

River Valley School District
Thursday, December 9, 2010
Regular Meeting
Middle School Library
7:00 p.m.

Present: Taylor, Cates, Cummings, Caraway, Nelson, Peach, Crowley, Ferguson, Jenna Hopkins (Student Rep)
Absent: Bettinger
Admin: Benson, Radtke, Hayek, Stotts, Palm-Leis
Others: Todd Miller, Caroline Hamblen, Mike Stoddard, Mike McDermott, Lisa Scofield, Bridget Roberts, Steve Roberts, Bev Smigielski, David Giffey (Home News), Paula Wedige (Administrative Assistant)

President Taylor opened the meeting. She noted that the meeting had been properly noticed and notice had been provided to the appropriate media and each School Board Member. Crowley moved to proceed with the legal meeting. Cates seconded. Motion carried.

Legislative Update

Taylor stated that State Superintendent Evers released the "Fair Funding for Our Future" school finance plan as part of the DPI's 2011-13 budget request. WASB Executive Director John Ashley issued a statement commending the plan. Among other things, the plan calls for a series of changes to the equalization aid formula. The plan also makes a number of changes to categorical aid programs.

Board Training Opportunities

Taylor, Nelson, and Caraway will be attending the annual WASB Convention in Milwaukee in January. Benson and Hayek will also be attending.

Student Council Report

The student council will be holding a high school holiday assembly on December 23 for the first time in recent years. There was a reminder to vote on the Fox 47 website for River Valley's entry in the "Message 2 Teens" contest.

Update on Alternative Education Program

Benson noted that the teacher, Tim Mazur, had nothing but good to say about the program following their recent alternative education program transition from the separate doublewide trailer to now being housed within the high school building.

Update on Revisions Related to the Proposed Charter School Contract Between River Valley School District (RVSD) and River Valley Elementary Studio School (RVESS) Governing Council

It was noted that while the number of students that would be served by the RVESS would be 40, there are 73 applications to date. There is a high interest by current students and we are required to give preference to resident students, which includes home school students in the district. McDermott expressed concern on not giving preference to non-resident students since his understanding was that a new revenue benefit was used as promotion for the charter school.

Grant monies can be used to train staff in our current buildings but cannot fund teachers. Therefore, the initial plan is to hire/transfer two teachers from the current schools. It was noted that projected common school class sizes for 2011-12 show declining enrollment, even before the movement of those students interested in the charter school. Radtke noted that the projected enrollment at Plain is 76 but could be 67 if those families interested in the charter school are chosen during the lottery. Radtke reminded the Board that small enrollment at Plain needs to be a part of the Board's consideration as we move forward with charter school planning efforts.

State and federal standardized test assessments (WKCE) are required in the charter school the same as our other schools. Scofield expressed concern of negative impacts if those attending the charter school would already be “high learners” and then comparison to current schools may then show unfavorably. She expressed concern over unintended consequences. It was stated that a lottery would be used to determine which interested students would attend the charter.

It was noted that it is not economically feasible to invest in an outside lease for the charter. The Spring Green campus is being considered for location of the charter school.

Crowley feels it is a win/win situation offering a new way to “do school” and choices. Cates believes the district is remarkable and the charter is just different. Ferguson feels it is a worthwhile experiment when 73 students are expressing interest.

Stoddard asked for a projected budget and expressed that he feels the charter is a luxury in these tough economic times and does not think it is the right time. General counsel has reviewed the proposed contract. It was noted that the contract allows for the discontinuation of the charter school if it becomes a financial burden.

Public Comments/Open Forum

Arena Elementary staff presented the Board with t-shirts from a recent reading incentive program held at Arena.

Consent Agenda: Checks, Invoices, Receipts – November 2010; Open Session Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2010

Crowley moved to approve the consent agenda items as submitted. Cummings seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Budget Committee Recommendations

The Budget Committee recommended the funding of two full time teachers for the new River Valley Elementary Studio School (RVESS) charter school. Crowley moved to fund two full time teachers for the RVESS for 2011-12. Cates seconded. The initial plan is that these positions will be filled by transferring two existing teachers within the district with no additional expense. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Caraway, Cates, Crowley, Cummings, Ferguson, Nelson, Taylor

Against the motion: Peach

Absent: Bettinger

Abstain: N/A

Polled vote was 7-1 in the affirmative with 1 absent. Motion carried.

The Budget Committee will meet again in January and report to the Board regarding potential budget cuts.

Consideration & Action on Charter School Contract Between River Valley School District (RVSD) and River Valley Elementary Studio School (RVESS) Governing Council

Cates moved to accept the charter school contract between the RVSD and RVESS with minor changes.

Crowley seconded. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Caraway, Cates, Crowley, Cummings, Ferguson, Nelson, Taylor

Against the motion: Peach

Absent: Bettinger

Abstain: N/A

Polled vote was 7-1 in the affirmative with 1 absent. Motion carried.

Cates left at 9:10 p.m.

Consideration & Action on Second Reading of New and Revised Board Policies

Crowley moved to approve the second reading of Policy #345.1 – Rule 2 – Cum Laude Chart with minor changes to close the gap in the point system using “.99” for cum laude and magna cum laude. Caraway seconded. Motion carried.

Ferguson moved to approve the second reading of Policy #830-Rule – Facilities Use Regulations and Policy #830-Exhibit – Facilities Use Request Form to note that user fees should be paid prior to using district facilities. Crowley seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Resolutions Accepting Gifts

Crowley moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Gifts of a Kodak Easy Share cx7430 camera valued at \$250 from Mike Mani to Spring Green Elementary. Caraway seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Ferguson moved to adopt the Resolutions Accepting Gifts of \$100 from Jack and Kay Taylor to Middle School Shakespeare Group and \$50 from Jack and Kay Taylor for high school band uniforms. Caraway seconded. Polled vote was 6-0 in the affirmative with Taylor abstaining and 2 absent. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on WASB Convention Resolutions

Crowley moved to request Taylor, as the Board delegate, to use her best judgment when voting on the Board’s behalf regarding WASB convention resolutions. Cummings seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action to Adjourn to Closed Session Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(c) for 2011–13 RVEA Collective Bargaining, 2011–13 RVEST Collective Bargaining, and Preparation for the Superintendent Evaluation in January

Crowley moved to adjourn to closed session at 9:17 p.m. pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(c) for 2011–13 RVEA Collective Bargaining, 2011–13 RVEST Collective Bargaining, and Preparation for the Superintendent Evaluation in January. Cummings seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Submitted by Paula Wedige For:

Deborah Nelson, School District Clerk