

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

River Bend Community Unit School District #2

January 22, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of River Bend Community Unit School District #2, Whiteside County, Illinois, was held on January 22, 2025, in the River Bend District Office Conference Room.

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

President Portz led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Portz led all present in a relationship building activity where everyone took a turn sharing their appreciation for another person in attendance at the meeting.

President Portz welcomed all visitors including: Paige Emerson, Jill Hamstra, Michelle James, Jeremy Leitzen, and Tim Phelps; Principals: Patrick Henrekin, Jeffrey Hoese, and Jeff Parsons and Assistant Principal: Kelli Parsons.

There were no additions to the agenda.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice Vote, all yea, motion carried.

There was no communication from the RBEA. Members of the board expressed they would like to see updates from RBEA either in person or written and shared with the board.

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. Parsons shared that the high school volleyball team was recognized by the Northwest Division Volleyball Officials Association as the 2024 Volleyball Team for outstanding display of good sportsmanship by the teams, coaches, administration, and fans.

Board members had no questions for the other administration.

Paige updated board members that she spoke with student council regarding the board members interest in visiting the schools and classrooms during the day. She shared the students had no concerns regarding this.

Dr. Hogue reported on the January 22, 2025 Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting.

- Dr. Hogue introduced Michelle James and Tim Phelps from Veregy to the committee members. Michelle and Tim shared a slide presentation of initial plans for a multi-use gymnasium and auditorium. The new space has an estimated cost of \$21.6 - \$24 million.

- Committee members had questions regarding storage space for the auditorium area for stage sets and the ability to still have band and choir concerts at the same time.
- Committee members also asked if the district would be able to have gym daily with the increase in space. The district would need to hire more PE staff to accommodate an increase in PE classes.
- Dr. Hogue shared financial data prepared by PMA showing the effect to tax payers on the cost of a project this size.
- Dr. Hogue shared with the committee that he and Mr. Henrekin have met with some area pastors to set up a community book study of *The Anxious Generation*. They have another meeting planned for March and are hoping to start the book study in the fall of 2025.

Dr. Hogue reported on the January 22, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting.

- Review of the treasurer's report:
 - Due to the 3.8 million bond dollars that have flowed in and out of the budget, overall percentages of revenue and expenditures are offset and not fully accurate as a year to year comparison. Revenue is slightly decreased as compared to previous years therefore expenditures look out of line.
 - Fund balances for each of our funds appear healthy with the exception of the transportation fund. Currently it has \$19,000. A transportation categorical payment from ISBE arrived earlier in the week and the \$58,000 will help cover the low balance. The transportation fund will continue to be monitored. At some point we may need to deposit EBF funds into the transportation fund to support the expenses.
- Financing a Fieldhouse/performing arts center at RBMS:
 - The district has been working with Veregy to determine the cost of a fieldhouse/performing arts center. Finalizing the prices is a moving target as the district determines its needs. At present, the cost ranges from 21 to 24 million dollars. To pay for a project of this size, the district would need to seek approval from the public in the form of a referendum. The district is working with PMA to determine the impact and cost of selling bonds to pay for the project. Two options exist for paying back the bonds.
 - Borrow funds and payback via the levy process
 - Borrow the funds and payback using a portion of 1% facility tax funds
 - The finance committee will invite Bob Lewis from PMA to meet with our team to determine a timeline and cost to borrow 20-24 million dollars.
 - The finance committee would like to move forward with understanding the cost and impact of selling bonds to pay for the project.

Dr. Hogue informed the board members of the IASB Northwest Division Meeting taking place on Monday, March 31, 2025. There is an in person and virtual option, reservations are due March 14th.

Dr. Hogue shared that enrollment is holding steady.

Dr. Hogue introduced Michelle James and Tim Phelps from Veregy. They shared the presentation on the Fieldhouse expansion with the board members that had been shared at the Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting. Board members suggested making a list of all the activities that would be using the space to ensure best utilization of the space. Member Portz asked for Paige to help in getting information to the students and bringing their ideas back to the board.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve the consent agenda including the December 18, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, December Treasurers Report, and January Bills Recommended for Payment in the amount of \$235,620.93, subject to audit; and authorization to dispose of the closed session audio tapes for October 19, 2022, October 26, 2022, January 18, 2023, January 24, 2023, February 21, 2023, April 26, 2023, and May 16, 2023. Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue and the policy committee recommended approval of the second reading of select policy updates and adopt as policy.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the first reading of select policy updates: 2:105, 2:110, 2:120, 2:140, 4:10, 4:30, 4:40, 4:60, 4:150, 4:160, 4:170, 4:190, 5:10, 5:20, 5:30, 5:35, 5:90, 5:120, 5:125, 5:150, 5:230, 6:20, 6:60, 6:65, 6:135, 6:270, 6:340, 7:10, 7:100, 7:160, 7:180, 7:200, and 8:10. Roll Call Vote

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Closed session minutes were reviewed. It was recommended to open closed session minutes dated January 25, 2024 and retain closed minute sessions for all others due to the need to retain confidentiality.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to open closed session minutes dated January 25, 2024 and retain closed session minutes dated February 20, 2024, June 19, 2024, October 2, 2024, and November 20, 2024 at this time due to the need for confidentiality to exist to all or part of the minutes. Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue discussed the Illinois Vision 2030 Resolution. He shared that Member Falls had expressed concerns of adding undue burden to teachers with these resolutions. Board members also felt the information shared was not detailed enough. The board members decided to table discussion on the Illinois Vision 2030 Resolution until more information is available to make a decision to adopt or not.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the Fulton High School Curriculum Handbook changes.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers to approve the Fulton High School Curriculum Handbook Updates as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of the 2025-2026 School Calendar.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the 2025-2026 School Calendar as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared updated costs and fees for summer school classes and trips. The costs to families will go from \$25 to \$50 for the week long classes and from \$25 to \$40 for the trips. Those students who are part of the Free/Reduced lunch program can apply for a scholarship through the EASY program to help with costs.

It was moved by Member Meyers, seconded by Member Fish, to approve the Summer School Costs and Fee updates as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue recommended approval of a new FCA student activity account at the high school.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Simmons, to approve the new FCA student activity account at Fulton High School Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

Dr. Hogue shared with the board the district received \$1,000 from the Lions Club and \$1,000 from Fulton Kiwanis for FHS Wrestling; \$1,000 from Agri-King and \$500 from First Wealth Financial for the Eric Ottens Shootout; and \$500 from Bosma-Renkes Funeral Home for FHS FFA Sponsorship.

It was moved by Member Fish, seconded by Member Meyers, to approve gifts to the district as presented. Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea Member Portz, yea
Member Meyers, yea Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

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

- *Approve Amanda Fosdick as Middle School Wrestling Volunteer for the 2024-25 school year.*
- *Approve the change in retirement date for Anna Spencer from the end of the 2025-2026 school year to the end of the 2024-2025 school year.*
- *Approve the retirement of Gary Wolfe, Building and Grounds Director, effective March 1, 2025.*
- *Approve the resignation of Rebecca Kampling as Bus Aide, effective January 10, 2025.*
- *Approve the resignation of Alysha Barsema as Paraprofessional at Fulton Elementary School, effective January 10, 2025.*

- *Approve the retirement of Kathleen Schipper, Curriculum Director, effective the end of the 2024-2025 school year.*
- *Approve the six-week maternity leave of Emily Phillips, March 24, 2025 through May 5, 2025.*
- *Approve the recommendation to hire Marla Wiersema as Van Aide, effective January 17, 2025.*
- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retirement, of Angie Stone, District Math Coach, effective the end of the 2027-2028 school year, under the terms of Article VII, section 7.2 of the collective bargaining agreement.*
- *Approve the resignation, with the intent to retirement, of Stacy Germann, Reading Interventionist at Fulton Elementary School, effective the end of the 2027-2028 school year, under the terms of Article VII, section 7.2 of the collective bargaining agreement.*
- *Approve the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction one-year contract and salary of \$86,000, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026; followed by a three-year District Superintendent contract, effective July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029, with a first year salary of \$132,500 for Kelli Parsons.*

Roll Call Vote.

Member Fish, yea

Member Portz, yea

Member Meyers, yea

Member Simmons, yea

Motion carried.

There was no closed session.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 6:30pm, at the River Bend District Office.

It was moved by Member Simmons, seconded by Member Fish, to adjourn the meeting at 8:44pm. Voice vote, all yea, motion carried.

Dan Portz, President
 Board of Education
 River Bend CUSD #2
 Whiteside County

Eric Fish, Secretary
 Board of Education
 River Bend CUSD #2
 Whiteside County