

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

May 18, 2022

The Waiver Hearing of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on May 18, 2022, at Fulton High School.

President Portz called the Waiver Hearing to order at 6:30 P.M. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary the following members were present: Andy Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons. Absent: Chris Barnett and Eric Fish. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Virginia Petersen, Recording Secretary. Also in attendance were those listed below under introduction of guests.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum regarding 105 ILSC 5/10-20 12a tuition for non-resident students. Approval of the waiver would allow students of River Bend CUSD #2 employees, whether full-time or part-time, who do not live within the district boundaries to attend River Bend Schools and not be required to pay the Per Capita Tuition Charge. Applicable registration fees will still be required to be paid.

There were no comments from the public or Board members.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to adjourn the waiver hearing at 6:32 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 May 18, 2022, at Fulton High School.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:32 P.M. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary the following members were present: Andy Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons. Absent: Chris Barnett and Eric Fish. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Virginia Petersen, Recording Secretary.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Kara Bush, Emilee Droegmiller, Elizabeth Falls, Alex French, Katie French, Magen Folk, Amanda Fosdick, Seth Hartman, Heidi Kolk, Jeremy Leitzen, Chris Mahoney, Eric Pessman, Sara Pessman, Abra Richards, Brent Stoecker, and Heidi Williams. Principals: Jeffrey Hoese and Robert Gosch.

Additions to the agenda. Dr. Hogue added report on Insurance Committee meeting held on May 16, 2022.

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

There was no communication from the RBEA.

Mr. Gosch indicated the Steamer of the Month and Education Pathway Students were not in attendance.

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

Heidi Kolk read a message to the board. In summary she indicated that even with her love for books, it was not her place to tell others what to do.

Chris Mahoney read a message to the Board. In summary she indicated the Board of Education is required to educate everyone equally.

Eric Pessman asked what Board Members do not want their children to read books with highly explicit sexual content? President Portz indicated he would have to contact each Board Member individually for their opinions. He also asked why Amazon's opinion on books is more important than a parent's opinion? Dr. Hogue explained that Amazon offers a rating system on books. Dr. Hogue would be happy to meet with Mr. Pessman and answer any other questions he may have.

Magen Folk is still concerned by a student at the middle school that acts like a cat. She also indicated that it may be detrimental for students without parental guidance to read material that requires explanation. If it is not ok to watch or hear what is described in books why is it ok to read about it. They are not asking to ban books but rather consider content before a book is suggested for students to read.

Abra Richards is concerned about bullying and that three students have taken their own lives. Everyone needs to do their best to keep communication open.

Mr. Gosch indicated the high school is working on increasing transparency. A book list is being created the will have links to rating systems and the content of the books. Books allow students to connect and handle situations they were unable to deal with before reading how others dealt with problems. Books open up channels to talk to teachers when they are not comfortable talking with family members. All the staff at the schools are there to support and encourage students to seek someone out if they need to talk.

President Portz thanked everyone who shared their thoughts. President Portz shared his phone number and indicated he supported any book supported by the teachers.

Principal reports. Mr. Gosch updated the Board on the Alternative Path to a High School diploma. He indicated more time is needed to plan but will continue to move forward. Handbook review is underway. The School Improvement Team would like the Sophomores to be released from school during RtI at the end of the day if they meet certain criteria. More information will be presented at the June Board meeting. Mr. Hoese indicated the ELA curriculum team has started a curriculum study and will begin piloting programs from various publishers. Mr. Hoese has another Alternative Placement meeting and Field Day will be held on Thursday. Member Orman-Luker complimented the elementary school for the student's behavior at the Windmill during a field trip. Mr. Hoese is planning jump start sessions the first two weeks in August. Fifty-six students have been identified who would benefit from the jump start sessions. Mr. Hoese informed the Board he has been asked to present "Rocco to the Rescue" at the IPA Conference. Dr. Hogue indicated that himself and Mr. Gosch will be presenting on the Work Study program at the Triple I conference this November. Dr. Hogue indicated that Mrs. Schipper has done an outstanding job organizing summer enrichment classes and day field trips. Over 150 students are signed up for classes and 244 students have signed up for one-day field trips.

Dr. Hogue reported on the Wellness meeting held on April 21, 2022. The committee reviewed the new Wellness policy written using the ISBE template. The first reading of the policy is on the agenda for approval tonight. This committee is only required to meet every three years but River Bend's Committee meets annually.

Dr. Hogue reported on the May 18, 2022, Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting. Members present included Chris Mahoney, Jeffrey Hoese, Robert Gosch, Jeremy Leitzen, Mary Simmons, and Dr. Hogue. Dr. Hogue reviewed the Title I, IIa, and IV Grants and compared the 2021-22 grants to the proposed 2022-23 grants. At the elementary school meeting with stakeholders it was requested that grant funds be used to provide a 4th section of first grade. The current Kindergarten class is around 77 students and has had two years of pandemic disruptions. It will be recommended that ESSER II and Title funds be used to fund the cost of expanding to four sections of first grade. Dr. Hogue indicated summer school will be held the week of June 6-10 and currently one-hundred fifty (150) students enrolled in classes which is an increase of fifty (50) from last summer. Summer educational field trips are also being offered. Two-hundred forty-four (244) students are signed up for these field trips. The administration and committee were pleased with the interest in the classes and field trips. ESSER III funds are being used to pay for summer school courses. The District's challenge will be continuing to offer the summer activities after the 2024 summer when ESSER funds are no longer available. The River Bend Education Foundation provided up to \$10,000 to help cover the costs of the summer educational field trips. Mr. Gosch updated the group on changes being made to communicate curriculum to stakeholders. The Fulton High School English Department will be working this summer to create a book list that will provide information about the books along with links for families to use that provides additional information and rating systems. A Google site will be used to organize the books by grade level. The HS English team is also hoping to provide a communication link that will allow parents to communicate which books they do or do not want their child reading.

Dr. Hogue reported on the May 18, 2022, Finance Committee meeting. Members present included Andy Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Rachel Snyder, and Darryl Hogue. Dr. Hogue reviewed the current treasurer's report. Revenue is up due to ESSER funds, CPPRT, and Food service USDA paying for school lunches. Typically, during a regular school year 65% of the budgeted revenue is collected and this year 80% was collected. The increase in revenue will be used to cover the additional expense added to cover the cost of ESP salary increase in the amount of \$163,000. Dr. Hogue presented the bond repayment schedule that has been shared with the bond sales representative. He noted that annually for the first three years, the district will need to pay about \$100,000 to cover the cost of the annual payment. Dr. Hogue will see if the payment can be lowered by adding dollars to the final year when 1% funds can be used to make the final payment. The committee preferred the conservative approach so that Social Security, IMRF, and Tort funds would not be stressed by using the reserves and shifting funds to Bond and Interest in the levy. Dr. Hogue indicated Blue Cross/Blue Shield provided renewal information for health insurance. At present, rates will increase by 5%. However, if the District offers short and long term disability insurance the rate will decrease by 1%. The Insurance Committee agreed that the District would offer disability insurance. The District may also be able to reduce the overall cost by offering accidental and catastrophic insurance through Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative will be providing an update on the savings available to the district. Dr. Hogue indicated that interest rates are beginning to rise. The Business Office will monitor interest rates to determine if investing in short and mid-term CDs would be financially advantageous based on the rate of return and the time of commitment for the funds.

Dr. Hogue reminded the Board registration for the Triple I Conference opens in June. Please let Virginia know if you plan on attending.

Dr. Hogue indicated the Insurance Committee met May 16, 2022. Representatives from the Dungan Group indicated Health Insurance cost is expected to increase 5%. Additional savings could be realized if the District were to offer short and long term disability insurance to employees. If this option is taken, the District could no longer offer AFLAC.

Dr. Hogue informed the Board enrollment is only down one student this month.

Dr. Hogue updated the Board on the projects to be completed this summer including: Cabinetry for the middle and high school has been ordered. Bids for the high school bathroom project will be opened May 26, 2022 with final pricing to follow. Bids for the secured entrance at the high school are being considered with the high school construction class doing the remodel work.

Dr. Hogue has contracted a Competency Based Education Coach to work with the district. Allysa Hermenson has been invited to the June Board meeting. The main focus is to determine how to progress without overloading the staff. Competency Based Education will address skill sets in all subject areas.

Dr. Hogue reminded the Board the River Bend Middle School Promotion is May 19, 2022, and Members Portz and Meyers will be in attendance. Fulton High School Graduation is May 22, 2022, and Members Orman-Luker, Portz, and Simmons will be in attendance. The ceremonies will be held at Fulton High School.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the consent agenda including the April 20, 2022, Regular Board Meeting Minutes as printed; April Treasurer’s report; and May Bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$346,783.86, subject to audit. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

President Portz presented the resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$547,120 General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2022.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve Resolution providing for the issue of not to exceed \$547,120 General Obligation School Bonds, Series 2022, for the purpose of altering and reconstructing school buildings and purchasing and installing equipment therein for fire prevention and safety, energy conservation and school security purposes, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax sufficient to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of a fourth section of first grade beginning the 2022-23 school year to be evaluated each year.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Portz, to approve a fourth section of first grade beginning the 2022-23 school year and to be evaluated each year. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the application for a waiver of tuition for non-resident students of employees and submit to the Illinois State Board of Education General assembly for consideration.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Orman-Luker to approve the application for waiver of tuition for non-resident students of employees and submit to the Illinois State Board of Education General Assembly for consideration. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the first reading of the River Bend CUSD #2 Local Wellness Policy 6:50.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the first reading of the River Bend CUSD #2 Local Wellness Policy 6:50. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the second reading of policy 6:60-AP1, Comprehensive Health Education Program and adopt as policy.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the second reading of Policy 6:60-AP1, Comprehensive Health Education Program and adopt as policy. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Fulton Elementary School’s Agreement with Scholastic Book Fair for sale of books with anticipated revenue of more than \$1,000.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the Fulton Elementary School’s agreement with Scholastic Book Fairs for the sale of books with an anticipated revenue of more than \$1,000. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Treasurer’s Bond and Activity Fund Bond.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve Nixon Insurance Agency, Inc., proposal for Treasurer’s Bond with an annual premium of \$1,993 with limit of \$2,000,000 for Virginia Petersen and Activity Fund Bond with an annual premium of \$125 with limit of \$100,000 for Rachel Snyder. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue indicated the state’s minimum wage increase has caused newly hired employees to earn close to the same amounts as veteran staff. Regionally schools are adjusting salaries for non-certified staff and several neighboring school districts have already increased non-certified wages. To remain competitive with these school districts, River Bend has proposed a longevity increase of .03 per year, placing staff in one of four starting wage categories (\$17.00/hr, \$15.00/hr, \$14.00/hr, and \$13.00/hr) starting in FY 2022-23. The overall cost of increasing wages and adding longevity increase will be approximately \$163,329.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the River Bend Education Association and the River Bend Board of Education to increase Educational Support Personnel wages as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval the Regular Board meeting schedule for FY 23 as presented.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the Regular Board meeting schedule for FY 23 as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue indicated that since new furniture is being purchased several items need to be declared surplus goods. The items at the high school are 44 long wooden tables, 108 chairs, 91 slanted desks, 15 banquet tables, 50 flat desks, and 120 textbooks. At the elementary school the items are 470 chairs, 280 desks, and a large divider and other miscellaneous items.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Simmons to approve the items as presented as surplus goods and dispose of in an appropriate manner. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

There was no closed session.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the April 20, 2022, Regular Meeting Closed Session Minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

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

- Approved the resignation of Allen Hansen, Bus Driver, effective May 24, 2022.*
- Approved the resignation of Courtney Boonstra, Cook’s Helper at Fulton High School, effective the end of the 2021-22 school year.*
- Approved the resignation of Stacy McMahon, Kindergarten Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2021-22 school year.*
- Hired Stacy Bueno as Secretary at Fulton High School beginning July 25, 2022.*
- Approved Nicole VanZuiden as Kindergarten Teacher beginning the 2022-23 school year.*
- Approved John Dail as Night Custodian at Fulton Elementary School effective May 9, 2022.*
- Approved Jennifer Williamson as Cook’s Helper at Fulton Elementary School effective April 18, 2022.*
- Approved Courtney Boonstra as pre-school Van Driver, replacing Al Schuitema, for the 2022-23 school year.*
- Approved Jenna StremLOW as Freshman Volleyball Coach at Fulton High School for the 2022-23 school year.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Meyers, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Motion Carried.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at 6:30 P.M., at the Fulton High School.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 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