



River Valley Board of Education
RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
15480 Three Oaks Road
Three Oaks, Michigan 49128
www.rivervalleyschools.org

**Special Work Session – RV Middle/High School Library
Monday, October 12, 2009 @ 6:30 p.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

1.0 Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by President German at 6:30 p.m. Members present: President German, Vice President Ehlert, Treasurer Petro, Trustee Pfauth, Trustee Wagner and Secretary Farhat. Members absent: Trustee Knutel. Superintendent Robert Schroeder and Business Manager Cheryl Capiak were also present.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President German.

3.0 Consider Approval of Agenda as Presented

Motion made by Wagner, supported by Ehlert, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4.0 Hear and Discuss Citizens Committee Report

Superintendent Schroeder:

- Began the discussion citing with average school building ages nationally and locally, with maintenance cost forecasts for various age groups
- Explained the various sources of funding and highlighted the fact that RV has no capital improvement funds where most districts in Berrien County do have these funds available to them
- Outlined the additional costs of operating two small schools and the restrictions it places on utilizing proper technology, among other obstacles
- Shared who made up the Citizens Committee and its diversity of thought and opinion

Business Manager Cheryl Capiak:

- Described the previous bond requests of 2006, 2007 and 2008 and the scope and voting totals of each.

Elementary School Principal Garry Lange:

- Discussed enrollment history and current space usage within the two campuses.
- Outlined why the current enrollment supports one single school versus two separate schools

Business Manager Cheryl Capiak

- Discussed the four questions of the Citizen Committee survey and outlined the results
 - 62% would support building new or remodeling elementary facilities
 - 69% supported would support renovating the Middle/High School facility
 - 74% indicated that they vote
 - The majority of those polled were either parents of students or friends/neighbors of parents

Superintendent Schroeder

- Discussed the possible alternatives discussed by the Citizen Committee and their Pros/Cons along with comparable costs and other impacts
 - Grade leveling possibilities via renovations in current buildings
 - Constructing a new elementary school
- Committee Recommendation
 - Build one new elementary school at a central location at \$12,500,000 (estimated to be just over 1 mil)
 - Construct an auxiliary gymnasium at the new school that would be available for all schools to use
 - Recapped that all members were not “on the same page” initially but over the course of 5 meetings and reviewing the survey results, all agreed on this plan

President German

- Discussed that since the Committee has made its recommendation, the Board would have to decide whether or not to proceed
- Highlighted that the objections regarding centralization were discussed in detail, including pride and cost effectiveness, and outlined how all involved came to recognize that this was the best option
- Stated that he felt that the voting population would come to support this plan once it is properly marketed
- Highlighted that the Committee is only making a recommendation at this point and that no time frame, specific design or specific location has been set
- Stated that marketing would be an important part of moving forward with this proposal

Rich Ramsey with Wolgast construction

- Explained that many schools in Michigan have merged buildings over the years dating back to the 1960s
- Acknowledged that the neighborhood school does disappear, but highlighted that the distances here are short

Various committee members, citizens and board members made comments and discussed points of the recommendations made at length.

President German stated that this will be placed on the agenda for the October 26th, 2009 Regular Board Meeting. It will be also placed on the agenda for discussion during the October 19th, 2009 Work Session Meeting

5.0 Hearing of Persons Present
As stated above.

6.0 Adjournment
Motion made by Petro, supported by Farhat, to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**

William G. Farhat, Secretary
River Valley Board of Education