**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ACT 84 OF 2011, RELATING TO THE FLORENCE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER THREE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SO AS TO MODIFY THE PROCEDURE FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE DISTRICT BUDGET AND PROVIDE FOR THE MANNER OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND FINAL APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE DISTRICT.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. SECTION 3 of Act 84 of 2011 is amended to read:

“SECTION 3. ~~(A)~~ ~~On the first Saturday of May of each year, the Board of Trustees of Florence County School District Number Three shall hold a public meeting, open to all residents of the district who are registered electors, for the purpose of a vote on the approval of the proposed budget for the district for the ensuing fiscal year. The balloting must be held at a place within the school district and must commence not later than 8:30 a.m. and shall continue throughout the day until the poll is closed at 7:00 p.m. The vote and the location of the balloting must be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation within the district at least four times during the period sixty days prior to the date of the balloting. The vote and the location of the balloting also must be published on the website operated by the district for a period of at least forty‑five days prior to the date set for the balloting.~~

~~(B)~~ ~~During the sixty‑day period prior to the public meeting provided for in item (A), the board of trustees of the district shall publish its proposed budget for the operation of the school or schools within the district, together with the estimated millage necessary to carry the budget into effect. The proposed budget must be available for review at the Lake City Library, at the district office, on the district’s website as a downloadable file, and in other ways convenient to public access.~~

~~(C)~~ ~~The board shall conduct at least two hearings, one each on the respective Saturdays next proceeding the first Saturday in May, to review the proposed budget. The hearings shall be open to comment and question from the citizens present and electors qualified to vote shall be allowed to offer amendments to the budget at any such hearing and any amendment must be considered by the board of trustees and acted on by the board of trustees at the meeting at which it is offered. The hearings shall be recorded and a transcript shall be made and be available for the public meeting.~~

~~(D)~~ ~~The budget and millage and any incorporated amendments must be formally submitted to a vote of the registered electors of Florence County School District Number Three on the first Saturday in May and only may be adopted by majority vote of the qualified electors present and casting a ballot. A summary of the budget shall be available for distribution to the public at the location of the balloting. The Florence County Election and Voter Registration Commission shall be responsible for the conduct of the balloting and the expenses therefore shall be paid by Florence County School District Number Three. The Florence County Election and Voter Registration Commission shall use the most current voter registration information available in determining a voter’s eligibility to participate in the balloting. The budget offered by the board of trustees must maintain a tax millage levy equal to at least the level of per pupil financial effort established in the previous fiscal year.~~ (A) Prior to the adoption of the final district budget for the ensuing fiscal year, the Board of Trustees of Florence County School District Number Three shall hold at least two public meetings, open to all residents of the district, for the purpose of a review and explanation of the proposed budget for the district for the ensuing fiscal year.

(B) Not later than the second day of April each year, the board of trustees of the district shall publish its proposed budget for the operation of the school or schools within the district, together with the estimated millage necessary to carry the budget into effect. The proposed budget must be available for review at the Lake City Library, at the district office, on the district’s website as a downloadable file, and in other ways convenient to public access.

(C) The board shall conduct the two public meetings as required in Section 3(A) above sometime between April first and the regularly scheduled board meeting in May of the same year. The board will publish the dates of these meetings at least one week in advance of each meeting. The publishing of the dates of the two public meetings must be by, but not limited to, notice in the local newspaper, on the district’s website, and in other ways convenient to public access. The two public meetings must be a minimum of one week apart. Each meeting will have a time set aside for public comment. As with all board meetings, minutes must be taken and made available to the public.

(D) The budget offered by the board of trustees must maintain a tax millage levy equal to at least the level of per pupil financial effort established in the previous fiscal year.

(E) The district administration shall maintain a register of all persons who have indicated, in writing, their desire to receive notices, communications, reports, and any other periodic information involving the budget from the district. Citizens interested in being listed on the register must file their names and addresses by which they desire to receive communications in person at the district office or by written communication mailed or delivered to the district office.”

SECTION 2. SECTION 4 of Act 84 of 2011 is amended to read:

“SECTION 4. ~~Not later than the last day of June following the vote on the approval of the budget and the millage as provided for in SECTION 3, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Florence County School District Number Three, shall certify the budget and millage to the county auditor who shall levy the millage upon all taxable property within the school district. The treasurer of Florence County shall collect taxes levied and the proceeds derived from the levy. The treasurer shall keep these proceeds and disburse to the district upon warrants issued or drawn by the school district. A tax levied under the provisions of this act may not be repealed at any subsequent meeting of the district board of trustees occurring after the last day of June following the vote on the approval of the budget and the millage as provided for in SECTION 3.~~ One week following the adoption of the final budget for the district, but not later than the last day of June, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Florence County School District Number Three, shall certify the budget and millage to the county auditor who shall levy the millage upon all taxable property within the school district. The treasurer of Florence County shall collect taxes levied and the proceeds derived from the levy. The treasurer shall keep these proceeds and disburse them to the district upon warrants issued or drawn by the school district. A tax levied under the provisions of this act may not be repealed at any subsequent meeting of the district board of trustees occurring after the approval of the budget and the millage as provided for in SECTION 3.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor

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