

RIVER BEND COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #2

1100 3RD STREET

FULTON, IL 61252

BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET HEARING AND REGULAR SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

September 17, 2025

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

President Portz called the Budget Hearing to order at 6:33pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary, the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Mary Simmons, and Travis Temple, Absent: Andrew Meyers and Jay Ritchie. 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 welcomed all visitors including: Emilee Droegmiller, Miranda Frohling, Michele James, John Lambert, Jeremy Leitzen, Tim Phelps, and Zack Ratcliff; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeff Parsons; Assistant Principals: Nicole Bowers and Aimee Marten.

President Portz asked for questions or comments from the public or the Board regarding the budget. There were no questions or comments from the public or the Board. Dr. Hogue shared that the projected EAV amount had increased since the proposed budget was shared in August.

There being no further discussion it was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to adjourn the FY 26 Budget Hearing at 6:36pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:36pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary, the following board members were Present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Mary Simmons, and Travis Temple, Absent: Andrew Meyers and Jay Ritchie. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent, Kelli Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary, and Paige Emerson, Student Liaison.

President Portz led all present in a relationship and culture building activity where everyone took a turn sharing something fun they did this summer.

There were no additions to the agenda.

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

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

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum. Zack Ratcliff asked how long the district has had the Physical Education Waiver to not have physical education class everyday. Dr. Hogue informed Mr. Ratcliff that he would have to research when that started, however, he shared that the district has had the waiver the entire time he has been superintendent. President Portz

also shared the district has had the Physical Education Waiver the entire time he has been on the Board. Dr. Hogue informed Mr. Ratcliff he would find out the information and let him know at a later date.

The principals had nothing to add to their reports. Member Falls asked about CrisisGo. Dr. Hogue and the principals shared that it is the emergency communication app that the district uses for communication during emergency situations - the teachers can communicate via the app and roster students. Member Simmons shared that board members used to have the app and she would like it for her new phone, Member Falls would also like access to the app.

Fall baseline FastBridge testing data for the elementary and middle schools were shared with the board members. Teachers have already begun to make changes based on these tests in areas where it shows students are lacking compared to where they ended last school year.

Paige shared that she sent out a survey to students about AI usage, unfortunately she did not receive as many responses as she was hoping for. Nothing stood out to her, some students are utilizing it. President Portz and Dr. Hogue asked that Paige gather information from students on the potential building projects and what improvements the students would like to see.

Dr. Hogue shared a few highlights from the annual safety meeting held on August 27, 2025. The district reunification date has moved from October to January due to the bridge closure. The committee discussed installing safety bollards at the preschool. A company has been out to look at the area, the district is waiting for a quote. The district will look to have Dave Rogis host CPR and Stop the Bleed training for staff.

Member Simmons shared information from the September River Bend Education Foundation Meeting. A Fulton High School student attended the meeting to thank the foundation for approving the mini grant for him to be able to attend the HOBY conference, he shared it was a very valuable experience. Summer enrichment classes and one day trips went well, Mrs. Schipper has secured funding for next summer and the district will not need to ask the foundation for funding for another year. The Academic Excellence dinner date and speaker have been confirmed, the dinner will be on Saturday, February 28th and the speaker will be Brent Houzenga.

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

- Dr. Hogue provided an update on summer projects and asked to start a list of potential projects for next summer. A few items mentioned were carpet in a few places at the high school as well as locker rooms outside of the east gymnasium at the high school.
- Dr. Hogue shared that the district may use this year's maintenance grant to finish the health, life, safety door project at the high school.
- The committee discussed potential building additions with the Veregy team.

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

- The treasurer's report and FY26 budget were reviewed.
- Mark Hansen reviewed a PMA slide presentation with the committee members.
 - With no changes, the district's current outstanding debt will be paid off in 2031.
 - Four scenarios to pay back a \$30 million referendum were reviewed
 - Non-referendum bonding options were reviewed

Dr. Hogue informed the board members of the IASB Northwest Division Hybrid Meeting on Thursday, October 2nd. Dr. Hogue will be attending virtually due to the meeting being held in Winnebago. Dr. Hogue informed the board that River Bend will be hosting the Spring IASB meeting on March 5th.

Dr. Hogue shared that overall enrollment remains steady. Member Falls asked for a line chart for enrollment.

Michele James with Veregy presented a slide presentation to the board members sharing the survey results from those who had attended the town hall meeting regarding the proposed construction. She also shared a potential timeline to put a referendum vote on the March 2026 ballot and potential start date of use of the new additions. Michele also shared with the board the infrared readings for the roofs. At this time, all buildings are eligible for a roof coating versus a full tear off replacement. This roof coating comes with a 20 year warranty.

Dr. Hogue shared information from a company called Beyond Your Base that he and Mrs. Parsons consulted with regarding the potential referendum. Beyond Your Base is a company that specializes in helping school districts with the entire referendum process. The company felt that the potential dollar amount the district would be asking for was too high for a community of River Bend's size. Based on the conversation with Beyond Your Base and the Facilities Committee, Dr. Hogue's recommendation is to narrow the scope of the building projects and only move forward with the gymnasium addition at the middle school, and the multi-sport space at the high school, as well as the roof coating on all buildings. Member Portz feels the district needs to get the cost of the two building addition items down to \$17 million. Michele James will work on breaking out the cost for the roof coating on each building as well as narrowing the scope of the middle school gymnasium to try and bring costs down.

Dr. Hogue shared that staff will start to work on identifying age appropriate criteria for each of the Steamer Success Indicators.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to approve the consent agenda, including the August 5, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, August Treasurer's Report, and September Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$241,058.39, subject to audit. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the FY26 budget.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Temple, to approve the FY26 budget with total revenues of \$13,538,587.41 and total expenditures of \$13,037,162.32. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of posting on the website the 2025-26 Projected Administrative Compensation Report and the Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefit Report for the school year 2025.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Folk, to approve posting on the webpage the 2025-26 Projected Administrative Compensation Report and the Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefit Report for the school year 2025. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the snow bid submitted by Jody Bielema for the 2025-26 school year. Jody is the district's current snow removal company.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the bid submitted by Jody Bielema for \$700 per plow; \$900 per plow if eight (8) or more inches of snow. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

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

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the first reading of select policy updates: 1.10, 1.20, 1.30, 2.10, 2.80, 2.130, 2.240, 3.30, 4.50, 4.55, 4.180, 7.40, 7.90, 7.130, 7.140, 7.300, 7.325, 8.80. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approving items as surplus goods and dispose of in an appropriate manner.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to approve declaring library tables at Fulton High School, electric stove at Fulton Blended Preschool, filing cabinets, teacher desks, television, podium, and stand at Fulton Elementary School as surplus goods and dispose of in an appropriate manner. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of closing the Shop and Trap Shooting student activity accounts at the high school as these activities will be run under the FFA student activity account.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve closing the Shop and Trap Shooting Club student activity accounts at Fulton High School. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Steamer Success Indicators.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Simmons, to adopt the Steamer Success Indicators as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the MOA between Whiteside County Health Department and Whiteside County Health Clinic for mental health services for River Bend students. The health department will start by providing services one day a week and will increase time in the district as the need arises. Member Falls asked if they had enough staff to dedicate to our needs. Dr. Hogue stated the health department informed him they felt they had the staff necessary and would add staff in the future if needed.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Temple, to approve the MOA between Whiteside County Health Department and Whiteside County Community Health Clinic. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, abstain Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared that the district received \$500 from Ryan Spain for the Fulton High School Bass Fishing club, and \$1500 from Birkey's Farm Store for the Fulton High School FFA.

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

Member Falls, yea Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Portz, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the recommendation to hire Ally Reed as Fresh/Soph Softball Coach for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve Patrick Lower as a Volunteer Football Coach for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Kyle Jackson as Assistant Golf Coach for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Allie Wiersema, effective August 12, 2025.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Chris Marten as AG Teacher at Fulton High School, effective August 18, 2025.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Tracy Stanley as Paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective August 21, 2025.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Addison Crowley as Night Cleaner at Fulton High School, effective August 22, 2025.*
- *Approve the resignation of Dan Graham as Head Custodian at River Bend Middle School, effective August 26, 2025.*
- *Approve Josh Agnew and Merlin Butt as Volunteer Trap Shooting Coaches for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Sean VanKampen from Night Custodian at Fulton Elementary School to Head Custodian at River Bend Middle School, effective September 4, 2025.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Taylor Mabaga as 6th grade Girls Basketball Coach for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Jason Snyder as Industrial Technology Teacher at Fulton High School, effective August 6, 2025.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea Member Simmons, yea

Member Folk, yea Member Temple, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 6:30pm at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Folk, seconded by Member Temple, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26pm. 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