



River Valley Board of Education  
River Valley School District  
15480 Three Oaks Road, Three Oaks, Michigan 49128  
www.RiverValleySchools.org

Regular Meeting: 7:30 p.m. Monday, July 21, 2008  
River Valley Middle/High School Library

### **1.0 Call To Order**

President Farhat called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members present: Michael Ehlert, William Farhat, J.C. German, Fred Knutel, Vicky Pfauth and Vickie Wagner.

Member absent: Ronald Petro.

Superintendent Schroeder and Finance Coordinator Cheryl Capiak were in attendance.

### **2.0 Pledge of Allegiance**

President Farhat led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **3.0 Provide Oath of Office to Newly Elected Board Members**

Cheryl Capiak, Notary, administered the Oath of Office to newly elected Board member Vicky Pfauth and reelected Board member Fred Knutel. Both will serve a four-year term through June 30, 2012. Capiak and Farhat welcomed both members to the Board.

### **4.0 Approval of Agenda as Presented**

Farhat called for additional agenda items. Moved by German, supported by Ehlert, to accept the proposed agenda as presented. All Ayes. Motion carried.

### **5.0 Public Comment on Agenda**

There were no public comments on the agenda.

### **6.0 Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2008**

Farhat asked if there were any additions or corrections to the proposed meeting minutes. Moved by Knutel, supported by German, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of June 23, 2008. All Ayes. Motion carried.

### **7.0 Board Committee Reports**

#### **7.1 Personnel Committee**

Farhat recognized Knutel who gave the Personnel Committee Report. The Committee met prior to the Board meeting, July 21 at 5:30 p.m., and discussed recalls, recommended hires, vacancies and floating classes. Farhat thanked Knutel for the report.

### **8.0 Correspondence**

Farhat reviewed correspondence received: a letter of apology from a student, a request for support from a district candidate and notes of appreciation from retirees Nancy Francis, Tom Palen and Diana McCotter.

### **9.0 Old Business**

German reminded everyone that Give A Little Back II would be held July 26 and 27. Volunteer workers will be split into two groups to do work at both elementary schools. German and Farhat thanked the local press for featuring the work sessions.

## **10.0 New Business**

### **10.1 Organization of the River Valley Board of Education for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

#### **10.1.1 Election of Board of Education Officers**

Farhat reviewed the positions open for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. All agreed that Farhat did a fine job as President of the Board in FY 2008. Farhat was nominated by Wagner, supported by German, for the office of President for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. There were no other nominations. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Ehlert was nominated by Wagner, supported by German, for the office of Vice President for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. There were no other nominations. All Ayes. Motion carried.

German was nominated by Farhat, supported by Knutel, for the office of Secretary for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. There were no other nominations. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Petro was nominated by Knutel, supported by Ehlert, for the office of Treasurer for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. There were no other nominations. All Ayes. Motion carried.

#### **10.1.2 Appointment of Membership to Standing Board Committees for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

##### **10.1.2.1 Curriculum/Policy Committee**

President Farhat appointed Wagner as Chair with Knutel and Pfauth to the Curriculum/Policy Committee for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

##### **10.1.2.2 Finance Committee**

Farhat appointed Petro as Chair with Ehlert and himself (Farhat) to the Finance Committee for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

##### **10.1.2.3 Personnel Committee**

Farhat appointed Knutel as Chair with German and Pfauth to the Personnel Committee for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

#### **10.1.3 Appointment of Membership to Temporary Board Committee for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

##### **10.1.3.1 Buildings and Grounds Committee**

Farhat appointed German as Chair with Ehlert and Petro to the Buildings and Grounds Committee for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

#### **10.1.4 Appointment of Representative and Alternate to the Berrien/Cass County School Board Association for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Farhat appointed Knutel as representative and Petro as alternate to the Berrien/Cass County School Board Association for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

#### **10.1.5 Appointment of Board Designated Hearing Officer for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Farhat explained that in most if not all situations, grievances, etc. will come before the whole Board, though one person should be considered in charge of the proceedings. As President of the Board, Farhat appointed himself (Farhat) as the Board Designated Hearing Officer for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

#### **10.1.6 Selection and Designation of Bank Depositories for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Moved by Wagner, supported by Knutel, to use the following banking institutions to maintain current school accounts for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, as recommended by the Finance Coordinator: Berrien Teachers Credit Union, St. Joseph; Chemical Bank, Three Oaks; Fifth-Third Bank, Three Oaks; Horizon Bank, Three Oaks; LaSalle Bank Midwest, St. Joseph; and Michigan Liquid Asset Fund Plus (MILAF+), Lansing; as well as accounts with Berrien Community Foundation, St. Joseph. All Ayes. Motion carried.

**10.1.7 Approval of General Legal Counsel and Independent Auditor for the District for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Moved by Knutel, supported by Ehlert, to continue to retain Thrun Law Firm, P.C. of Lansing to serve the school district as general legal counsel and advise and/or represent the Board and administrative staff on legal matters for the 2008-2009 fiscal year and to continue to retain Schaffer & Layher, Certified Public Accountants, of St. Joseph to conduct district annual audits for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. All Ayes. Motion carried.

**10.1.8 Appoint Board Members to Negotiations Team for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Farhat appointed himself (Farhat) and German as representatives to the Negotiations Team for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

**10.1.9 Appoint Legislative Liaison and Alternate to the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Farhat appointed Knutel as representative and Pfauth as alternate to the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

**10.1.10 Approval of IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Moved by Wagner, supported by Knutel, to authorize the District's mileage reimbursement rate to be paid at the standard federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) mileage reimbursement rate for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. All Ayes. Motion carried.

**10.2 Approval of Student Tuition Rates for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Finance Coordinator Capiak recommended the District maintain the current out-of-state student tuition rate of \$2,500. Currently the District has one out-of-state student enrolled. Moved by Knutel, supported by Ehlert, to establish an out-of-state student tuition rate at \$2,500 per student for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. All Ayes. Motion carried.

**10.3 Approval of the Accounts Payable for July, 2008 and the Treasurer's Report for June 2008**

Finance Coordinator Cheryl Capiak reviewed accounts payable and gave the treasurer's report:

**Accounts Payable for July, 2008**

General Fund \$146,031.75  
General Fund Prepaid \$244,315.78  
General Fund Payroll \$372,754.32  
Athletic Fund \$1,609.19  
Athletic Fund Prepaid \$753.89  
Athletic Payroll \$2,939.25  
School Lunch Fund \$0  
School Lunch Fund Prepaid \$2,719.27  
School Lunch Payroll \$4,677.49  
Total Accounts Payable \$775,800.94

**Treasurer's Report for June, 2008**

General Fund \$2,074,691.61  
Combined School Service Fund \$16,218.74  
Activity Fund \$293,242.70, including scholarship dollars and funds donated to the school district

Capiak noted the Athletics Department had "done a great job" with their budget. Farhat thanked Capiak for her report. Moved by Knutel, supported by Ehlert, to approve the accounts payable report for July 2008 and accept the treasurer's report for June, 2008. All Ayes. Motion carried.

#### **10.4 Approval of Nominations to Berrien County Parent Advisory Committee for the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year**

Superintendent Schroeder recommended that April Lingle and Barb Schuck continue to serve as representatives to the Berrien County Special Education Parent Advisory Committee. He said both had agreed to continue as the District's representatives, were excellent representatives for the District and that they would like to make a presentation to the Board in the future. Schroeder said he was pleased to make the recommendation this early in the fiscal year.

Moved by Ehlert, supported by Knutel, to appoint April Lingle and Barb Schuck as River Valley School District representatives to the Berrien County Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) Special Education Parent Advisory Committee for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. All Ayes. Motion carried.

#### **10.5 Recommendations to Hire New Staff Members**

##### **10.5.1 Middle/High School Assistant Principal**

Superintendent Schroeder and Middle/High School Principal Warner briefly reviewed Cynthia Ursprung's credentials, provisional certification and experience, including her work at parochial schools, with a crisis management program and curriculum development committees. Eighty-six (86) individuals applied for the position.

Moved by Wagner, supported by Knutel, to hire Cynthia Ursprung as Middle/High School Assistant Principal for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, pending background checks. All Ayes. Motion carried.

##### **10.5.2 Part-Time Elementary Art Teacher**

Superintendent Schroeder briefly reviewed Lisa Van Plew-Cid's credentials and experience, including 12 to 15 years of teaching experience in California and owning a gallery. Twenty-eight (28) individuals applied for the position.

Moved by Ehlert, supported by Knutel, to hire Lisa Van Plew-Cid as a part-time elementary art teacher for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, pending background checks. All Ayes. Motion carried.

##### **10.5.3 Part-Time Elementary Special Education Teacher**

Superintendent Schroeder briefly reviewed Andrea Alexander-Buck's credentials and experience, including consulting work with special needs children and their families. Schroeder noted she was highly recommended for the position and fully certified in Learning Disabilities (LD). Ms. Alexander-Buck would serve part-time at the Chikaming campus.

Moved by Wagner, supported by Ehlert, to hire Andrea Alexander-Buck as part-time elementary special education teacher for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, pending background checks. All Ayes. Motion carried.

#### **11.0 Items for Discussion Only**

German reminded everyone of the upcoming Give A Little Back II volunteer workdays at the elementary schools. A meeting will be held Thursday, July 24 and workdays will be conducted July 26 and 27. Lunch will be provided for all volunteers. German asked for community volunteers.

#### **12.0 Hearing of Persons Present**

Middle/High School Principal Wayne Warner reported band camp would be conducted the last week in July and that Mr. Hay had returned from Tennessee where he completed preliminary work for the upcoming Liberty Bowl performance. Warner said the Elks were helping with a fundraiser for the band.

Warner reported that all the classrooms were cleaned and that the choir room was being repainted.

German noted the gymnasium floor was repainted and Schroeder invited Board members to tour the facility after the meeting.

German announced that football camp would be conducted July 28, 29 and 30.

**13.0 Adjournment**

Moved by Wagner, supported by Knutel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Wagner, Outgoing Secretary