

**RIVER TRAILS SCHOOL DISTRICT 26**  
**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013**

President Johnson called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education for the month of December to order at 7:06 p.m. The meeting was held at River Trails Middle School.

The Board and audience members stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Fiarito, Johnson, Miller, Koka, Beck, Nemcek, Linder  
 Absent: None

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Action**

Mrs. Linder requested Consent Agenda Item F – Fitness Room Proposal be removed from the Consent Agenda and voted on separately.

Mr. Miller moved, seconded by Mrs. Nemcek, to approve the Consent Agenda for Tuesday, December 10, 2013 as presented, consisting of the following items:

**A. MINUTES OF 11/19/13 INCLUDING CLOSED SESSION MINUTES**

The Minutes of 11/19/13 including Closed Session Minutes were approved as presented.

**B. ACTUAL PAYROLLS, BILLS AND CHECKS**

The actual payrolls for November 26, 2013 in the total amount of \$747,285.73; and the November/December bills and checks as follows: November 15, 2013 in the total amount of \$764,035.01; November 15, 2013 in the total amount of \$39,990.13; November 22, 2013 in the total amount of \$57,652.70; December 6, 2013 in the total amount of \$151,130.00; December 6, 2013 in the total amount of \$2,117.84; and December 6, 2013 in the total amount of \$150,845.33.

**C. BOARD AGREEMENTS**

The Board approved the 2013 Board Agreements as presented and they will be included in the Board Handbook.

**D. UNIVENT UPGRADE**

The Board approved to award the contract for Unit Ventilator upgrades to Trane. The total cost of the project is \$440,490.

**E. POLICY 4:170**

Revised Board Policy 4:170 – Safety was approved for inclusion in the River Trails School District 26 Policy Manual as presented.

## **G. PERSONNEL REPORT**

The Board approved the Personnel Report for December 10, 2013 consisting of one letter of resignation, one intent to retire and one long-term substitute hire. A copy of the Personnel Report is attached to these official minutes.

YES: Fiarito, Johnson, Miller, Koka, Beck, Nemcek, Linder  
 NO: None  
 Motion carried

## **F. FITNESS ROOM PROPOSAL**

Mr. Fiarito moved, seconded by Mrs. Nemcek, to approve the fitness room proposal allowing River Trails School District 26 staff to use the fitness center at River Trails Middle School during the before and after school hours discussed.

Mrs. Linder commented that she would like to see the starting hours in the proposal changed from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in order to avoid any conflict with students using the facility.

Mrs. Beck stated that she will be voting no on this topic because she believes use of the facility should be exclusively reserved for the students. Mrs. Beck also indicated that she has not seen any of the proposed changes reflected in writing and would need to see that before voting on this topic.

Dr. Koka expressed concern that students may not get preference of the facility over employees so she supports a later starting time of 4:00 p.m.

YES: Fiarito, Miller, Nemcek  
 NO: Johnson, Linder, Beck, Koka  
 Motion Denied

The Administration will continue to work with the Wellness Committee and a revised proposal will be brought back before the Board.

## **V. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2013 TAX LEVY**

## **Action/Information**

Dr. Koka moved, seconded by Mrs. Beck, to enter into a Public Hearing to review highlights of the 2013 Tax Levy and take public comment on said 2013 Tax Levy at 7:17 p.m.

The legal notice regarding this Public Hearing was published in the local edition of the Journal and Topics Newspaper on November 29, 2013.

YES: Fiarito, Johnson, Miller, Koka, Beck, Nemcek, Linder  
 NO: None  
 Motion carried

Ms. Schuster, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, displayed a PowerPoint presentation for the audience which reviewed details of the 2013 Tax Levy including the CPI, new growth, EAVs and Tax Rate Extensions. She explained that the levy requested is higher than actually anticipated in order to capture any new property that may come up in the community. Tax increase on existing property is limited to the 1.7% CPI. Ms. Schuster's slides also detailed items that impact individual

property taxes such as exemption amounts and the EAV multiplier. Also examined was the shift of taxes from businesses to residential homeowners. Additionally, the presentation explored the District's efforts to maintain or reduce expenditures.

The Levy presentation will be posted on the District website.

**VI. ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2013 LEVY** **Action**

There being no further comments or questions, Dr. Koka moved, seconded by Mrs. Nemcek, to adjourn the Public Hearing on the 2013 Tax Levy and return to the regular Board of Education Meeting at 7:34 p.m.

YES: Fiarito, Johnson, Miller, Koka, Beck, Nemcek, Linder  
 NO: None  
 Motion carried

**IX. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS** **Information**

Mrs. Nemcek commented on the success of the orchestra concert held at RTMS on December 3, 2013.

Mr. Fiarito thanked Dr. Delli and the RTMS staff and students for the chorus concert that took place before the board meeting.

Mrs. Johnson proposed expanding the board minutes to include more details about discussions that take place. The board took a straw poll and the majority was in favor to expand the board minutes.

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. BUSINESS SERVICES**

**1 – Approve 2013 Tax Levy** **Action**

Mrs. Nemcek moved, seconded by Mr. Miller, to adopt the 2013 Tax Levy to be necessary in the total aggregate amount of \$24,667,311, as follows:

\$20,467,311 to be levied for the Education Fund,  
 \$1,850,000 to be levied for the Operations and Maintenance Fund,  
 \$550,000 to be levied for the Transportation Fund,  
 \$400,000 to be levied for the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund,  
 \$400,000 to be levied for the Social Security Fund, and  
 \$1,000,000 to be levied for the Special Education Fund;

And to direct the Board President and Board Secretary to sign the prepared Resolution required by the Cook County Clerk's Office pertaining to the 2013 Tax Levy, the Certificate of Tax Levy, the Truth in Taxation Certificate, and the Supplemental Resolution.

YES: Fiarito, Johnson, Miller, Koka, Beck, Nemcek, Linder  
 NO: None  
 Motion carried

## **B. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

### **1. River Trails Middle School Presentation**

**Information**

Dr. Delli introduced Jeannine Wagner, technology teacher at River Trails Middle School, who brought students from her robotics class to perform a demonstration for the Board. Mrs. Wagner noted that the robotics program was made possible due to the “Project Lead the Way” grant that the district had received three years ago. She reviewed the robotics program curriculum with the Board and students gave a demonstration of their recent projects.

In response to board member’s questions:

- The class is an elective so it is open to anyone who wants to sign up.
- This is the first year for the advanced robotics class.
- While currently only taught at RTMS, the program has been evaluated whether it would be possible at the elementary schools.

The board called a short break and resumed at 8:12 p.m.

## **C. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

### **1 – NSSEO Report; Dr. Judy Hackett, NSSEO Superintendent**

**Information**

Dr. Delli introduced Dr. Judy Hackett, NSSEO Superintendent. Dr. Hackett shared with the Board comments on the success of the current year’s NSSEO programs and activities. She highlighted progress in the following goal areas:

- Student Achievement
- Student Growth and Improvement
- Partnership with Stakeholders
- Positive and Safe Learning Environment
- Fiscal Responsibility

The Board thanked Dr. Hackett for an excellent presentation.

Mr. Fiarito commented that NSSEO is an exemplary role model for how community support can have such a positive effect on an organization.

### **2 – 2014-15 School Calendar Draft; Dr. Silverman, Asst. Supt. for Curriculum and Instruction**

**Information**

Dr. Silverman presented to the Board members the Proposed 2014-15 School Calendar draft. This Calendar was reviewed with and approved by the District Teaching and Learning Council. Highlights of the 2014-15 School Calendar are:

- Monday, August 18, 2014 is a District Directed Teacher Institute Day (First Day for Staff)
- Tuesday, August 19, 2014 is a Teacher Directed Institute Day
- Wednesday, August 20, 2014 is the First Day of School for Students and is planned as a half day
- Fall Non-Attendance Day is Thursday, September 25, 2014
- The proposal is to have a holiday on Tuesday, November 11, 2014 for Veterans Day.

- Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for November 21 and 24, 2014
- Thanksgiving Non-Attendance Days are Tuesday, November 25, Wednesday, November 26 and Friday, November 28, 2014
- Winter Break will take place from Monday, December 22, 2014 through Friday, January 2, 2015. Classes resume on January 5, 2014
- Spring Break is scheduled from Monday, March 23 through Friday, March 27. Classes resume Monday, March 30, 2013
- Teacher Directed Early Release Days are on Wednesday, October 31, 2014, Thursday, November 20, 2014, Friday, February 13, 2015, and Friday, May 22, 2015
- District Directed Early Release Days are on Friday, October 10, 2014, and Thursday, April 2, 2015
- Last Day of School scheduled for June 4, 2015 without using any emergency days; June 5, 2015 if all allowable emergency days are used.
- The State of Illinois may require the last day of school to be a full day of student attendance.
- The calendar provides 182 teacher work days as required by the 2010-2014 Negotiated Agreement, and 176 student attendance days.

Each board member shared their individual opinions on the 2014-15 School Calendar draft.

Mr. Miller shared his belief that having a floating holiday like Veteran's Day during the middle of the week throws off the continuity of the student's schedule. Also, Mr. Miller asked if Teacher Directed Institute Days are used for individual or collaborated group work amongst the teachers. Dr. Silverman answered that these days are used however individual teachers see fit.

Mrs. Beck commented that she believes the continuity of student's schedule is affected by the calendar as presented and that it wasn't designed with the best educational interest of students in mind. She would like to see Veterans Day be a normally scheduled student attendance day and the parent teacher conference schedule changed back to the old format where they place the Monday and Tuesday the week of Thanksgiving break.

Due to being on the District Teaching and Learning Council, Mr. Fiarito walked the board through the thought process of selecting the days on the calendar as presented. He noted that by having Veterans Day be a holiday, that better aligns us with the District 214 calendar and it helps parents who have students in both school districts. The reason the Parent-Teacher Conference schedule was proposed the way it is listed is because they believe it gives more time for teachers to better prepare for conferences rather than having it on back to back days.

In response to Mrs. Johnson's question, Dr. Silverman will provide a roster of the members on the Teaching and Learning Council.

Mrs. Linder commented that District 214 has Veteran's Day scheduled as a normal student attendance day. Also, she would rather have November 4, 2014 be a non-attendance day due to being a voting day rather than having Veterans Day off. Mrs. Linder is also in support of changing the Parent-Teacher Conference scheduled back to the old format.

Dr. Koka expressed similar concerns that Mrs. Beck and Mrs. Linder have already voiced, but she would like to see the election days in November and April be non-attendance days.

Mrs. Nemcek commented that like others, she believes the month of November is too fragmented of a month and will throw off the continuity of the student's schedule. She would like to see Parent-Teacher Conferences held at a different time of the year to better help students improve their grades

in the middle of the school year. Mrs. Nemcek also commented that the calendar should follow the language presented in the negotiated contract, which she believes it currently does not. She would like to see teacher professional development time better spread out throughout the year instead of clumped in the beginning of the year.

Mrs. Johnson expressed similar concern as others.

The board took a straw poll and the majority was in favor to have school in session on November 11, 2014 - Veterans Day.

The board took a straw poll and the majority was in favor to have school in session on November 4, 2014 - Election Day.

The board took a straw poll and the majority was in favor to change the Parent-Teacher Conference schedule back to be on Monday, November 24, 2014 and Tuesday, November 25, 2014.

A conversation took place regarding the teacher directed early release professional development days and whether they could be consolidated into one full professional development day.

The Administration will take the Board's recommended revisions into consideration and this item will be presented for Action on the February 21, 2012 Board of Education Agenda.

#### **D. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **1 – Finance Committee Report; Mrs. Johnson, Chair**

##### **Information**

Mrs. Johnson provided the Board a recap of the December 4, 2013 Finance Committee meeting held at the ESC. The Committee received a presentation from a Forecast5 representative on data benchmarking for negotiations. Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Miller shared their excitement for the data analysis possibilities the program offers.

#### **E. PRESIDENT'S REPORT; President Johnson**

##### **1 – Upcoming Events**

##### **Information**

- December 12, 2013 - Winter Chorus Concert at Euclid – 7:00 p.m.
- December 16, 2013 - Band Concert at RTMS – 7:00 p.m.
- December 18, 2013 - Winter Chorus Concert at IG – 2:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
- December 19, 2013 - Variety Show at RTMS – 7:00 p.m.
- December 20, 2013 - Winter Carnival at RTMS – 1:00 p.m.
- December 23, 2013 - Winter Break
- January 3, 2014
- January 6, 2014 - Classes Resume

## **F. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT; Dr. Delli**

### **1 – Donation to RTMS**

**Information**

Dr. Delli announced several donations to District 26.

- River Trails Middle School received a donation from Northwest Assembly of God for \$766.26 to be used to purchase new fitness equipment.
- Sara Cohn donated an 18” computer monitor to the district.
- The Wheeling Walmart donated \$2,000 worth of cloths and toys for use in the District’s Holiday clothing and toy giveaway.

Dr. Delli also announced that Keir Rogers, RTMS Principal, and Jeff Prosccko, District volunteer, were award recipients in the Mt. Prospect Shining Star Celestial Celebration.

## **XI. FOIA REQUESTS**

Dr. Delli shared a FOIA request from Jeff Bradley, District Resident, for emails to the River Trails School District 26 Board of Education email address. The District responded that the email was not active during his time frame requested.

## **XII. FUTURE TOPICS**

### **B. Item(s) for Future Consideration**

**Information**

Mrs. Nemcek brought up the idea of having a midyear “check-in” of the Superintendent’s goals. Also, she asked whether the District participates in the Rising Star program. Dr. Silverman answered that the District may take part in it next year.

Mrs. Linder inquired about the possibility of “year round school” be a future topic. This item will be brought up as a possible Strategic Planning topic.

## **XIV. CLOSED SESSION**

No Closed Session took place.

## **XVI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Meeting adjourned by common consent at 9:59 p.m.

APPROVE:

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna M. Johnson, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda K. Linder, Board Secretary