared to vote on the motion?