

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

December 20, 2023

The Truth in Taxation Levy Hearing of the Board of Education of River Bend CUSD #2, Whiteside County, Illinois was held on December 20, 2023, at the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Truth in Taxation Levy Hearing to Order at 6:30pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary the following members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Eric Fish, Andrew Meyers, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons; Absent: Jane Orman-Luker; Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent, and Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary.

President Portz led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to adjourn the public hearing at 6:32pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

(Member Orman-Luker entered at 6:32pm)

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend CUSD #2, Whiteside County, Illinois was held on December 20, 2023, at the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:32pm. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Eric Fish, Andrew Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons, Absent: none. Others Present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Reese Dykstra, Stacy Dykstra, Michele James, John Lambert, Jeremy Leitzen, Paige Lower, Rae Beth Lower, and Tim Phelps; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, Jeffrey Parsons, and Assistant Principal: Kelli Parsons.

Additions to the agenda. Dr. Hogue added to the superintendent's report an update on the Thomson detachment.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the agenda as amended. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

There was no communication from the RBEA.

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

Principal Reports. Mr. Parsons introduced the two Overall Steamers of the Quarter – Paige Lower and Reese Dykstra. The FFA Chapter has been getting their name out into the community, with the sale of yard signs and t-shirts. The boys' basketball program was recognized by the IBCA for their 1500 wins. Mr. Parsons honored Mr. Anton at the high school band and choir concert for his 30 years of service.

Mr. Henrekin thanked Mrs. Parsons for stepping in and helping out at the middle school while he has been out recovering from surgery. Mr. Henrekin also thanked Officer Leitzen and Mrs. Wiersema who have been a tremendous help as well. The middle school field trip to Chestnut is planned for this Friday, everyone is hopeful the weather cooperates.

Mr. Hoese shared that the elementary school concerts went well. Breaking the grade levels up into different days and times continues to work well. Mr. Hoese and the elementary school were able to coordinate gift assistance for 25 students through the generosity of other families. The Fulton Fire Department Sparkettes also provided snow pants and boots to families.

All of the board members that attended the Triple I Conference found great value in the sessions they attended. Member Orman-Luker shared one of her sessions was about getting, nurturing, and retaining administration. The number of people entering into the admin roles has diminished significantly over the last few years. The session indicated that administrators are looking for personal coaching and professional development opportunities.

Member Simmons shared she attended a few sessions geared towards communication. How to keep open communication and how to listen and bring the issues to the board were the main focus. Member Falls shared her biggest take away session discussed strategic planning. The group that presented gave an example where a Board set their plan, then each building created a team to set their building plans based off the district plan. Each group then used a metric they had designed to measure their growth.

Member Portz shared about a company that installs badge readers on all doors. Instead of teachers having a key to get into their classroom, they would use a badge to open the doors, and all staff and students would have badges to get in doors. Member Portz attended a session on adding students to the board that Member Simmons brought back to the board after conference last year. All members are supportive of adding student voice to board discussions.

(Member Ritchie left at 8:00 pm)

Dr. Hogue shared that enrollment remains steady.

Dr. Hogue shared the second semester professional development schedule. The district will continue to focus on Capturing Kids Heart training.

Dr. Hogue shared bonding options provided by PMA. With the bids in for construction Dr. Hogue will need to ask for a \$3.7 million option be put together. Dr. Hogue will look to have PMA at the January board meeting to discuss different payback options.

Dr. Hogue shared that the five acres of land behind the preschool and bus garage are for sale. This would allow the district to house all busses in one location and would allow for the current bus garage by the high school to be repurposed.

Dr. Hogue presented three calendar options for the 2024-2025 school year. Options one and two are similar, as well as being similar to years past, with school starting the second week in August and finishing around Memorial Day. Option three school would start the third week in August to allow for possible construction delays and school would finish the first week in June. The district will finalize the calendar in April once construction at the elementary school has begun.

Dr. Hogue provided an update on the Thomson detachment from West Carroll. The feasibility study will be completed in March and ROE 8 will make their decision after review of the study. Dr. Hogue shared that the letter submitted to ROE 8 from the detachment group contained some inaccuracies and he will be submitting a letter of response to ROE 8.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the consent agenda including the November 15, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes; November's Treasurer's Report; and December bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$341,032.54, subject to audit. Roll Call Vote:

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2023 Tax Levy with a 11.75% increase. The district asks for the higher rate so in the event EAV increases the district is able to capture all available funds.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the 2023 Tax Levy as presented with estimated total levy extension, without bonds of \$6,063,388 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 Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

The Policy Committee met on December 8, 2023, and recommends approval of the first reading of select policy updates.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the first reading of select policy updates: 2:20, 2:110, 2:120, 2:200, 2:220, 3:50, 4:10, 4:30, 4:60, 4:90, 4:130, 4:160, 4:170, 5:30, 5:50, 5:90, 5:120, 5:150, 5:190, 5:200, 5:210, 5:220, 5:250, 5:330, 6:15, 6:20, 6:30, 6:50, 6:60, 6:65, 6:230, 6:270, 6:280, 7:50, 7:60, 7:70, 7:160, 7:190, 7:250, 7:270, 7:285, 7:290, 7:345, and 8:30. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

The Board will meet on January 25, 2024, at 6:00pm at the River Bend District Office for the superintendent’s evaluation.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the Special Meeting Date on January 25, 2024, at 6:00pm at the District Office for the superintendent’s evaluation. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board that Benning Group, LLC had submitted the lowest bid for audit services. The district is pleased to maintain its collaboration with Benning Group, LLC.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the audit bid submitted by Benning Group, LLC for three years. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Fulton High School Course Handbook Updates. Member Orman-Luker asked for clarification on some of the new AG course titles for the shop classes. Mr. Parsons explained that the courses and content taught will be the same, the new course titles allow for them to count for FFA points for the students.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the Fulton High School Course Handbook Updates as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the job description for the new Fulton High School Career Pathway & Transition Coordinator position. Member Orman-Luker is in favor of the new position but shared concerns that the amount of work required may be overwhelming for one staff person.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the Fulton High School Career Pathway & Transition Coordinator job description. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the contract and plan with Veregy. Michele James, Tim Phelps, and John Lambert from Veregy shared the final drawings and bids received from the construction companies. The plan is to break ground in February and be complete with the construction the first week in August.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the contract with Veregy through School of Illinois Public Cooperative pricing agreement, with a cost limit at \$3.7 million. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the student internship opportunity with Veregy. The student would work with the project manager gaining valuable hands on experience. The interested students would apply then go through an interview process to be selected. The students would work with the project manager one class period every other day during the school year, and four hours per day Monday through Friday during the summer. The summer hours would be paid.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the student internship with Veregy. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the bread bid from Pan-O-Gold Baking Co.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the bid from Pan-O-Gold Baking Co for bread for the district. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

There were no gifts to the district.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the recommendation to hire Joe Bacidore as Fulton High School Scholastic Bowl Coach for the 2023-2024 school year.*
- *Approve the approximate 9 ½ week maternity leave of Laura Spillane, January 17, 2024 through April 2, 2024.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Patrick Sanchez as bus driver for the district, upon completion of school bus license, with an anticipated start date of January 11, 2024.*
- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retire, of Michelle Letcher, paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2024-2025 school year, under the terms of Article VII, section 7.3 of the collective bargaining agreement.*
- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retire, of Timothy Green, custodian at River Bend Middle School, effective January 10, 2024.*
- *Approve the following Volunteer Wrestling Coaches at River Bend Middle School for the 2023-24 School Year: Jeremy Fosdick, Jesse Kennedy, and Seth Spooner.*

- *Approve the internal transfer of Alanna Ganzer from Night Cleaner at Fulton High School to Night Cleaner at River Bend Middle School, effective January 11, 2024.*
- *Approve the resignation of Chris Seesser as Robotics Coach at Fulton High School, effective immediately.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire the following coaches for the 2024-2025 school year:*

Level I

*Varsity Football - Patrick Lower
Varsity Volleyball - Stacey Germann*

Level IA

Golf - Mitch VanZuiden

Level II

*Assistant Football - Derek Germann
Sophomore Football - Dan Wilkins
Freshmen Football - Zach Ryder
Sophomore Volleyball - Camerin Huizenga
Freshmen Volleyball - Jenna Stremlow*

Level III

*7th Grade Volleyball - Colleen Temple
8th Grade Volleyball - Monique Harris*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, January 24, 2023, at 6:30pm, at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 pm. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

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

Eric Fish, Secretary
Board of Education
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