

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 16, 2020

The Truth in Taxation Levy Hearing of the Board of Education of River Bend Unit District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois was held on December 16, 2020, at Fulton High School.

President Portz called the Truth In Taxation Levy Hearing to order at 6:32 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 asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public comment. There was no public comment.

Dr. Hogue indicated he increased the Estimated Assessed Valuation (EAV) figure by 9.91% in order to capture all the dollars the district is entitled to in case the EAV goes up in March from the figure he was given in October. Last year if the levy request had not been increased, the district would have received \$30,000 less.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Barnett, to adjourn the public hearing at 6:36 P.M. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on December 16, 2020, at Fulton High School.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:37 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 welcomed all visitors including: Jim Collachia, Kylie Collachia, Stacey Collachia, Giana Floming, and Brooke Posateri. Principals: Robert Gosch, Jeffrey Hoese, and Kathleen Schipper (remote). Assistant Principal: Patrick Henrekin. RBEA: Craig Hafner (remote). Media: Sara Ford, Sauk Valley Media (remote); and Jerry Lindsey, Cityone.com (remote).

Additions to the agenda. There were no additions to the agenda.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Barnett, to approve the agenda as presented. 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 public comment.

Mr. Gosch introduced October Steamer of the Month, Kylie Collachia. One of the teachers who nominated Kylie said this, "Kylie is very willing to meet the needs of the supervisor for Community Involvement. Her written work is done well. When she needed to change her time of attendance to meet the needs of the place where she goes, she did so willingly. She also found an additional place for Community Involvement to fill in the lost time. She is most deserving of this honor." Another teacher said this, "Kylie is a no-brainer for Overall Student of the Month. She is an outstanding student and equally great person! She is highly involved in extracurricular activities and is a leader and good role model."

Mr. Gosch introduced November Steamer of the Month Giana Floming. One of the teachers who nominated Giana said this, "She always strives to be the very best. She is a silent leader that is always looking out for others. Giana is the epitome of a scholar student. She represents FHS with high standards and definitely deserves the honor of Steamer of the Month."

Principal reports. Mr. Hoese is impressed with the process and how good it has been working throughout the pandemic. The staff, students, and parents have all had a part in making everything work as well as it has. To date the elementary school has sixteen students failing at least one subject. Steps being taken to correct this is 1-parent contact, 2-requiring students to stay after school to complete work, and 3-signing an achievement contract. Mr. Hoese is also looking into a dedicated STEM space. Due to Covid all the rooms are currently being used. An Educational modular space would cost approximately \$70,000, which is significantly lower than renovating the media center. Mr. Hoese shared some of the projects students and Ryan Dail have created with the new 3-D printer. This is a great opportunity for students to design and make their own creations.

Mrs. Schipper indicated that in November the middle school had 38% of the students failing at least one subject which is a significant difference from this time last year. To date that number is down to 16%. Students failing a class are required to stay after school to complete the work. Those that are unable to make up the work will be offered a chance during second semester to increase their grade from first semester. Attendance has been very good even with having to send students home due to Covid restrictions

Mr. Gosch indicated the high school has 118 students failing at least one subjects. The administration and staff are constantly contacting students and parents regarding failing grades. Second semester, students with a failing grade will be required to stay after school to complete missing work. The deadline to improve grades will be February 5, 2021.

Dr. Hogue reported on the IASB Virtual Summit on November 20, 2020. Dr. Hogue felt a full day was too long and there was no opportunity to pick and choose the topics of interest. Member Orman-Luker felt not all the topics were relevant to River Bend.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board enrollment is holding steady at 901. There is normally movement in and out of the district at semester. It will be interesting to see what the enrollment will be in January.

Dr. Hogue indicated that there are still 104 students that are totally remote which means there is still a need for the 1:00 dismissal time. After winter break, Monday, January 4, 2021, will be a Teacher Institute Day, Fulton Elementary will be in-person the remainder of the week and 6-12 students will be hybrid using the Anchor/Boat day schedule. At this point in time, the plan is to return to full in-person on January 11,

2021. Whiteside County positivity rate decreased from 25% to 18%. The Fulton and Albany areas increased from 15% to 17%. The need for substitutes and the positivity rates in the schools has remained relatively low. On the horizon is the vaccine. The hope is that school employees will be able to receive the vaccine in February. As with everything else associated with Covid, this too will be challenging and require planning.

Dr. Hogue has been exploring other companies for the bond issuance to insure River Bend is getting the lowest price possible. Stifel Investment Services provided Dr. Hogue comparison of costs of similar bond issues as River Bend’s. Dr. Hogue has communicated his findings to First Midstate and they are willing to work with the district on the cost. Dr. Hogue would like to keep the amount below \$2 million with payback occurring in six to seven years. In order to do this the district would have to commit to \$300,000 from the Operations and Maintenance Fund. Dr. Hogue will finalize the details at the next Finance Committee meeting in January.

Dr. Hogue indicated the bus leases expire next school year. Dr. Hogue met with Jeff Martin from Central State Bus Sales. There will be a significant increase in three-year bus leases. Dr. Hogue recommends increasing the lease to five-years which is less money and the mileage allowance is manageable. Another option to reduce cost would be to purchase one of the buses for \$51,000 to be used as an extra bus when it is necessary due to extracurricular activities. This would reduce the number of busses leased from eight to seven. The district could buy a used bus for \$40,000 or an older one for \$10,000 but buying a bus we already use and know the care it has will eliminates the unknown of purchasing a used bus. Dr. Hogue also recommended purchasing the Braun Entervan at the end of the lease. Dr. Hogue will finalize his recommendation in January.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board the Stipend Committee has created a document that addresses differential stipend responsibilities during Covid-19 pandemic conditions. The document details will be managed by Mr. Henrekin and will allow for full or partial payment to coaches and sponsors.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the consent agenda including the November 18, 2020, Regular Board Meeting Minutes as printed; November Treasurer’s Report; and December Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$166,661.82, subject to audit. 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 2020 Tax Levy with a 9.91% increase. This will allow the district to receive funds if the Estimated Assessed Valuation were to increase from the predicted value given in October.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the 2020 Tax Levy as presented with estimated total levy extension, without bonds, of \$5,533,000 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:

<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 Phase IV CTS projects including updating and replacing the Fulton High School boiler.

It was moved by Member Barnett, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the Phase IV CTS projects including updating and replacing the Fulton High School boiler at a cost not to exceed \$2,360,000.

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.

The Policy Committee met on December 8, 2020, and recommends approval of the first reading of select policy updates.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the first reading of select policy updates: 3:40, 4:10, 4:55, 4:80, 4:90, 4:150, 4:175, 5:30, 5:30-AP2, 5:190, 5:270, 6:15, 6:20, 6:40, 6:280, 6:300, 6:310, 6:315, 6:230, 6:340, 7:100, 7:140, 7:300, 7:325, and 7:340-AP1. 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.

The Board will meet on January 27, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. in the Fulton High School Conference room for Superintendent’s Evaluation.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the Special meeting date on January 27, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. for the Superintendent’s Evaluation. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board the district received gifts from CF Industries in the amount of \$1,100 for teacher requests and the district was awarded an IPRF Safety and Educational Grant in the amount of \$1,036.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Meyers, to accept the gifts to the District 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.

There was no closed session.

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

- *Accepted the resignation of April Lund as Para Professional at Fulton Elementary School, effective December 4, 2020.*
- *Accepted the resignation of Dan Sitzmore, Art Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2020-21 school year.*

- *Hired Sydney Larkey as full-time teacher for increased student support due to Covid-19 for the second semester of the 2020-21 school year.*

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.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the November 18, 2020, closed session meeting minutes 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.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, January 20, 2021, at 6:30 P.M., at the Fulton High School.

It was moved by Member Barnett, seconded by Member Meyers, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 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
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