

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

August 11, 2021

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:38 P.M. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary the following members were present: Chris Barnett, Eric Fish, Andy Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons. Absent: None. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Virginia Petersen, Recording Secretary.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Kordelia Boles, Elise Bowen, Lynne Coffey, Heather Cook, Emily Daley, Tim Daley, Jane Eads, Elizabeth Falls, Magen Folk, Amanda Fosdick, Tessa Fosdick, Caleb Fuller, Kelly Gosch, Jill Hamstra, Christy Harris, John Kershner, Nicole Kershner, Jeremy Leitzen, Marie Meyers, Rich Pannell, Matt Sanderson, Shannon Sherman, Kathy Stoecker, and Nicole VanZuiden. Media: Jerry Lindsey, Cityone.com.

Additions to the agenda: Dr. Hogue added award received by Mrs. Schipper.

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 RBEA report.

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum.

Elizabeth Falls spoke against the mask mandate for K-12 students and staff. Some of her points were Covid will circulate with or without a mask, masks continue not to work, empty threats from the Governor's office, the Governor's office is being sued and has no control over the IDPH or ISBE, an insurance claim against the district would have to prove gross negligence on the district's part, consider the health and well-being of the students, show strong leadership-not subservient, and allow parents to make choices for their children.

Magen Folk asked the Board to make wearing masks optional. Currently, the choice is to go to school and wear a mask or stay home and do remote learning.

Shannon Sherman asked that masks be optional. The virus is not as deadly as it is being made out to be. A person could die from a car accident and if they had Covid at the time it would be reported as a Covid related death. She questioned what the positive rate is based on. Children need to build their immune system naturally.

Matt Sanderson informed the board he has been studying Covid the past year. The Board approved masks as optional on July 26, 2021. Why the change in direction other than the Governor's mandate? Covid cases reported should come from the number of cases reported in Clinton instead of Sterling since it is only two minutes away and people from Fulton spend more time in Clinton than Sterling. Currently, there are

only two cases of Covid in the Clinton Hospital. Mr. Sanderson believes the mandate is extortion, if you do not mask, something will be taken away.

President Portz moved the agenda to approval of the Return to Learn plan.

Dr. Hogue stated that the choice the Board has is to comply with the mandate requiring all school personnel and students to wear masks or dismiss the Governor’s Executive Order. Dr. Hogue read a letter from the State Superintendent encouraging school districts to comply with the order. Dr. Hogue presented pros and cons of each option, follow or dismiss. Overwhelming, school districts that follow the mandate are better off and students are safer. The state says accreditation will not be awarded to schools and athletes will not be allowed to participate in IHSA sports if the mandate is not followed. Lynne Coffey, Family Medicine Nurse Practitioner, indicated the wave of new cases coming from the south is here. Health Care organizations are still recommending masks be worn.

Member Meyers indicated the health and safety of student is the Board’s primary consideration. The Board has to trust Dr. Hogue’s recommendation, however, he struggles with the mask mandate.

Member Fish thanked everyone for coming and speaking. The Board and administration are trying to make the best decisions for students and staff. He thanked everyone for handling the challenges. John Deere just enforced wearing masks again. He agrees it is better without the masks but the experts are saying to wear masks. The students, staff, and the community as a whole all have to be considered in this decision.

Member Barnett does not believe the state should hold something over the schools who chose not to enforce the mask mandates. He continues to support masks as optional.

Member Orman-Luker is aware of the difficult decisions that need to be made. She is in favor of wearing masks and school officials should use every tool available to keep students and staff safe. She does not want to have to go back to remote learning.

Member Ritchie is in favor of wearing masks. All of the mitigations put in places last year seemed to work and kept students in school and Covid out of the schools.

Member Simmons indicated that this is a real struggle but students and staff safety is the number one consideration. What was done last year worked and the district needs to keep students at school and continue in-person learning.

President Portz indicated safety is the number one consideration. The Board has to think of the safety of all 1200 students and staff. Start with the baseline of wearing masks and change to optional when it is feasible.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the River Bend CUSD #2 2021-22 Return to Learn Plan as presented which requires masking regardless of vaccination status for all staff and students. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Barnett, nay</i>	<i>Member Orman-Luker, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Fish, yea</i>	<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	
<i>Member Meyers, nay</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>	

Motion Carried.

Principal’s reports. Mr. Gosch presented before and after pictures of the Steamer Suite. Mr. Hoese indicated the jump start summer school session was going very well. Parents liked the fact that this occurred just before the start of school rather than after school was dismissed for the summer. Mr. Hoese introduced Nicole VanZuiden who attended a National Conference this Summer. Mrs. VanZuiden presented a Power Point presentation including highlights of the conference entitled “Get Your Teach On”. She indicated it was an excellent conference and was very grateful for the chance to attend.

Dr. Hogue indicated that CTS is testing all the new units installed over the summer. The Regional Office of Education will return for a final inspection before issuing the final occupancy permit.

Dr. Hogue indicated the enrollment is estimated at 888 which is down seven from the end of school in May. The principals indicated new students are still registering. The kindergarten class is now at 78 students and there may be a need to add additional classroom aides to help with the large kindergarten class sizes.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board the opening day of school will start with breakfast at the middle school. Principals will introduce new staff, Sauk Impact will be shared, Kyle Huebner will talk on community wellness and connections, and Chris Caves will talk on value of career pathway planning throughout the K-12 experience. CTS will provide lunch on Tuesday.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board a Steamer Suite stipend will have to be developed due to the extra work load and staff will be required to work evening hours.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board that Mrs. Schipper was awarded the Marquette Keys Fellowship Award. Congratulation Mrs. Schipper.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the consent agenda including the July 21, 2021, Regular Board Meeting Minutes, as printed; July Treasurer’s Report; and authorize Dan Portz and Jane Orman-Luker to approve the August Bills Recommended for Payment subject to audit. Roll Call Vote:

*Member Barnett, yea Member Orman-Luker, yea Member Simmons, yea
Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Ritchie, yea*

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue indicated the Policy Committee recommends approval of the second reading of select policy updates and adopt as policy.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the second reading of select policy updates and adopt as policy: 1:10, 1:20, 1:30, 2:10, 2:20, 2:30, 2:125-E3, 2:130, 2:240, 3:30, 3:70-AP, 5:10, 5:30, 5:30-AP2, 5:170-AP1, 5:170-AP2, 5:170-AP3, 6:100, 6:145, 6:160, 6:170, 6:235, 6:255, 6:260, 6:260-E, 7:220, 7:230, 7:280, and 8:90. Roll Call Vote.

*Member Barnett, yea Member Orman-Luker, yea Member Simmons, yea
Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Ritchie, yea*

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue presented the FY 22 tentative budget. The overall projected difference in revenues and expenses is a negative \$203,871.89. Dr. Hogue will be looking at the Bond and Interest fund closer to see if

the difference of \$109,516 can be reduced. The Transportation fund is in the negative due to new lease for buses, a van was purchased, and the van that was totaled in an accident will need to be replaced.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the tentative FY 22 budget for public review with total revenues in the amount of \$12,984,610 and total expenditures in the amount of \$13,188,482 and set the budget hearing for September 22, 2021, at 6:30 P.M. at the Fulton High School. Roll Call Vote:

<i>Member Barnett, yea</i>	<i>Member Orman-Luker, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Fish, yea</i>	<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>	

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the proposal submitted by Bray Architects for architectural services for a STEM room addition at Fulton Elementary School and restroom renovations at Fulton High School.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve proposal from Bray Architects for architectural services for FES STEM room addition at Fulton Elementary School and restroom/shower renovations at Fulton High School as presented. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Barnett, yea</i>	<i>Member Orman-Luker, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Fish, yea</i>	<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>	

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended a revised fee schedule for 2021-22 school year. Extracurricular activity fees were discussed at the July meeting and this is the official action.

It was moved by Member Barnett, seconded by Member Fish to reduce the one activity fee from \$235 to \$150, multiple activities from \$285 to \$180, and Middle school from \$85 to \$65 (\$25 paid by parent, \$40 paid by Eric Ottens Memorial Fund). Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Barnett, yea</i>	<i>Member Orman-Luker, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Fish, yea</i>	<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>	

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of new activity accounts for the Class of 2025 and Steamer Suite at Fulton High School.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Fish, to approve new activity accounts for the Class of 2025 and Steamer Suite at Fulton High School. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Barnett, yea</i>	<i>Member Orman-Luker, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Fish, yea</i>	<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	
<i>Member Meyers, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>	

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended seeking bids for snow removal for the 2021-22 school year.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Barnett, to direct the Superintendent to seek snow removal bids for the 2021-22 school year. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board the district received from the River Bend Athletic Boosters \$4,899 for HUDL for football and volleyball, \$888.66 for a cart, iPad and hitting boxes, \$300 for misc., \$2,437 for 24' trap chute and \$1,000 for volleyball misc.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers, to accept Gifts to the District as presented.
Roll Call Vote.

Member Barnett, yea Member Orman-Luker, yea Member Simmons, yea
Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Ritchie, yea

Motion Carried.

No closed session.

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

- *Approved the resignation of Michayla Martin, Paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective August 9, 2021.*
- *Approved the recommendation to hire Brandy Schroeder as Night Cleaner at Fulton High School beginning immediately.*
- *Approved the recommendation to approve Megan Huizenga as Student Council Sponsor at Fulton High School for the 2021-22 school year.*
- *Approved the recommendation to hire Kimber Stoecker as Paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School beginning the 2021-22 school year.*

Roll Call:

Member Barnett, yea Member Orman-Luker, yea Member Simmons, yea
Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Ritchie, yea

Motion Carried.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, September 22, 2021, at 6:30 P.M., at the Fulton High School.

It was moved by Member Barnett, seconded by Member Fish, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 P.M.
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
River Bend Unit District #2
Whiteside County