

River Valley School District
Thursday, March 14, 2024
Regular Meeting
Middle School Library
7:00 p.m.

Present: Young, Jennings, Carstensen, Cates, Iausly, Gauger, Minich, Bettinger, Leah Drachenberg (Student Representative)

Absent: Maier

Admin: Glasbrenner, Moore, Knoll, Peterson, Radtke

Others: Lisa Roelke, Heather Meixelsperger, Michelle Orcutt, Shawn Duren, Paula Wedige (Administrative Assistant)

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

Consideration & Action on Approval of Agenda

Iausly moved to approve the agenda items as submitted. Minich seconded. Motion carried.

Community Spotlight

This is a new monthly agenda item to recognize an individual, group, or business in our community for supporting River Valley schools. The Athletic Booster Club officers (Heather Meixelsperger, Lisa Roelke, Greg Prem, Aaron Prochaska) were recognized. Heather and Lisa were present and noted the Club was formed in 1993 to subsidize district funding for athletics and explained that the Club fulfills requests by coaches for team needs (such as equipment, technological needs, and clothing) as well as sponsors students through college scholarships and donations for participants in all-star events.

Public Comments

None.

Student Council Report

Leah Drachenberg was present. Student council will be meeting to discuss teacher appreciation ideas. There will be a penny war and food bank fundraiser in April. A group of music students spoke on WRCO about the referendum question related to a performing arts center. The ELC had an author visit to discuss a book about kindness. The middle school participated in Lit Wars individual and team competitions and placed in both events. State spelling bee contestant is Mollie Maes. 5th graders hosted a wax museum of influential black Americans and 6th graders met with reading buddies from St. Johns to share positive pick me up messages for the younger students. Students were involved in mock trial preparation and some are involved in a history themed middle school club. 8th graders toured Cardinal and MATC. Students learned about the ukulele in music class. At the high school, River Valley hosted the "Project Yellow" art show for five area districts, which was inspired by Rhiannon Humphries, to showcase students with disabilities. The mock trial team placed 8th at the state tournament.

Update on Referendum Communications

Two community referendum information sessions were already held with the last one to be held on March 21, 2024, at 5 pm River Valley Middle School - LMC. Other communications include Glasbrenner presenting at village/town Board meetings, a brochure boxholder mailing, "informational boards" displayed at businesses, and a "Frequently Asked Questions" document, all of which are on our district website. River Valley residents with a Lone Rock or Spring

Green P.O. Box will be getting the boxholder brochure next week after they were missed in the initial mailing to all River Valley residents.

Update on Board Development Goals

An outcome of the Board's January 29 special meeting was two goals for Board focus: staff input by engaging staff regarding culture and issues and onboarding for new Board members. For the first goal, Glasbrenner shared the results of a teaching staff morale survey given at the end of year last year and again mid-year this year for comparison. The survey will be given again at the end of this year. He will convene a group of teaching staff to meet over the summer to review the survey data. Board members and administrators will be invited. For the second goal, the Policy Committee met and discussed and Carstensen and Gauger will draft a process for onboarding for new Board members.

Update on School District Operations from Administration

At the high school, Band-o-Rama and ACT testing both happened recently. Spring co-curricular activities have started or are starting soon. Course offerings/scheduling is taking place. It was noted there will be 8 weeks of school left after Spring Break. Middle school students will take the Forward Exam after Spring Break. A speaker that presented to all staff regarding resilience is scheduled for next Friday to speak to middle school students. At the elementary level, a "Literacy Night" and book fair was held and 500 people attended. Also, there was a visit by an author and kids are now writing their own books. We were chosen to participate in NAEP testing at 4th grade and Forward Exam testing will occur next week. A fun phy ed activity is being planned. Knoll hired a candidate for next year to fill the school psychologist vacancy. Speech and language virtual services are being used for the rest of this year due to a staff vacancy. Spec ed staff have started a 16 hour course regarding working with students with dyslexia. Moore noted we were chosen for a random student membership audit. He recently attended a federal funding conference and one day of a WISEdata conference. He will be submitting a high cost special education report for additional funding for districts with students with higher costs. He met with Leah Drachenberg and student council to discuss their activity account.

Board Reminders, Announcements, and Training Opportunities

Jennings noted that the April 8 Budget/ERC Committee agenda will include interviews of two law firms that specialize in school law to fill the vacancy of district general counsel since Eileen Brownlee will be retiring in May.

Legislative Update

Four resources for early literacy have been recommended and funding comes with these four. If a district chooses another resource, it will not be funded.

Consent Agenda: Checks, Invoices, Receipts – February 2024; Open Session Meeting Minutes – February 8, 2024, Regular Meeting; February 19, 2024, Special Meeting

Cates moved to approve the consent agenda items as submitted. Minich seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Resignations, if any

Iausly moved to approve the resignation of Jeff Johnson, Middle School Phy Ed Teacher. Young seconded. Polled vote was 8-0 in the affirmative with 1 absent. Motion carried. Johnson was thanked for his professionalism, organization, and quality of teaching phy ed and health for 27 years at River Valley during his 36 year career.

Consideration & Action on Hirings, if any

None.

Consideration & Action on Buildings and Grounds Committee Recommendations

As recommended by the Committee, Cates moved to approve a contract with Reliable Floor Care for restoration services at the high school, not to exceed \$165,000. Gauger seconded. Money is in the budget already. More areas in the district will be looked at using a phased approach. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Cates moved to approve a contract with Northstar Equipment for \$68,000 for high school bleacher replacement. Money is in the budget already. Minich seconded. Motion carried.

There was discussion about our current contract with CMS for custodial services and care of our buildings. We are in the first year of a three year contract. Jon Linley, CMS, will meet with Moore on a monthly basis to discuss cleaning and preparation for the summer months. A new work order ticketing system is also being implemented. Clear goals have been set and CMS is on high alert to improve or we will be moving forward.

Consideration & Action on Policy Committee Recommendations

As recommended by the Policy Committee, Young moved to approve the first reading of the following policies: 345.3 Promotion and Retention; 351 Summer School Program; and 164 Board Member Compensation and Expenses. Cates seconded. New Board members are encouraged to attend all committee meetings and will be compensated. Bettinger asked if Board officer pay can be discussed before the annual meeting, but it was noted that must be acted on at the annual meeting. Motion carried.

Gauger and Carstensen will work together to provide an outline of the orientation process for new Board members.

Consideration & Action on Curriculum & Instruction Committee Recommendations

No action. The Committee discussed summer school goals at each level, ways to increase youth apprenticeship, the curriculum timeline, and professional development, including the math pilot.

Consideration & Action on Budget/ERC Committee Recommendations

There was discussion of a payroll error from nine years ago that allotted 12 extra reimbursable leave days to five employees. As recommended by the Committee, Young moved to award those hours to the five employees. Cates seconded. Young noted those employees relied on the amount in their leave bank for many years. Carstensen asked what about other employees who didn't get this extra leave. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Cates, Gauger, Jennings, Minich, Young

Against the motion: Bettinger, Carstensen, Iausly

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Maier

Polled vote was 5-3 in the affirmative with 1 absent. Motion carried.

Two other items were discussed without action. The first was the 12.9% expected increase for health insurance through Quartz. We will request bids from other carriers. The HSA contribution will also be discussed as a related item. The other item was a possible increase for

Before and After School Program fees for 2024-25, but to offer a lower fee if a family qualifies for free or reduced lunch prices.

Consideration & Action on Resolutions Accepting Gifts, if any

Iausly moved to adopt the Resolutions Accepting Gifts as follows: \$200 from BJ and Kristin Galle to the Gymnastics Team; and \$306 for 6 golf umbrellas and \$500 for 5 rangefinders from Athletic Booster Club to Golf Team. Cates seconded. Polled vote was 8-0 in the affirmative with 1 absent. Motion carried.

Young moved to accept the donations for the Project Lunchbox fundraiser as follows: \$300 from Ronald Bauer; and \$500 from Centurians, Inc. (Blanchardville). Iausly seconded. Polled vote was 8-0 in the affirmative with 1 absent. Motion carried.

Iausly moved to adjourn at 8:16 p.m. Minich seconded. Motion carried.

Submitted by Paula Wedige for:

acting 

Sara Carstensen, School District Clerk