

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

April 16, 2025

The Final Meeting, Reorganization Meeting, and Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on April 16, 2025, in the River Bend District Office Conference Room.

President Portz called the Final Meeting to order at 6:31pm. Member Simmons was appointed Secretary Pro-Tem. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary Pro-Tem, the following members were Present: Elizabeth Falls, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons; Absent: Eric Fish and Andrew Meyers. Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Jennifer Griser, 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 recognized Mrs. Schipper for her 20 years of service to the district, as she will be retiring in May 2025.

The Board acknowledged the canvassing of results of the ballots as presented by the County Clerk for the April 1, 2025 election.

Board of Education, four-year term:

*Travis Temple 869

*Dan Portz 785

*Kyle Folk 709

Jane Orman-Luker 492

*Elected

President Portz asked if anyone would like to speak as part of public forum. No one spoke as part of public forum.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to adjourn the Board of Education of the River Bend CUSD #2 "sine die" (per definition – without a day for future action) at 6:52pm. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Superintendent Hogue took nominations for President Pro-Tem.

Member Portz nominated Member Simmons as President Pro-Tem. There being no other nominations, Member Simmons was elected President Pro-Tem by proclamation.

Member Simmons took nominations for Secretary Pro-Tem.

Member Falls nominated Member Ritchie as Secretary Pro-Tem. There being no other nominations, Member Ritchie was elected Secretary Pro-Tem by proclamation.

Upon roll call by the Secretary Pro-Tem the following members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, Mary Simmons, and Travis Temple; Absent: Andrew Meyers.

The nomination and election of officers for a two-year term was as follows:

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Simmons, to elect Dan Portz for the Office of President of the Board of Education for a two-year term. Roll Call Vote:

<i>Member Falls, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	<i>Member Temple, yea</i>

Motion carried.

Member Dan Portz was declared President.

It was moved by Member Portz, seconded by Member Temple, to elect Andrew Meyers for the Office of Vice President of the Board of Education for a two-year term. Roll Call Vote:

<i>Member Falls, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	<i>Member Temple, yea</i>

Motion carried.

Member Andrew Meyers was declared Vice President.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Portz, to elect Mary Simmons for the Office of Secretary of the Board of Education for a two-year term. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Falls, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	<i>Member Temple, yea</i>

Motion carried.

Member Mary Simmons was declared Secretary.

The school board members took the Oath of Office for School Board Members.

Regular School Board meetings shall be held on the third Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm, except for the months where it is necessary to move due to the start of school or breaks.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to schedule the River Bend CUSD #2 Regular School Board Meetings at 6:30pm, at the River Bend District Office, located at 1110 3rd Street, Fulton, IL 61252 as follows: July 16, August 6, September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17, January 21, February 18, March 18, April 22, May 20, and June 17. Roll Call Vote.

<i>Member Falls, yea</i>	<i>Member Ritchie, yea</i>
<i>Member Folk, yea</i>	<i>Member Simmons, yea</i>
<i>Member Portz, yea</i>	<i>Member Temple, yea</i>

Motion carried.

President Portz established the following committees:

Finance: Member Meyers and Member Temple

Negotiation: Member Portz and Member Simmons

Transportation: Member Portz, Member Meyers, and Member Simmons

Policy Committee: Member Ritchie

Facilities Committee: Member Falls, Member Ritchie, Member Folk

Insurance Committee: Member Temple

Wellness Committee: Member Portz

Citizen's Advisory Committee: Member Falls and Member Simmons

River Bend Education Foundation: Member Simmons

There is potential for members to move or join committees as they learn about them.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, to designate Central Bank, Fulton, IL; Community State Bank, Fulton, IL; Morton Community Bank, Albany, IL; and Illinois School District Liquid Asset Fund Plus as the depositories for River Bend CUSD #2 funds. Roll call vote:

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Temple, to designate Benning Group LLC, as the auditor for River Bend CUSD #2. Roll call vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Falls, to appoint Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer, Rodick, and Kohn and Ward, Murray, Pace, and Johnson as Legal Counsel for River Bend CUSD #2. Roll call vote:

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Temple, to appoint Richard L Johnson Associates, Inc as architect for River Bend CUSD #2. Roll call vote:

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to accept all policies, acts, and deeds of the previous Board of Education. Roll call vote:

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Simmons, to adjourn the Reorganization Meeting at 7:32pm. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:32pm. Upon roll call by the Secretary, the following board members were Present: Elizabeth Falls, Kyle Folk, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, Mary Simmons, and Travis Temple; Absent: Andrew Meyers; Others present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Paige Emerson, Michele James, Jeremy Leitzen, Kathleen Schipper, and Lynn Schipper; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeff Parsons and Assistant Principal: Kelli Parsons.

President Portz led all present in a relationship and culture building activity where everyone took a turn sharing something that brings them joy.

There were no additions to the agenda.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, 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 one wishing to speak during public forum.

Principal Reports. Mr. Hoese shared the elementary school is still working on filling the vacancies from the falling dominos of staff moving positions. They currently have two teacher positions and four support staff positions open. Mr. Hoese also shared curriculum recommendations for Science and Writing Curriculum (for K-3) that the elementary school curriculum committees have decided on.

Mr. Henrekin had nothing he wanted to highlight, the board members had no questions for him. Mr. Parsons shared that ACT testing at the high school went well. The staff worked all year at preparing the students for the switch from SAT testing to ACT testing.

Paige Emerson shared that she did not receive as much feedback as she was hoping on the questions and topics she brought to student council. Paige shared that next time she will ask for input through an anonymous google survey. Since last meeting, Paige asked students what their top concerns were, if there was anything the students would like to see changed, and why do students think there had been an upward trend in discipline issues. Paige reported that the students top concerns were regarding lunch and small portion sizes and the students would like to change that they do not have to stay for fifth hour/RTI at the end of the school day. Currently, Juniors and Seniors with good grades and no behavior issues can leave for fifth hour if they have no other obligations, students would like to see this extended to Sophomores. The students also shared they feel the uptick in discipline is due to students getting restless.

Dr. Hogue asked Paige to poll students about how seriously they take the state required testing, both the pre-ACT and the ACT. Member Portz asked that Paige ask the students about the culture in the

district – how do they feel about it, how do we build a better, stronger, student culture. Member Simmons suggested Paige create sub-committees of sorts so that she has help in gathering information from other student groups that she may or may not be a part of.

Superintendent Hogue reported on the April 8, 2025 River Bend Education Foundation Meeting. The Foundation has scheduled the Academic Excellence dinner and has confirmed Brent Houzenga as the speaker. The Foundation Scholarship committees also met and selected scholarship recipients.

Dr. Hogue reported on the April 16, 2025 Facilities Committee Meeting. Michele James from Veregy presented updated drawings for gymnasium, auditorium, and multi-use space additions at the middle school and high school. New flooring in the high school music room was also discussed. The district is currently waiting on asbestos testing before moving forward with a plan to replace the flooring.

Dr. Hogue reported on the April 16, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting.

- Treasurer's report review: Dr. Hogue provided an in-depth review of the revenue and expenditures. Revenue will conclude with early taxes in late June. 40% of the revenue budget is based on early taxes and this looks as if revenue is not growing. State distributions have been on time. A review of expenditures show that the budget will need to be modified with an amendment. Expenses have risen throughout this budget year.
- Review of the amended budget: Each year in April, Rachel and Dr. Hogue submit an amended budget that better aligns with revenue and expenditures that were not budgeted in August of the previous year. The Ed fund budget deficit was \$805,000. Most of the deficit is related to increased staffing costs, using reserves to add a preschool additional class and special education increases to serve students. We have seen a decrease in state revenue as well and 40% of our budget is state funded. The overall projected budget deficit is \$432,590. It was also noted that the transportation fund received \$100,000 from an EBF payment. To offset the loss of EBF funds to the Ed fund \$100,000 will be abated from the Working Cash fund and placed into the Ed fund.
- Looking at interest revenue of about \$80,000-\$90,000 per year, the funds could be put into the transportation fund to provide additional revenue. Interest income could also be placed into the Ed fund if EBF funds are used to support the transportation fund.
- Rachel provided a summary of expenses and revenue for the 24/25 school year that outlined the impact on the budget from our day to day operations.

Dr. Hogue shared that enrollment continues to see move ins and outs even this late in the school year.

Dr. Hogue introduced Michele James from Veregy. Michele shared a slideshow presentation with updated drawings and information for the fieldhouse/performing arts center addition. The first option would just be a new gymnasium at the middle school with a cost range of \$11.2-12.2 million. The second option would consist of a new gymnasium at the middle school, along with a wrestling space at the high school, with a cost range of \$16.4-17.9 million. The wrestling space could also be used for other activity practices during the other seasons. The third option would consist of both of those additions, as well as the West gymnasium at the high school being remodeled into a performing arts center and the addition of another gymnasium on the North side of the current high school East

gymnasium. This option would also add a mezzanine seating area for the current East gymnasium to increase seating capacity. The cost for the third option ranges from \$30.5-33.3 million. Dr. Hogue will schedule a community meeting for May to get the information out to the community as well as get community feedback.

Dr. Hogue and the board members agreed on June 23rd from 5:00-8:00pm for the board member retreat and training with Jim Burgett.

Dr. Hogue informed members of the River Bend Middle School Promotion on Thursday, May 15th at 5:00pm and the Fulton High School Graduation on Sunday, May 18th at 2:00pm. Members Falls and Temple will be at the middle school Promotion to help hand out certificates and Members Portz and Simmons will attend the high school Graduation.

Dr. Hogue asked that the July Board of Education meeting be cancelled. Members agreed this would be okay.

It was moved by Member Temple, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the consent agenda including the March 19, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes, March Treasurers Report, and April Bills Recommended for Payment in the amount of \$199,625.52, subject to audit. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared feedback from staff members on the removal of eLearning from an option for weather related days. Member Portz asked that the board put the option for eLearning days back into the policy. Members Simmons, Ritchie, and Temple shared they felt it was a good tool to be able to use sparingly. Member Temple shared he felt the use of eLearning days helps prepare students for the use of online meetings in the work force. Member Folk shared he does not like the idea of students sitting in front of screens all day.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Portz, to amend the second reading of the update to policy 6:20 School Year and Day to include eLearning as an option for weather related closures and bring forth for a third reading. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, nay

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, nay

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2025-26 student registration, extracurricular, meals, fees, and prices. There were no changes in fees.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the 2025-26 student registration, extracurricular, meals, fees, and prices as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the lawn care bid submitted by Spring Green.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Folk, to approve the bid for lawn care submitted by Spring Green in the amount of \$980 for the high school football field and \$1,785 for treatment of all school lawns. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, nay

Member Portz, nay

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2024-25 tentative Amended Budget and set the Budget Hearing for June 18, 2025.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the 2024-25 tentative amended budget with total revenues in the amount of \$24,529,147.59 and expenditures in the amount of \$24,961,738.27 and set the budget hearing for June 18, 2025 at 6:30pm. Roll Cal Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) 2025-26 membership for the middle school track, wrestling, and golf at a renewal cost to the district of \$635.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the IESA 2025-26 membership for River Bend Middle School athletics with a fee of \$635.00 Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the middle school handbook changes.

It was moved by Member Falls, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the River Bend Middle School handbook changes for the 2025-26 school year as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the addition of a girls wrestling coach at the high school. It would be a level 2 stipend at \$3,200 for the 2025-26 school year.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the addition of a Fulton High School Girls Wrestling Coach stipend. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approving old baseball uniforms as surplus goods and to dispose of in an appropriate manner. There are 25 jerseys that were used from years 2002-2007 and 28 jerseys used from 2008-2015.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Temple, to declare old baseball jerseys as surplus goods and dispose of in an appropriate manner. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the resolution to abate a portion of funds from Working Cash to the Education Fund.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Temple, to approve the resolution abating a portion of funds from Working Cash to the Education Fund. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Folk, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Temple, yea

Motion carried.

There were no gifts to the district.

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

- *Approve the recommendation to hire Heather Mangelsen as Transportation Aide for the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Pat Foster from Head Day Custodian at FES to Head Day Custodian at FHS.*
- *Approve the resignation of Jaime Pflederer as Reading Interventionist at FES, effective the end of the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the River Bend Middle School Principal 2025-2030 contract with a salary of \$81,650 for FY 26.*
- *Approve the resignation of Madison Robertson, 1st Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Christy Hanson from 1st Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School to Special Education Teacher at Fulton Blended Preschool, for the 2025-26 school year.*

- *Approve the internal transfer of John Dail from Night Custodian at FES to Head Day Custodian at FES.*
- *Approve the internal transfer of Elizabeth Roos from 2nd Grade teacher to Interventionist at Fulton Elementary School for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Lindsey Mitchell as 1st Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School for the 2025-26 school year.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Deb Damhoff as Library Manager at Fulton Elementary School and River Bend Middle School for the 2025-26 school year.*

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 6:30pm, at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Falls, to adjourn the meeting at 10:03pm. 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