

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

November 15, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend CUSD #2, Whiteside County, Illinois was held on November 15, 2023, at the River Bend District Office.

President Portz called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30pm. Member Simmons was appointed Secretary Pro-Tem. Upon Roll Call by the Secretary Pro-Tem, the following board members were present: Elizabeth Falls, Andrew Meyers, Jane Orman-Luker, Dan Portz, Jay Ritchie, and Mary Simmons, Absent: Eric Fish. Others Present: Darryl Hogue, Superintendent and Jennifer Griser, Recording Secretary.

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Jeremy Leitzen, Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese and Jeffrey Parsons, Assistant Principals: Kelli Parsons and Kathleen Schipper

Additions to the agenda. Dr. Hogue added to the superintendent's report an update on the reunification drill.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the agenda as amended. 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 reported that the Veteran's Day assembly at the elementary school went very well and they recognized 40 veterans who were in attendance and many more in their slide show. Mr. Hoese shared that he and Mrs. Strehlow put together a grant request for Timken/Drives for new equipment, furniture, and other supplies for the STEAM space. The elementary school held their first House Day event of the school year where all new students and staff were sorted into their respective houses.

Mr. Henrekin shared the middle school hosted a Capturing Kids Hearts Family night that was well attended. Mr. Henrekin is still hopeful for the addition of 6th grade sports and is still talking with area districts to get games scheduled. Mr. Henrekin also shared there are a handful of 8th grade students who are advanced in math that he would like to give an opportunity for higher level learning. The students will be going to the high school every afternoon and taking the Algebra class with the high school math teacher.

Mr. Parsons highlighted the Chemistry day organized by Ms. Gates and her Chemistry students. This was a day full of sharing experiments with the elementary school students.

(Member Fish entered at 6:52 pm)

President Portz discussed with the board if they would like to use the same format for the superintendent review this year. It was decided they will continue to use the excel chart. President Portz will work on getting that out to board members and a date for the review will be set at the December Board of Education meeting.

Dr. Hogue reported on the Facilities Committee meeting held on November 15, 2023.

- FES/RBMS Construction Update: Veregy will begin collecting bids, with a due date of November 21, 2023. The district still has concerns regarding the parking lot expansion. The estimate from Veregy is between \$550,000 and \$650,000, while an estimate from a local vendor was for \$140,000. However, the bids are not an equal comparison. The committee would like to see the additional parking spaces added, but will need a better final price. Due to the construction, the 2024-2025 school year may need to start a week later.
- Preschool Remodel: The district architect has provided an estimate of \$271,000 to create a space that will be suitable for the preschool class. An additional shed for storage will need to be added for \$27,000, this includes the cement pad and having the shed built. The committee recommends that the district move forward with the preschool remodel project so that an additional 40 students can attend. Some preschool grant funds will be used to resource the space with equipment for the students.
- High School Weight Room: The high school is looking to expand the weight room to include cardio equipment. A \$55,000 donation from the Eric Ottens Memorial was made to the district, in hopes that the funds be used to purchase cardio equipment other equipment that can be used for students in Physical Education classes. After meeting with the architect, the district would like to remove the temporary wall and expand the exercise room into the existing hall and a storage room across the hall. The storage room will need to be cleaned out. A room next to the current storage room can be used for play costumes and shoes. Gary believes that he can complete much of the work. Next steps include drawing a plan, submitting it to the architect for a building permit and begin the renovations.
- Other projects underway:
 - Fulton High School Teacher Workroom - Electrical work has been completed, the PA system has been moved and cabinetry has been ordered. Asbestos abatement will be completed over the winter break. Construction class students will be placing the cabinets when the space is ready.
 - Asbestos abatement at the high school is scheduled for Dec 27th -29th in the main hallways, the old office, and the entry to the west gym.
 - Culinary class - Plumbers will be onsite to update the plumbing and install the commercial sinks. The goal is to have a fully certified kitchen that will allow the FFA class to expand culinary options.

The next Facilities Committee meeting will be held Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 3:30pm.

Dr. Hogue reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on November 15, 2023.

- The treasurer's report was reviewed. Overall the percent of revenue and expenditure reports look to be on target when compared to other year's transactions. Fund balances on the treasurer's report are healthy and growing slowly, unless reserves are being used.

- Preschool expansion remodel - Kelli Parsons provided an update to the finance committee outlining the costs and needs to prepare the space to host an additional two sections of preschool. The building costs are estimated to be \$271,000 and a storage shed is estimated to cost \$27,000. The committee is recommending that funds be transferred from working cash to the O/M fund to pay for the costs of the remodel.
- FES/RBMS construction project - Because the construction project will begin in February, Veregy will have expenses to be paid. The district will receive bond funds in July of 2024. The bond funds will be used to repay the district for costs incurred from February through June 30, 2024. The district will commit \$700,000 from the facility fund to make the construction payments.
- Bonding amount - Based on the price of the RBMS/FES construction project, the district may need to consider bonding for 3 million or 3.5 million. The finance committee would also like to see the FES parking lot expansion, but will need to wait on the price.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 5:30pm at the River Bend District Office.

Dr. Hogue shared that enrollment is staying steady. Overall, the district is up 30 students from August 2022 and it appears the increases are spread across all grade levels.

Mrs. Schipper shared the Illinois School Report Card with the board. All buildings are in the commendable category. Mrs. Schipper shared that the district is focusing on decreasing our chronic absenteeism rate. Notes were sent home to all families to show how many days a student missed first quarter.

Mr. Parsons shared with the board a full-time teaching position, Career Pathway & Transition Coordinator, that the high school is seeking approval to hire for the 2024-2025 school year. This position would allow the high school to provide more pathways opportunities for students. This staff member would also work with the community involvement and work study students. Mr. Parsons would like to post for this job opening in January to ensure time to select a quality candidate.

Mrs. Parsons shared a timeline overview of the preschool expansion. The district has learned that some of the preschool grant funds can be used to help with the purchase of paint, flooring, and furniture for the preschool. The district will need to pay for the actual construction of the classroom space and storage area.

Dr. Hogue shared with the board that the district completed an evacuation and reunification drill on Wednesday, November 15, 2023. All staff members evacuated to pre-determined evacuation sites and were then bussed to the Fulton Fire Station, the district's reunification site. While the district was conducting their drill, local first responders were also conducting their own drill within the schools. The district's goal is to have a similar drill with students. This may take place with individual buildings on different days.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the consent agenda including the October 18, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes; October’s Treasurer’s Report; and November bills recommended for payment in the amount of \$1,131,090.69, subject to audit.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the second reading of the update to policy 5:220 and adopt as policy.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the second reading of the update on policy 5:220 and adopt as policy. Roll Call Vote.

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

Motion Carried

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the second reading of the Alternative High School diploma and adopt as policy. Mrs. Schipper updated the language of the requirements per the board’s request at the last meeting. Mrs. Schipper also stressed that this by no means is giving the students an opportunity to choose the “easy path” to a diploma. The standards are still rigid, there are just fewer elective credits required.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the second reading of the Alternative High School Diploma and adopt as policy. Roll Call Vote.

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

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approving the tentative 2023 Tax Levy and set the Truth in Taxation Hearing for December 20, 2023. The district will go with the 11.75% levy that was presented. The district asks for the higher rate so in the event EAV increases the district is able to capture all available funds.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Ritchie, to approve the tentative 2023 Tax Levy and set the Truth in Taxation Hearing for December 20, 2023. Roll Call Vote.

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

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended consideration and action on a resolution abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2023 to pay debt service on the District's General Obligation School Bonds (Alternative Revenue Source), Series 2021. Taxes levied need to be abated in order to use 1% funds to make the bond payment for construction projects. This is the 3rd abatement of the 2021 Bond Series.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve a resolution abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2023 to pay debt service on the District's General Obligation School Bonds (Alternative Revenue Source), Series 2021. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the ISBE Maintenance Grant application. The maintenance grant will be used towards installation of the MGT window film and a new boiler at the middle school.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the ISBE School Maintenance Project Grant Application and submit to ISBE for consideration. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Health, Life, Safety Amendment for the replacement of the middle school boiler. Funds will be used from both the maintenance grant and the HLS amendment to replace the aged boiler.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to approve the HLS amendment for the River Bend Middle School boiler. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Motion Carried.

Dr. Hogue informed the board the district received \$2,070 from First Reformed Church for the Fulton High School Student Fund and \$55,000 from the Eric Ottens Memorial for the high school weight room.

It was moved by Member Ritchie, seconded by Member Orman-Luker, to accept gifts to the district as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Motion Carried.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the following personnel items:

- *Approve the recommendation to hire Courtney Fullick as paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective November 6, 2023.*
- *Approve the resignation of Danyell Kennedy as paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective November 2, 2023.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Bentley Butz as paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective November 13, 2023.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Madison Case as 1st Grade Teacher at Fulton Elementary School, for the second semester of the 2023-24 school year.*
- *Approve the following volunteer high school Girls’ Basketball Coaches for the 2023-2024 school year: Adrien Loncar, Lily Harlan, Lydia Coatney, and Kearston Norman.*
- *Approve the following volunteer high school Boys’ Basketball coaches for the 2023-24 school year: Adam Hamstra and Cody Sanderson.*
- *Approve the resignation of Breanna Kastelic as Fulton High School Scholastic Bowl Coach for the 2023-2024 school year.*
- *Approve the resignation of Xavia Seesser as volunteer Robotics coach effective immediately.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Motion Carried.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the Closed Sessions Minutes date October 18, 2023 as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Falls, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Fish, yea

Member Ritchie, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Member Orman-Luker, yea

Motion Carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 6:30pm, at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Orman-Luker, seconded by Member Meyers, to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 pm. 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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