

River Valley School District
Thursday, March 11, 2021
Regular Meeting
Middle School Library
7:00 p.m.

- The public was able to view this meeting live on our River Valley YouTube Channel.

- Anyone who attended the meeting in person was required to wear a mask and follow social distancing.

- Public comments were to be shared without attending this meeting in person by contacting Kathy Jennings, Board President, prior to the meeting at 608-588-4737 or at jennings.rvsb@rvschools.org.

Present: Nelson, Jennings, Young, Cates, Bettinger, McGuire (left at 7:04 p.m.), Strozinsky, Iausly, Kelsey Olson, (Student Representative)

Absent: Maier

Admin: Glasbrenner, Krey, Blakley, Peterson, Radtke, Hegland

Others: Dan Machovec, Luke Thatcher, Brad Hutnik, Mary Lockman, Susan Lee, Shawn Duren, Eileen Brownlee (General Counsel), Judy Ettenhofer (Home News), Paula Wedige (Administrative Assistant)

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

Consideration & Action on Approval of Agenda

Young moved to approve the agenda. Bettinger seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments

McGuire stated that this is his last meeting since he is resigning from the Board. He wants to spend his time officiating but said this was a good experience for him and he learned a lot. He offered respect for committee leaders, gave thanks, and wished the Board good luck.

McGuire left the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Brad Hutnik urged the Board to reconsider accepting bids for the Arena school forest and to keep the property for teaching students about conservation. He feels selling the land would be exploiting school forest for short-term gain. Mary Lockman lives on Coon Rock Road, south of the Arena school forest. She agrees with Hutnik. She doesn't want to see the property clear cut and would prefer development if sold. She noted that when she bought her land, she was told the Arena school forest could never be sold, but she hasn't been able to locate a public record that states this.

Student Council Report

Kelsey Olson reported that the high school will record the POPS Concert at the high school for later viewing since it is not open to the public. They will also be recording sole ensemble

entries. Sophomore Kylie Morrey will be competing virtually at UW Whitewater in the Midwest High School Pitch competition for her business startup idea.

At the middle school, 7th graders are learning about maps and features and the middle school mock trial team has been learning about trial procedures and legal terminology. Rehearsals for the middle school play “For the Love of Shakespeare” start on March 16 and the play will be recorded to share in May. Students have been participating in themed dress up days on Fridays and there is a talent show this month that will be recorded and shared in homerooms. The pull-tab competition in homerooms is ongoing to support the Ronald McDonald House and students have been voting weekly for favorite books in a battle of books.

At the elementary level, 4K to 4th grade students were involved with Opera for the Young and “Hansel and Gretel” as part of a grant funded by River Valley Endowment. The 4th graders are reading about the Iditarod and Mr. Quigley from the high school was a guest speaker and talked about living and working in Alaska. Another speaker brought a dog sled and equipment and shared sledding knowledge.

Equity Conversation and Future Steps

Young noted that she has been meeting with Glasbrenner and Susan Lee and Sue Quale to discuss equity in our schools. She feels it is time to put some extra focus on equity and anti-racism. They want to expand the group to have representation from administration, staff, community, parents, and the Board. She noted goals of the group could include: develop a statement of district commitment to equity and understanding (there is currently a draft that they would like to have reviewed by the expanded group); research professional development and recommend a plan; research a rapid response protocol; and assess current curriculum to see if it represents a wide range of perspective and recommend changes.

Iausly asked about the objective of the group and district. Young reiterated the four items she stated earlier. Glasbrenner also noted that during our upcoming districtwide curriculum audit, we might identify curriculum modifications and materials needed to meet equity goals. The first task identified by the group is to meet with administration to discuss the next step and to add staff representation to the group.

End of Semester Review of Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) Program

Peterson noted that we have now finished assessment and we are seeing growth in kids. We are glad to have them in person. Krey noted this semester review is required to receive funds to help keep class sizes low.

Update on School District Operations from Administration

Glasbrenner noted that all district employees, substitutes, and coaches have been offered opportunities to get a vaccine. He extended thanks to Krey for working with vendors and reaching out to staff. Krey also thanked Jordyn Wendhausen, school nurse, for working with Krey as the only two involved keeping the process confidential. Blakley noted vaccines are another step in the right direction, but still hard work this school year and masks are still required. Peterson noted six staff members had to go home on the same day after their second vaccine dose, but the rest of the staff stepped up and we got through the day. She is pleased that we have gained 48 students for 4K-4th grade in-person learning. Of those, 31 were virtual students earlier in the year, 3 were home school students, 6 were open enrolled out students, and

7 are new to the district. More kids and parents are becoming comfortable with in-person learning.

Radtke agreed that getting vaccines is one more step forward and brings hope. The middle school has gained about 20 students for in-person learning who were virtual students earlier in the year. State student assessments will be administered soon. In February, students participated in a Signs of Suicide (SOS) program organized by Holly Lochner, School Counselor. In addition, parent/teacher conferences were held virtually or by phone.

Blakley reported that ACT testing and registration for current 8th graders coming to the high school next year both took place recently. Plans are being developed to hold an outside, in-person graduation. He thanked the Board and staff for what we've done this year by working through adversity and moving forward.

Hegland noted strength and conditioning is offered for athletes as we transition from winter to spring sports. Athletes are following safety protocols. Spring sports will not start until April 19 to allow for an alternate fall sports season for some districts that didn't participate in the fall. Hegland has been meeting with other athletic directors in our conference and they are discussing masking policies and spectator restrictions that could ease up in the spring since all sports are outside and are non-contact, except girls soccer. In April, the Board will be asked to consider the reinstatement of the use of district facilities by outside groups.

Board Reminders, Announcements, and Training Opportunities

The River Valley School District received the 2020 Employer Appreciation Award from the Spring Green Area Chamber of Commerce. This is the second year in a row. The award is voted on by the community, and Jennings expressed that she is proud to be part of this district and offered recognition to its leaders.

Legislative Update

Glasbrenner noted that state student assessments are required to take place this year, but we do not have to meet the threshold of 95 percent participation.

Consent Agenda: - Checks, Invoices, Receipts – February 2021; Open Session Meeting Minutes – February 11, 2021, Regular Meeting

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

Consideration & Action on Sale of School Forest Property in Arena

It was noted that the Board took action in December 2020 to accept sealed proposals for the purchase of the 120-acre Arena School Forest property, with one stipulation being that we would not sell for less than \$4,000 per acre. Traci Halverson submitted a bid for \$480,000 and Alsum Farms submitted a bid for \$498,000

Strozinsky asked if it was too late to postpone selling the land and stated he doesn't think this is what the forest was intended for when deeded to the district in the 1940's. He explained that even though he is the chairperson on the Board's Buildings & Grounds/School Forest Committee, he is not in favor of selling the land. This would be a one-time boost for Fund 49 in the budget, which can only be used to purchase certain things. Cates agreed with Strozinsky and voted against going to bid when the Board took action in December. She doesn't see the purpose

of selling and doesn't want to see it clear cut. She feels we need more housing in our community but doesn't think the benefit outweighs keeping the land for conservation or serving our community by using it as publicly owned land to access for free.

Young referenced public comments and asked if we heard from the public earlier in the process. Jennings noted this was not a quick process and there was time for public comments. Strozinsky and Nelson both agreed that any comments they heard were against selling the land. Young noted we do have a remaining parcel that we use for education purposes. Iausly expressed frustration that the process of selling prior parcels and this parcel started more than three years ago, and no other options for use of the land was pursued. We should have talked about a management plan if that was our intention. Young asked if we could postpone action to review the proposals in more depth, but Eileen Brownlee, General Counsel, noted that the request for proposal states a timeline for action, but the Board could reject both bids.

Bettinger moved to accept the proposal from Traci Halverson for the purchase of the 120-acre school forest located in Arena. Iausly seconded. Roll call vote:

For the motion: Bettinger, Iausly, Jennings, Young

Against the motion: Cates, Nelson, Strozinsky

Abstain: N/A

Absent: McGuire, Maier

Polled vote was 4-3 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Resolutions Accepting Resignations, if any

Iausly moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Resignation of Heather Hedges effective at the end of the school year. Strozinsky seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Hirings, if any

None.

Consideration & Action on 2021-22 CESA #5 Contract

Bettinger moved to approve the 2021-22 CESA #5 Contract for audiology services. Cates seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Policy Committee Recommendations

As recommended by the Committee, Young moved to approve the 2nd reading of the following policies: 728 Wearing Masks and Face Coverings; 111 Goal Setting; 521 Staff Involvement in the Decision-Making Process; and 374 Student Activity Fund Management. Iausly seconded. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Strozinsky moved to approve the 1st reading of the following policies: 743 Acceptable Use of Networked Computers, Electronic Mail, and Internet Safety Policy; 733 Energy Management; 733 Rule Energy Management (NEW); and 373 Fundraising Activities. Cates seconded. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Technology Committee Recommendations

No recommendations for action. Iausly noted that the new laptops are here for teachers. The Library Media Specialists are hoping that as CDC guidelines make cleaning protocols faster, they can get more books into the hands of students. The Committee gave suggestions for revisions to Policy 743 Acceptable Use of Networked Computers, Electronic Mail, and Internet Safety Policy to the Policy Committee. It was noted that we cannot charge a student user fee if we require an item as part of instruction, but a new ticketing system for repair costs will be reviewed.

Consideration & Action on Budget/ERC Committee Recommendations

As recommended by the Committee, Iausly moved to approve the Rural Virtual Academy charter school option contract with the Medford School District for the 2021-22 school year. Young seconded. This gives an option to students interested in virtual schooling as well as current home schooled students and open enrollment out students. River Valley would still count them in our pupil count, even though they would be enrolled virtually at Medford. Students would be allowed to participate in River Valley's co-curricular activities. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Iausly moved to approve the purchase of the WASB Policy Manual Quick Check Service for \$4,000. Cates seconded. The last time this was done was in 2013. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Strozinsky moved to approve the 2021-24 Snow Plowing and Related Services Contract with J&J Total Lawn Care LLC. Iausly seconded. Their prices have not increased since 2010. Motion carried.

The Committee recommended a wage increase for all staff for 2021-22 of 1.23 percent (CPI) plus a supplemental 1.02 percent, for a total of 2.25 percent. As recommended by the Committee, Iausly moved to approve a 2.25 percent wage increase for all staff for 2021-22. Cates seconded. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Iausly moved to approve a 6 percent increase in health insurance premiums, 0 percent increase in dental, and 0 percent increase in vision. Cates seconded. There are no changes to the copays and HSA amounts. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Young moved to approve the 2021-22 RVEST Master Agreement. Strozinsky seconded. The agreement outlines the 1.23 base wage increase for the RVEST salary schedule. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Iausly moved to approve the 2021-22 RVEA Master Agreement. Strozinsky seconded. The agreement outlines the 1.23 base wage increase for the RVEA. Motion carried.

As recommended by the Committee, Iausly moved to approve \$30 an hour summer school pay for credit recovery classes. Young seconded. This revision will be made in the 2020-21 All Staff Employee Handbook under Extended Contracts. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action on Ratification of 2021-22 RVEST Agreement

Action was taken above as part of Budget/ERC Committee recommendations.

Consideration & Action on Ratification of 2021-22 RVEA Agreement

Action was taken above as part of Budget/ERC Committee recommendations.

Consideration & Action on Resolutions Accepting Gifts, if any

Young moved to adopt the Resolution Accepting Gifts of a \$50 anonymous donation to the River Valley Elementary lunch program. Jennings seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Consideration & Action to Adjourn to Closed Session Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes

19.85(1)(a) and 19.85(1)(f) for Expulsion Hearing and Deliberation and Action

Iausly moved to adjourn to closed session at 8:27 p.m. pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(a) and 19.85(1)(f) for Expulsion Hearing and Deliberation and Action. Cates seconded. Polled vote was 7-0 in the affirmative with 2 absent. Motion carried.

Submitted by Paula Wedige for:

_____ Deborah Nelson, School District Clerk