

**BEEKMAN CHARTER SCHOOL  
GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
SMALL GYM  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.**

-The Greivance Committee Meeting was called to order by Keith Huntsman at 6:30pm.

-Roll call was conducted by Abigail Atkins. The results are as follows:

Members present: Keith Huntsman, Lori Wallace, Matt Schmitz, Zemarcus Mays, Abigail Kilcrease, Jessica Allred

Others in attendance: Lara Lane, Sarah Ellingburg, Frances Loyless, Samantha Mann, Emily Myrick, Joseph Purvis, Kayce Waller, Joseph Waller, Abigail Atkins, Guston Atkins, Alan Murry, Tanner Spigner, Carolyn Harris, Gary Guice, and approximately forty (40) guests in attendance.

-Prayer was led by Matt Schmitz.

Agenda Item: To enter into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. –Keith Huntsman

-Keith Huntsman asked Joseph Waller if he would like to continue with the meeting in executive session, or if he would like to hold an open meeting. Mr. Waller voted for an open meeting.

Mr. Huntsman read the rules of conduct for the meeting, followed by an outline of the reason the meeting was called. The grievance was filed by Joseph Waller because he felt that the punishment of one week suspension without pay was too harsh.

Joseph Waller was provided with an opportunity to address the committee with his case. As part of his defense, he explained that Mangham fans instigated the altercation. His brother was escorted out of the building, and that he, himself, did not know what was going on. He stated that he followed the instructions of Joseph Purvis willingly, not insubordinately. In addition, he described that punishment for him had already been decided before communicating with him about the event.

He started by having the administration team play the surveillance video from the basketball game which resulted in the punishment issued. He described the actions as they played out on the screen. In short, the BCS basketball team was playing against Mangham High School. When visitors from Mangham High School used profanity against Joseph Waller's children at the game, Joseph Waller's brother addressed the issue with the Head Coach of Mangham High School's team. Joseph Waller went to see what was happening when he saw his brother being escorted from the basketball court.

Mr. Waller stated that he has been a teacher for twelve (12) years, six (6) of which, he spent employed at Beekman Charter School. During that time, he reported that this was his first incident with an opposing coach. His punishment for this incident was five (5) days of

suspension without pay. This punishment resulted in his pay being docked \$1,700.00. In his opinion, this punishment was extreme for a first offense.

To build his case, he described a few scenarios in which he felt as though Mrs. Myrick was cold toward him based on personal interactions. At this time, he also called upon witnesses.

The first of his witnesses was the assistant basketball coach, Guston Atkins. Guston Atkins applauded Coach Waller for his ability to act professionally when they were involved in a similar scenario at an away game.

Next was Carolyn Harris. Mrs. Harris is the mother of a basketball player for Beekman Charter School. She was seated on the visitor's side of the gym that night, and witnessed the entire interaction. She heard the Mangham student use profanity, and reported what she heard to the principal. She also testified that the Mangham coach did not keep his composure.

Alan Murry is the basketball coach for the girl's team. He reported that from what he saw, the Mangham coach was not innocent.

Taylor Spigner is the assistant basketball coach for the girl's team. She testified that in this instance, as well as past interactions, there were complications with Mangham's coach.

The final witness for Joseph Waller was Gary Guice. Gary Guice was a deputy on duty at the game that night. He described in full detail, the events from his perspective. When he noticed the disturbance, he approached Justin Waller, the brother of Joseph Waller. He walked him outside and asked him to deescalate. There was no resistance from Justin Waller. When he returned, he escorted Joseph Waller to the other side of the court. He noted that there was no resistance from Joseph Waller, and that there was no riff. He further commended Joseph Waller for handling himself well under pressure and leading by example. Mr. Guice reported that he was never asked about what he had seen or experienced by any member of the Beekman Charter School administration.

Mr. Guice answered several questions that were asked of him. Among those, he stated that he was never asked to remove anyone from the basketball court. He answered that Joseph Waller did not incite Justin Waller in any way. Joseph Waller did comply with his instructions. There was never a time that Gary Guice heard Joseph Waller fail to comply with the instructions of administrators.

Next, Mrs. Emily Myrick was allowed an opportunity to state her defense. She cited page thirty-three (33) of the Beekman Charter School Employee Handbook. In brief, when an employee breaks the code of conduct, the supervisor should make corrective action, and that action may not always start with verbal warnings. She further testified that from her stand-point, there was an intense confrontation between Joseph Waller and the Coach of the Mangham basketball team. At that time, she feels that Mr. Waller traded professionalism and stepped into a parental role. In reply to a question that was asked, she stated that the game was stopped due to the significance of the event.

At this time, Joseph Purvis served as a witness for Emily Myrick. Joseph Purvis is the Athletic Director. He stated that Joseph Waller was angry, and he told Mr. Waller that he could not get ejected from the game. He stated that Mr. Waller repeated that he could not stand the Mangham coach. (Let it state, for the record, that an obscenity was used in this scenario that has been omitted from the minutes.) To answer questions that were asked of him, he stated that he was there as an administrator. He did give Joseph Waller an order to go to the other side of the court, but he did not tell Mr. Waller to go and never come back to the other side.

The floor was returned to Emily Myrick. She added that Joseph Waller violated LHSAA regulations, and that the proper chain of command was not followed. She stated that this was an LHSAA sanctioned event. According to the by-laws, our school could have been put on probation. She self-reported this event out of precaution and by recommendation.

Mrs. Myrick added that another factor she based this decision on, was Beekman Charter School history. The standard punishment in the past has been five (5) days suspension, and that this is the fourth occurrence in which that has taken place. She stated that there have been outbursts by Joseph Waller in the past. However, verbal counsel was given, there was no documentation.

Matt Schmitz made a motion to enter into executive session. Lori Wallace seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The results are as follows:

- Keith Huntsman – Yes
- Lori Wallace – Yes
- Matt Schmitz – Yes
- Zemarcus Mays – Yes
- Abigail Kilcrease – Yes
- Jessica Allred – Yes

Motion carried.

A motion to exit executive session was made by Keith Huntsman. Seconded by Matt Schmitz. A roll call vote was taken. The results are as follow:

- Keith Huntsman – Yes
- Lori Wallace – Yes
- Matt Schmitz – Yes
- Zemarcus Mays – Yes
- Abigail Kilcrease – Yes
- Jessica Allred – Yes

Motion carried.

Matt Schmitz made a motion to amend the five (5) day suspension to three (3) days of suspension, in which two (2) days of pay will be reimbursed to Joseph Waller. Seconded by Jessica Allred. A roll call vote was conducted. The results are as follows:

- Keith Huntsman – No
- Matt Schmitz – Yes
- Lori Wallace – Yes
- Zemarcus Mays – No

- Abigail Kilcrease – Yes
- Jessica Allred – Yes

With a majority vote of yes, the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.