

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-36

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT OF THE PELL CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM

WHEREAS, in 1982, the City of Pell City formed the Pell City School System by separating from the St. Clair County School System; and,

WHEREAS, following the approval of Amendment 972 to the Constitution of Alabama, the St. Clair County Board of Education and the Pell City Board of Education formally established the “Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District,” which is comprised of all land located within the city limits of the City of Pell City and that portion of the unincorporated region of St. Clair County served by the Pell City School System (the “County portion”); and,

WHEREAS, since the formation of the Pell City School System, those individuals that reside outside the city limits of the City of Pell City and within the County portion of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District have not been legally eligible to serve on the Pell City Board of Education; and,

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Pell City Board of Education requested a property tax increase in the entire Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District through the Pell City Kids Count Referendum and promised to address the issue of representation for families residing in the County portion of the District; and,

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Pell City Board of Education determined that it was in the best interests of all citizens residing in the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District to return the Pell City Board of Education to an appointed board, as it existed when the Pell City School System was formed, and to legally establish that the appointed members of the Pell City Board of Education shall be qualified individuals who reside within the entire Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District, with at least two of those members being appointed from the County portion of the District; and,

WHEREAS, the Pell City Board of Education unanimously requested that the local legislative delegation propose a local constitutional amendment to address the governance issues between the Pell City School System and the St. Clair County School System and to modify existing Alabama law to allow individuals who reside in the County portion of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District to serve on the Pell City Board of Education; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Pell City supported the unanimous decision of the Pell City Board of Education and agreed that the proposed legislation was in the best interests of all citizens of St. Clair County; and,

WHEREAS, the voters of St. Clair County overwhelmingly approved the local constitutional amendment in November 2024, with over 54 percent of the voters in the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District approving the measure; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with the local constitutional amendment, now known as Amendment 1018 to the Constitution of Alabama (“Amendment 1018”), new members of the Pell City Board of Education will be appointed by the City of Pell City under Alabama law upon the expiration of the terms of office of the current members of the Board; and,

WHEREAS, recently, Dr. James Martin, Superintendent of the Pell City School System, announced his intention to resign effective April 30, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, recognizing the need for continuous leadership for the Pell City School System, the Pell City Board of Education has diligently hired an interim superintendent to manage the system’s operations until a permanent Superintendent can be selected; and,

WHEREAS, the Pell City Board of Education has also hired the Alabama Association of School Boards (“AASB”) to lead the search for the next Superintendent of the Pell City School System; and,

WHEREAS, because Amendment 1018 mandates that at least two new board members of the Pell City Board of Education must reside outside the current City limits but within the County portion of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District, there will be a substantial shift in board composition when the terms of the current board members expire in a few months, with at least 40 percent of the members being new appointments; and,

WHEREAS, high-quality applicants for the office of Superintendent of the Pell City School System will desire to know the next members of the Board of Education for whom he or she will be working, and because that information is not currently known, the number and quality of applicants for the office of Superintendent of the Pell City School System could be reduced if the current Pell City Board of Education attempts to hire the next Superintendent before a new Board of Education is selected; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Pell City has been contacted by a representative of AASB who has invited the Mayor and the members of the City Council to participate in AASB’s ongoing search for a permanent Superintendent for the Pell City School System; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Pell City believe that the current Pell City Board of Education should not appoint the next permanent Superintendent of the Pell City School System; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Pell City believe it is in the best interest of the Pell City School System to allow the incoming, newly constituted Board of Education the responsibility and opportunity to conduct a thorough and thoughtful search for the next Superintendent and the opportunity to select the next Superintendent; and,

WHEREAS, this will ensure that the next leader of the Pell City School System will align with the vision and composition of the newly appointed board, reflecting the will of the community as expressed through the recent election; and,

WHEREAS, most importantly, allowing the next members of the Pell City Board of Education to appoint the new Superintendent will also ensure that the first members of the Pell City Board of Education to ever reside outside the City limits will be allowed to participate in one of the most important decisions that a school system can make; and,

WHEREAS, residents of the County portion of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District have long requested voting representation on the Pell City Board of Education, and thankfully, in 2024 the community fixed this long-standing representation issue through the passage of Amendment 1018; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Pell City have determined that it would be unfair and inequitable if the current Board of Education selected the next Superintendent days or weeks before the first Board of Education members from the County portion of the Pell City School System take office; and,

WHEREAS, such a result would clearly undermine the intent of the voters when they approved Amendment 1018; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Pell City have determined that it is wise, prudent, and in the best interests of all citizens served by the Pell City School System to pass this Resolution requesting that the current members of the Pell City Board of Education refrain from appointing the next Superintendent of the Pell City School System and urging the current Board members to allow that important decision to be made by the next Board of Education, which will be constituted for the first time in history by members that reside from all portions of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Pell City, Alabama, as follows:

1. For the reasons set forth above, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Pell City hereby respectfully request that the current members of the Pell City Board of Education refrain from appointing the next Superintendent of the Pell City School System and urge the current Board members to allow that important decision to be made by the next Board of Education, which will be constituted for the first time in history by members that reside from all portions of the Pell City School Attendance Zone and Tax District.

2. The City Manager is hereby directed to inform the Pell City Board of Education and its consultant, AASB, that the City of Pell City shall not participate in a Superintendent search conducted by AASB on behalf of the current Pell City Board of Education.

RESOLVED this 21st day of April, 2025.

W. Judge Alverson, Council President

ATTEST:

Sheree D. Pruitt - City Clerk

APPROVED this 21st day of April, 2025.

William T. Pruitt, IV, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sheree D. Pruitt - City Clerk