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Mayor explains charter school issue

APRIL 20, 2018 BY ADMIN

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by **Paul Bailey**

On April 23, the Matthews Town Board will review and approve a legislative agenda to provide our legislative representatives the town's position on matters coming before the legislature in the upcoming short session and in the regular session in January 2019.

One of the items on the agenda is House Bill 514, which, if supported by the town board and subsequently passed by the N.C. Senate, will put into place legislation for Matthews and Mint Hill to initiate municipal charter schools. I want to provide information on how a municipal charter school would work and help address some concerns.

Both a charter school and a municipal charter school are public schools. A municipal charter works the same way as the established charter school process. Any charter school must petition the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to have their charter approved. There are a few differences:

- The board of directors of the charter school are the "school board" and oversee the operation of the charter and the school. In the case of a municipal charter school, the municipalities' town board may serve as the board of directors or may appoint individuals to serve as the board of directors.
- As with any charter school, a municipal charter would co-exist with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Parents would have the same choices they have now for their students, such as CMS, private school, home school and charter school. If you are satisfied with your situation with CMS, you simply continue with your school as assigned by CMS.
- Under the charter school and municipal charter school options, no CMS school property transfers to the charter organization. The municipal charter would be responsible for housing the students. CMS students would

continue to go to CMS schools.

- The state provides funds to operate CMS on a per pupil basis. Charter schools receive a pass-through from CMS for the students the charter school is teaching. The pass-through amount is equal to the per pupil funding provided by the state (for example, if CMS gets \$8,000 per student from the state and 3,000 of the 6,000 Matthews students in CMS, home schools, or other charter schools decide to go to the municipal charter, then the municipal charter would receive the \$24 million as a pass-through from funds provided to CMS by the state for those 3,000 students).
- The municipal charter bill allows, but does not require, Matthews to provide funding to the municipal charter school in addition to the state funds.

Addressing the process for a municipal charter school:

- If the Town of Matthews supports HB 514 and the Senate passes HB 514, it does not create a Matthews municipal charter school, it simply gives Matthews the opportunity to start a municipal charter school.
- Starting a municipal charter school would be a significant undertaking and would need to include an extended period of due-diligence and public input.
- If the decision was made to proceed with a municipal charter, submitting the charter to the state is an involved process and will take a significant period of time. All of the students in Matthews are able to go to CMS schools in Matthews or Mint Hill for the first time in over 30 years. My discussions with parents when I served as the District 6 representative on the school board and as your mayor show that you are happy with the present situation with CMS. In fact, the survey performed by CMS in 2015-16 showed a majority of citizens in every zip code in the county wanted students to go to school near their homes and each school to have equity in education and opportunity. Matthews also supported the \$910 million CMS bond package. There is no intent at this time to begin pursuing a municipal charter school for Matthews. However, if circumstances with CMS change, we must be positioned to have the ability to pursue options to assure a quality education for our students. The process to enact such legislation can take two years or more. We must be prepared to address changed circumstances, should they occur, in a timely manner.

Thank you for your continued support of our wonderful town. We have always worked hard to make sure our citizens determine the destiny of our town. Together WE make Matthews unique and the greatest place to live in North Carolina.

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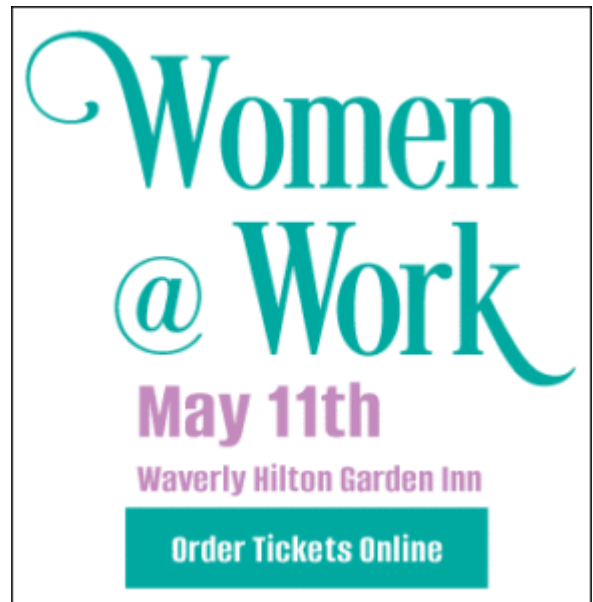
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Women
@ Work
May 11th
Waverly Hilton Garden Inn
Order Tickets Online

A promotional poster for a 'Women @ Work' event. The title 'Women @ Work' is written in a large, teal, cursive font. Below it, the date 'May 11th' is in a bold, purple font, and the location 'Waverly Hilton Garden Inn' is in a smaller purple font. At the bottom, a teal rectangular button contains the text 'Order Tickets Online' in white.



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A poster for 'The Queen's Cup Steeplechase'. At the top is a crest with a jockey on a horse and the text 'THE QUEEN'S CUP' and '23rd ANNUAL'. Below the crest, the event title 'THE QUEEN'S CUP STEEPLECHASE' is in large white serif font. The date and location 'SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2018 | MINERAL SPRINGS, NC' are in a smaller white font. A blue banner below that says 'BUY PACKAGES & BADGES NOW AT QUEENSCUP.ORG'. The bottom half of the poster features a photograph of five jockeys on horses in various colored silks. At the bottom left, it says 'BENEFITING alzheimer's association' with the Alzheimer's Association logo. At the bottom right, it says 'PRESENTED BY SONITROL' with the Sonitrol logo.

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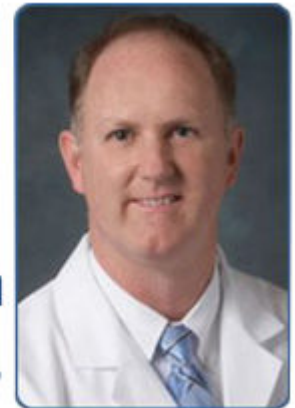
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