



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

Work Session: 7:00 p.m. Monday, February 15, 2010
River Valley Middle/Senior High School Library

1.0 Call To Order

President German called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and appointed Vickie Wagner as temporary recording secretary.

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

Members absent: William Farhat and Ronald Petro.

Superintendent Schroeder and Business Manager Cheryl Capiak were in attendance.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance

President German led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 Approval of Agenda as Presented

German asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Moved by Pfauth, supported by Knutel, to accept the proposed agenda as presented. All Ayes. Motion carried. There were no public comments on the agenda.

4.0 Review Regular Meeting Minutes of January 25, 2010

German reminded Board members to review the proposed meeting minutes and advise Secretary Farhat of any corrections.

5.0 Correspondence

Schroeder stated two notes of appreciation were received. The American Red Cross thanked students for a donation to assist Haiti's earthquake victims; elementary students raised \$1,084 for the island nation, \$657 in cash and \$427 in checks. The United Way thanked River Valley High School staff for their annual contributions. Schroeder also noted that he received a letter from U.S. Representative Fred Upton, regarding an update on Race to the Top.

6.0 Building and Grounds Committee

6.1 Citizens Committee Report

German, Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, stated the Citizens Committee met for several months, reached a decision and had a proposal for Board consideration. He recognized Richard Hebard of Hebard & Hebard Architects, Inc. Hebard reviewed the proposed building plans for a new elementary school that would be located at the Middle/Senior High School campus. After a brief summary of the site plan, Hebard said the Citizens Committee discussed options and had a "lot of dialogue" about the proposal. He noted that adding an elementary school to the north end of the existing high school, i.e., sharing a common wall, would save money and allow a "synergy" between buildings.

The proposed elementary school gym would attach to the existing gymnasium and provide an expanded locker room area for the high school. The proposed school building would have a separate entry, a separate parental drop-off area, a separate bus drop-off area and a separate food service area near the existing high school cafeteria. Preliminary planning included two "flex" classrooms for expansion, a kindergarten playground at the current tennis court area (tennis courts would be relocated) and secure

access to the elementary building (entry via staff release of locks electronically, i.e., “buzz in”). School buses would enter via Warren Woods Road and there would be a “loop” drive with parking in the front of and along the south side of the existing building. Hebard acknowledged there might be some “challenges” with parking during athletic events and that the plan would be the least costly. At the conclusion of the presentation, Hebard restated the proposed plan was the recommendation of the Citizens Committee.

John Alden asked about fencing for and landscaping around the children’s playground. Hebard stated fencing would be “decorative” and safe with masonry piers and gates, not chain link fencing. Landscaping would be decorative, but recommended it not be restrictive or block views of children at play. Neil Carter asked about the proposed parking areas and Hebard noted a 20-foot bumper zone would be required along the front/east parking area. When asked, Hebard said the approximate \$13,000,000 cost included construction management, architect fees, soft costs and contingency fees, permits, temporary construction roads, etc. German noted that if any funds were left over, the District could use the money to expand, upgrade or not levy the full amount.

Phil Hartman of Wolgast Corporation explained his firm’s role in the building process. By using the firm, bids for every aspect of the building would be posted, allowing small regional businesses to compete for the work. This would save the District time and money on contractor expenses. With “not to exceed” oversight, the firm would save taxpayers money and as experts in the field, the firm would make recommendations on products for heating, lighting, etc.

John Alden asked if the proposed plans would address any “mechanicals” at the high school. German said it would not, but by saving money in operating costs for just one elementary school building, the district would be able financially to address such issues at the high school building. German noted the boilers at both elementary schools required repair and would need to be replaced in the near future.

Wagner asked about the septic system and contaminated area. Hebard said the septic would have to be redone and that when such occurred, it would be a “good time” to address the soil condition.

Barb Doepeker asked if the proposal included furnishings. Hebard replied, “Fully furnished and technology.” German asked Kris Harrington if she had anything to share and she said she did not. Blane Hillman said the committee had developed a plan much smaller in scope, “from \$28 million to \$13 million.”

German informed Board members the recommendation would be addressed at the next regular meeting. He said that the alternative (not passing the proposal by taxpayers) would cause tough decisions for the district, with possible closure of one of the elementary school buildings. German thanked members of the committee for their time, good work and dedication to the District and said he believed the Board would accept their recommendation.

Principal Garry Lange asked if architectural drawings could be available for upcoming staff meetings, which Hebard confirmed. German thanked Hebard and Hartman for their time and dedication to the project.

7.0 Curriculum / Policy Committee

Wagner said there were no new items to address.

8.0 Finance

8.1 Review Accounts Payable for February 2010 and the Treasurer’s Report for January 2010

Capiak reviewed the accounts payable for February and the treasurer’s report for January. Pfauth asked about the fund modification and Capiak explained funds from the general account were transferred only as necessary.

8.2 Review 2009-2010 MSBO/MAPT Bus Purchasing Program Resolution

Capiak reviewed the consortium purchasing program, which required a Board resolution. She reminded all, that this was the same bus purchasing program the District used in the past. Capiak said a new bus would be purchased in July at a cost of approximately \$66,000.

9.0 Personnel

Board members were reminded to complete the superintendent's evaluation and submit it to Ms. Brunke.

10.0 Other

10.1 Announce Candidates Running for Vacant School Board Positions

Schroeder announced that Ron Petro, current Board member, John Alden, Blane Hillman, Bonnie Pollack and Jim Vopat filed for the upcoming election for two positions on the Board of Education. The election will be held May 5 and citizens would vote at their designated municipal precincts, not the high school.

10.2 Food Establishment Inspection Report

Schroeder shared the results of the recent Berrien County Health Division inspection report. No violations were found and observations noted the kitchen was "very clean and organized."

10.3 Congratulations to the RV Wrestlers for Winning the Conference Championships

The Board offered congratulations to the student wrestling team for winning the conference championship. Gratitude was expressed to Coach Berget, who was recognized for "building a program, not just a team." The program featured older students as mentors to younger participants; this method had a positive effect for both the mentor and the mentee.

11.0 Items for Discussion Only

11.1 Mission and Vision Statements

Schroeder said he had discussed the proposed mission and vision statements with both principals and they had agreed to the mission statement, but only two of the vision statements. Wagner asked how alternative assessments would not be part of our vision. She asked if they had accepted the proposed Key Practices, including extra help for students, high expectations, using data and students actively engaged; Wagner noted the high school assessment team commented that during observations, students were not actively engaged. Schroeder said they were comfortable with only two of the vision statements.

11.2 Other Comments

Schroeder said next Monday's agenda items would be sent via electronic mail.

Schroeder said the Finance Committee would have to schedule a meeting soon to address the next fiscal budget.

Schroeder noted the Culinary Arts class provided the refreshments, heart-shaped cookies and punch. The Board thanked the class for the tasty treats.

German thanked Wager for acting as recording secretary.

12.0 Adjournment

Moved by Knutel, supported by Ehlert, to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Wagner, Temporary Recording Secretary