

RIVER BEND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #2
1110 3RD STREET
FULTON, IL 61252
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF THE TAX LEVY HEARING AND REGULAR DECEMBER BOARD MEETING

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

December 17, 2025

The Tax Levy Hearing and Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, were held on December 17, 2025, in the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Levy Hearing to order at 6:30pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary, the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, Mary Simmons, and Travis Temple, Absent: Andrew Meyers. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent, Kelli Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary, and Paige Emerson, Student Liaison.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public comment on the levy. There was no public comment.

Dr. Hogue shared that the Tax Levy Hearing is required when the levy increase is above 4.9%. The district will ask for a large increase in the event the EAV increases so that the district captures all available funds.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls to adjourn the Tax Levy Hearing at 6:33pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:33pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary, the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, Mary Simmons, and Travis Temple, Absent: Andrew Meyers. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent, Kelli Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary, and Paige Emerson, Student Liaison.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Belle Curley, Christa Curley, Dave Curley, Stacy Gates, Michele James, John Lambert, Jeremy Leitzen, Andy Meyers, Braedon Meyers, Tim Phelps, Dawson Price, Owen VanZuiden, and Jacob Voss; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeff Parsons; Assistant Principals: Nicole Bowers and Aimee Marten.

President Portz led all present in a relationship and culture building activity where everyone took a turn sharing a picture from their phone photo gallery and the story behind it.

Dr. Hogue added Unity Preschool building to the agenda.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Temple, to approve the agenda as amended. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

President Portz asked if there was any information the RBEA would like to share. Ms. Gates stated there was nothing to share at this time.

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum. There was no one wishing to speak during public forum.

Mr. Parsons introduced students representing the high school golf team that placed 2nd at the State Tournament for the second year in a row. There were two students who placed individually as well. The students shared they learned to play as a team and not just for themselves this year. Mr. Parsons then introduced the two overall Steamers of the Quarter, Belle Curley and Braedon Meyers.

The high school and middle school had nothing to add to their reports and there were no questions from board members. The elementary school shared that the safety bollards and guard rails had been installed at the preschool.

Member Portz thanked the board members for allowing him to attend the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago and indicated that he took something away from all the sessions he attended. Member Portz also shared that he would like to add another student liaison member to the board and have each one serve a two year term. The terms would be on a rotating basis so there is a veteran liaison to show the new liaison what the expectations are.

Dr. Hogue shared some highlights from the Finance Committee meeting.

- Bob Lewis with PMA reviewed bonding information. The district will acquire \$12 million in debt certificates in February to purchase bonds in June for the gymnasium build. The district will also seek an additional \$3.5 million in bonds for the roof coatings on all buildings.

Dr. Hogue shared that overall enrollment remains steady.

Dr. Hogue shared the second semester professional development calendar and informed the board members the focus would be on aligning standards.

Mrs. Parsons shared information from the Illinois School Report Card. All buildings received a Commendable score. The district will continue to focus on teaching and learning and aligning standards to help improve scores. Mrs. Parsons also shared that the State will be instituting new standards for next year's Report Card.

Michele James, John Lambert, and Tim Phelps with Veregy shared updates on the middle school gymnasium project. They shared design changes to help keep costs under \$12 million, including removing an office area and one of two classroom additions. The district will also need to decide building material to help reduce costs, options of an all brick, all metal, or half and half design were shared. Veregy will continue to meet with the district to narrow down design options before going out to bid.

Dr. Hogue shared the Unity Preschool building and adjacent lot will be for sale with Unity moving to Clinton, Iowa. The initial sale price for the building is \$250,000. Several ideas for use of the space were discussed, however, board members felt this expense was not beneficial.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the consent agenda, including the November 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, November Treasurer's Report, and December Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$355,528.62, subject to audit. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

The policy committee recommended approval of the second reading of select policy updates and to adopt as policy.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the second reading of select policy updates and adopt as policy: 2:120, 2:150, 2:270, 3:10, 3:50, 3:60, 4:10, 4:30, 4:80, 4:110, 4:140, 4:150, 4:160, 4:170, 4:190, 5:10, 5:20, 5:90, 5:100, 5:120, 5:185, 5:190, 5:200, 5:220, 5:280, 5:300, 6:20, 6:40, 6:60, 6:130, 6:135, 6:140, 6:160, 6:210, 6:220, 6:235, 6:240, 6:260, 6:270, 6:280, 6:300, 6:310, 6:315, 6:320, 7:10, 7:70, 7:130, 7:140, 7:150, 7:180, 7:190, 7:250, 7:290, 7:310, 7:315, 7:340, 8:30, 8:100. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2025 Tax Levy. This levy represents a 12% increase. This will allow the district to receive all funds if the Estimated Assessed Value (EAV) were to increase from the predicted value given in October. The levy will only generate additional funds in the case the EAV goes up between now and the rate setting date in March.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Temple, to approve the 2025 Tax Levy as presented with estimated total levy extension, without bonds of \$7,153,000 and direct the Board President and Secretary to sign, and authorize the recording secretary to process the required documents with the County Clerk. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Member Portz shared with the board members that they would need to complete an evaluation for Dr. Hogue even though he is in the last year of his contract and retiring.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Temple, to approve setting a date for the Superintendent's Evaluation on January 28, 2026 at the River Bend District Office at 6:00pm. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Health, Life, Safety (HLS) Amendment for roof coating on all buildings.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the HLS Amendment to replace the wet insulation and coat the roofs at all buildings. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approving the resolution authorizing and providing for the issue of not to exceed \$12,050,000 debt certificates for the purpose of altering, repairing and equipping school facilities, including building and equipping a gymnasium at the River Bend Middle School, and improving school sites and authorizing the sale of said certificates to the purchaser thereof.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Falls, to approve the resolution authorizing and providing for the issue of not to exceed \$12,050,000 debt certificates for the purpose of altering, repairing and equipping school facilities, including building and equipping a gymnasium at the River Bend Middle School, and improving school sites and authorizing the sale of said certificates to the purchaser thereof. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the resolution to transfer funds from Working Cash to the Transportation Fund for the purchase of a lift bus for student transportation.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the resolution abating a portion of funds from Working Cash to the Transportation Fund. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the purchase of a lift bus from Central States. The district has two wheelchair bound students that need transportation.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Falls, to approve the purchase of a lift bus from Central States Bus Sales, Inc for \$82,400. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the high school course handbook updates. Member Folk would like the wording regarding students taking courses through Edmentum modified to say approval of taking courses would need administrative approval to allow for students to take courses similar to dual credit courses that are not offered at the high school.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the high school course handbook updates as amended. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended switching pest control services from McCloud to Plunketts.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Portz, to approve ending pest control services with McCloud and approving the contract with Plunketts for \$2,937 for all school buildings. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended declaring the storage containers at the high school as surplus goods and to dispose of in an appropriate manner.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to declare the storage containers that the high school as surplus goods and dispose of in an appropriate manner. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared that the district received \$500 from Boonstra Heating for overdrawn lunch accounts at the Elementary School, \$1,856 from 1st Reformed Church for the preschool, \$1,275 from CF Industries for teacher grants, \$4,500 from the Sauk Valley Area Chamber for FFA, and \$500 from Central Bank for Robotics.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Temple to accept gifts to the district as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Falls, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retire, of Shelia Alexander, 4th Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Kendrick Yates as Night Cleaner at Fulton High School.*
- *Approve the following Girls Basketball Volunteer Coaches at River Bend Middle School for the 2025-2026 school year: Lynn Schipper, Lynne Coffey, Stacey Collachia, and Stephanie Woodin.*
- *Approve the following Wrestling Volunteer Coaches at River Bend Middle School for the 2025-2026 school year: Seth Spooner and Joe Ottens.*
- *Approve Wiley Blasdell as a Volunteer Wrestling Coach at Fulton High School for the 2025-2026 school year.*
- *Approve Amanda Stillings as Volunteer Girls Basketball Coach at River Bend Middle School for the 2025-26 school year.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 6:30pm at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to adjourn the meeting at 10:01pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dan Portz, President
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County

Mary Simmons, Secretary
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County