

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

February 20, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend CUSD #2, Whiteside County, Illinois was held on February 20, 2024, at the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30pm. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary, the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Eric Fish, Andrew Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, and Mary Simmons; Absent: Jay Ritchie; Others Present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Stacy Gates, Michele James, Jeremy Leitzen, Michelle Snyder, Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeffrey Parsons and Assistant Principals: Kelli Parsons and Kathleen Schipper.

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

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, 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 Ms. Stacy Gates who was chosen by the Quad City Engineering and Science Council as the 2024 QCESC STEM Teacher of the Year. Stacy has been teaching at Fulton High School for 14 years and was instrumental in bringing Dual Credit Chemistry to the high school. Stacy will be recognized for this award at a dinner on Thursday, February 22, 2024. Mr. Parsons also shared the high school will be meeting with Central Bank to discuss the continued partnership and naming rights of the Steamer Suite. Mrs. Schipper shared first semester failure data. Overall, there are fewer students who failed a course this year compared to last year.

Mr. Henrekin shared that he has also met with students and parents regarding first semester failures. He has also started talking with students whose grades are not looking the best for second semester.

Mrs. Parsons shared a Capturing Kids Hearts win from a parent meeting. The student is one who has benefited from the behavior questions and social contracts. The parent would like to help reinforce these practices at home and will be discussing creating a family social contract. Mr. Hoese shared that the Books Are Fun fundraiser was well received. Approximately \$40,000 was raised to put towards new books and all students in grades pre-k through 5th will receive at least five books each.

Member Orman-Luker reported on the River Bend Educational Foundation Meeting held on February 13, 2024. All are invited to the Academic Excellence dinner being held on Saturday, March 2, 2024. Tickets are available for purchase at the district office or at the high school office. The speaker will be Aarik Woods, graduate of Fulton High School.

Dr. Hogue reported on the Facilities Committee Meeting held on February 20, 2024.

- FES/RBMS Construction Update: Fencing has gone up, playground equipment has been moved, roadways have been set up, and major construction will start on Monday, February 26th. Veregy is open to providing learning opportunities for students along the way as many elementary students have expressed an interest in knowing more about the construction. Veregy also conducted interviews for the high school student internship position. They selected two students for this opportunity.
- Preschool Remodel: There will be a pre-bid meeting on February 21st, bids will be due in early March. The next step is to pick out furniture so that it will arrive in time for the start of the school year.
- Summer Projects: smaller list than previous years due to construction
 - High School weight room expansion and asbestos removal in old restrooms currently used for storage
 - Commercial kitchen update at the high school – the final updates needed to make the culinary arts space an approved commercial kitchen will take place over the summer
 - Floors at the high school will be completed over spring break
 - A new rooftop unit will also be installed at the high school over spring break
- Summer Support Staff: The district will again hire a few people to help with cleaning and other summer projects. Jen Pepper will once again oversee the landscaping duties.
- Summer Purchases: In addition to repairing the current high school walk in freezer, they would like to purchase an additional outdoor freezer for overflow. There are also some leaks in the roof at the high school that need to be addressed.

Dr. Hogue reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on February 20, 2024.

- The current treasurer's report was reviewed. Both revenues and expenditures are on track. Member Orman-Luker asked that a letter to the community be drafted to explain where the funding for the construction at the elementary school is coming from.
- The next step in the bond process will be the hearing at the March board meeting.
- Rachel prepared tentative budget amendments that will be presented at the April board meeting for approval.

Dr. Hogue reminded the board members of the IASB Northwest Division Meeting taking place on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 in Stillman Valley, there is also a virtual option. Members Falls, Simmons, and Dr. Hogue will attend virtually.

Dr. Hogue shared enrollment increased by six students.

Michele James with Veregy provided a construction update. Everything is moving along nicely in large part due to the nice weather. They look to start on the footings next week. Two high school students interviewed for the internship opportunity. The internship will start March 12th with the students meeting twice a week with the contract manager and then will start five days a week after the school year. The construction team is also looking for opportunities to bring the elementary students out

to the site so they can get a better look at what is going on. Many of the students have expressed interest in watching the construction during recess time.

Dr. Hogue shared that he and the principals have been working on a new format for principal communication for their board reports. The goal is to have all buildings reporting in a similar format. Member Fish would like updates on how the construction noise is affecting students and classrooms on the corresponding end of the building.

Dr. Hogue shared a new Oscar Clark Service Award the high school would like to award at their annual awards night. Mrs. Pepper brought the idea to the family and they are supportive of the award. The winner of this award would be chosen by a panel of teachers and would be awarded to someone who has followed in Oscar’s footsteps building relationships, serving others with a smile, and displaying the following characteristics: Selflessness, Empathy, Responsibility, Visionary, Integrity, Caring, and Encouragement. The board members are also in favor of this new award and keeping the memory of Oscar alive within the high school.

The board expressed their desire for a letter to go out to all seniors and their parents stating senior pranks will not be tolerated. The high school administration team will prepare a letter for review at the March board meeting.

Dr. Hogue shared that the feasibility study is almost complete. The company completing the study would like to meet with both districts and go over their findings. This meeting will be hosted by West Carroll on Thursday, March 21st.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the consent agenda including the January 24, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes; January 25, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes; January Treasurers Report; and February Bills Recommended for Payment in the amount of \$206,218.06 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.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the resolution declaring the intention to issue \$4,000,000 Working Cash Fund Bonds for the purpose of increasing the Working Cash Fund of the District and directing that notice of such intention to be published in the manner provided by law. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the resolution expressing official intent regarding certain capital expenditures to be reimbursed from proceeds of an obligation to be issued by the District.

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 Simmons, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retire, of Sheila Alexander, 4th Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2026-2027 school year, under the terms of Article VII, section 7.2 of the collective bargaining agreement.*
- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retire, of Waneta Snyder, Head Custodian at Fulton High School, effective August 1, 2025, under the terms of Article VII, section 7.3 of the collective bargaining agreement.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Aimee Marten as Special Education Teacher at Fulton Blended Preschool for the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Travis Hartman as Special Education Teacher at Fulton Elementary School for the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Kearston Norman as 3rd Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School for the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Russ McCallister as Fulton High School Wrestling Head Coach effective the end of the 2023-2024 school year.*
- *Approve the following volunteer coaches for the 2023-24 school year at the high school: Boys Track – Sam Stephan and Daniel Hartman; Baseball – Justin Jensen and Andy Meyers*
- *Approve Austin Smith as Volunteer Baseball Coach for the 2023-24 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Shanna Hudson as 3rd Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School for the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve closed session minutes dated January 25, 2024.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion Carried.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to move into closed session for the purpose of discussing matters concerning the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors or volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body at 8:06 pm. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Falls, yea
Member Fish, yea
Member Meyers, yea*

*Member Orman-Luker, yea
Member Portz, yea
Member Simmons, yea*

Motion Carried.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Fish, to come out of closed session for the purpose of discussing matters concerning the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors or volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body at 9:35 pm. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Falls, yea
Member Fish, yea
Member Meyers, yea*

*Member Orman-Luker, yea
Member Portz, yea
Member Simmons, yea*

Motion Carried.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 6:30pm, at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to adjourn the meeting at 9:35pm. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

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

Eric Fish, Secretary
Board of Education
River Bend CUSD #2
Whiteside County