



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, March 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., welcomed everyone to the meeting and appointed Vickie Wagner as temporary recording secretary.

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

Member absent: William Farhat.

Superintendent Schroeder and Business Manager Cheryl Capiak were in attendance.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance

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 Knutel, supported by Pfauth:

- *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 February 22, 2010

German said Secretary Farhat would send via electronic mail the proposed meeting minutes. He reminded Board members to review the minutes and advise Farhat of any corrections.

5.0 Correspondence

Schroeder stated there were no items of correspondence.

6.0 Building and Grounds Committee

6.1 Citizens Committee Report

German, Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, asked Schroeder to update the Board.

Schroeder stated the Citizens Committee would address marketing issues for the bond proposal and look at strategies that have worked for other districts. He said the Citizens Committee would meet on March 25 and break into subgroups to address issues such as "big kids/little kids," traffic, funds, etc.

7.0 Curriculum / Policy Committee

Schroeder stated North East Ohio Learning Associates (NEOLA) had updates for district policy that would require Board review.

8.0 Finance

8.1 Review Accounts Payable for March 2010 and the Treasurer's Report for February 2010

Capiak reviewed the accounts payable for March and the treasurer's report for February. German thanked Capiak for the reports.

8.2 Bus Purchase

Capiak reminded the Board of the consortium purchasing program and said that she would seek Board approval at the next meeting to order a 71-passenger school bus at a cost of \$68,539. Capiak explained new emission levels would go into effect and that the district should order the bus by April 16 for delivery in July and to save approximately \$6,000. When asked, Capiak said the expense would be posted under Fiscal Year 2011 and that the bus would have a diesel engine.

9.0 Personnel

9.1 Review Recommendation to Hire Head Volleyball Coach

Schroeder said Mr. Neil Carter, Athletic Director, recommended the Board hire Jim Ragosta as the Head Varsity Volleyball Coach.

9.2 Schedule Superintendent's Year-End Evaluation and Discuss Process

Board members acknowledged receipt of the cumulative evaluation prepared by Ms. Brunke. All agreed 1) to conduct the superintendent's evaluation as a full Board at the next meeting on March 22; 2) that the Board will go into Closed Session to address the evaluation at the end of the March 22 meeting; and 3) no further business would be conducted after the Closed Session.

10.0 Other

10.1 Berrien County Health Department

Schroeder announced that the Berrien County Health Department congratulated the district for being in compliance and for the updated health records prepared by the district's secretaries.

10.2 Bus Grant Program

Schroeder reported the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) awarded \$500 to the district for a grant application prepared by Mrs. Haughey, First Grade Teacher. The grant will fund transportation costs for a field trip to Binder Park Zoo in Battle Creek. The Board congratulated and thanked Mrs. Haughey for obtaining the grant.

10.3 River Valley Middle School Choir

Schroeder reported the Middle School Choir received a I rating at the Middle School Choir Festival. He reported the choir was able to complete a sight-reading test in 10 minutes although 30 minutes were allowed. The Board offered congratulations to the students and Mr. Hay.

10.4 Academic Achievement

German recognized Wagner, who asked for a standing agenda item on students' academic achievement and the progress made to address deficiencies. Wagner noted her work with school districts across the country and shared that it is not appropriate for Board members to approach classroom teachers directly about test scores, curricula, teaching tools and methodologies, rather it was the administrators' responsibility. Wagner said the Board wanted and needed regular updates on what was being done to improve student success. After Board discussion, Wagner moved and Knutel supported:

- *To add a standing agenda item, "Progress Toward Mission and Vision," at every regularly scheduled meeting of the River Valley School District Board of Education.*

All Ayes. Motion carried. Schroeder asked what type of report would be expected. Board members agreed that nothing "formal" would be required for the March 22 meeting and they expected to be regularly updated on what administrators are doing to raise students' academic performance.

11.0 Items for Discussion Only

11.1 Preschool Funding

Capiak reviewed her assessment of the preschool funding. She recommended that the Board use \$66,000 from the General Fund to pay for the program. Preschool would be offered to 16 children in the morning and 16 children in the afternoon for a total of 32 available positions. Capiak explained the

district would offer the same program, but due to the reduction in state funds and the multiple restrictions to access the funds, the program cost would be basically the same for the district. She said the same criteria would be used, regardless if state funds would be available or program costs would be deducted from the General Fund, and that the district would retain its preschool license.

Principal Garry Lange said the program would continue to use the Michigan Department of Education's Great Start Readiness Program and that home visits would continue.

11.2 Other Comments

Schroeder announced that Michael Semenic was crowned Mr. Blossomtime. Board members congratulated Mr. Semenic.

Schroeder said Mr. Mike Latus, High School Mathematics Teacher, had conducted Happy Pi Day with his classes and that students were well informed on facts about pi.

Schroeder and Lange announced kindergarten registration at the New Troy Community Center at 6:00 p.m. on April 19 and that registration would also take place at the Three Oaks and Chikaming campuses.

Schroeder reported the River Valley Education Association (RVEA) would hold a meeting March 17 with Board representatives and administrators to review contract issues, such as the school calendar. Knutel asked if any teachers had announced their intent to retire at the end of the school year; Schroeder replied he knew one teacher would retire and there could be as many as four.

Schroeder reported Rep. Sharon Tyler visited the elementary schools to read stories to third graders. When asked about state incentives for teacher retirement, Tyler indicated "more sticks than carrots" could be expected. Schroeder confirmed the May 15 deadline to submit indication of retirement, but teachers who did submit by May 15 had until May 29 to withdraw their intent to retire.

Ehlert announced that on March 13 first grader Ethan Fadder, sophomore Alex Ehlert and senior Alex Kacmar won their matches at the regional wrestling tournament and would compete at the state level on March 26, 27 and 28. The Board congratulated the students.

Principal Wayne Warner announced Taco Night on March 17 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. The event will raise funds for the eighth grade students' trip to Washington, D.C.

German thanked Wagner for acting as recording secretary.

12.0 Adjournment

Moved by Petro and supported by Pfauth:

- *To adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.*

All Ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Wagner, Temporary Recording Secretary