

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS**

MAY 7, 2018

An executive session was held from 6:30 pm – 7:10 pm to discuss personnel matters.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Maureen McClure, President, called the Regular Meeting of the Riverview Board of School Directors to order at 7:15 p.m., May 7, 2018, in the Auditorium of the Tenth Street Elementary School.

VISITORS PRESENT

Dr. Monroe, Mr. Rizzo, Mr. Hewitt, Mr. English, Mr. Zolkowski, Mr. Hackworth, Ms. Gagetta, Ms. Lippert, Ms. Harden, Ms. Vitti-Lyons, Ms. Shoop, Ms. Ison, Ms. Hemingray, Ms. Dawson, Ms. Granahan, Ms. Sliben, Ms. Mayhood, Ms. Jaafar, Ms. Gornic, Ms. Tominello, Ms. Polesnik, Mr. and Mrs. Gourley, Ms. Kocur, Ms. G. Kocur, Ms. M. Kocur, Mr. and Mrs. Longstreth, Ms. Lowe, Ms. McFadden, Mr. Capsambelis, Ms. Chaparro, Ms. Quinlan, Ms. Jadowiec, Ms. Drabicki-Bell, Ms. Gardy, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Wilson, Ms. Joseph, Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, Ms. MacRae, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Ketterer, Ms. Girson, Ms. Machen, Ms. Fichte, Ms. Knapp, Ms. Patton, Mr. and Mrs. Billet, Ms. Costa, Ms. Shontz, Ms. Swift, Ms. G. Fichte, Mr. Fischer, Ms. Wellman, Ms. DeVita, Mr. and Mrs. Harley, Ms. Walko, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Abraham, Ms. Bodnar, Mr. and Mrs. Huber, Mr. Glaser, Ms. Beynon, Mr. Hill, Mr. Hasselman, Ms. Collins, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Forbeck, Ms. M. Dell, Ms. C. Dell, Ms. Paulone, Mr. Swensen, Ms. Allis, Ms. Wilton, Ms. L. Dugan, Ms. K. Dugan, Ms. K. Moore, Ms. C. Moore, Ms. Entwisle, Mr. Brun, Ms. Hornsby, Ms. M. Collins, Mr. Pagnotta, Ms. Dudash, Ms. Marchese, Mr. Moorefield, Ms. Lyons, Ms. Pietz, Ms. Stock, Mr. Smith, Mr. Sliben, Ms. P. Fichte, Ms. Laird, Ms. Longstreth, Ms. Willard, Ms. Reesh, Mr. Ditka, unsigned residents, unsigned members of the Riverview Education Association,

ROLL CALL

Present: Members: Mrs. Ashbaugh, Mrs. Aughenbaugh, Mr. DiClaudio, Mr. DiPietro, Mrs. Hurt-Robinson, Dr. Loeffler, Mr. Nehlsen, Mr. Tillman, Dr. McClure; Falco Muscante, Solicitor; Dr. DiNinno, Supt.; Ms. Good, Business Manager; Mrs. Tamburro, Recording Secretary

BOND UPDATE

Ms. Alisha Reesh and Mr. Ditka (Janney Montgomery Scott and Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP) presented the Board with an update. Pending approval, they are scheduled to sell bonds on Wednesday. Improvements will include ADA compliance ramps at Verner, brick repointing, glass block, window safety lining, carpet replacement, and small security projects. Mr. Nehlsen mentioned that the time to borrow is when money is cheapest.

BUDGET UPDATE

Dr. DiNinno made the following statement:

Here we are again. We find ourselves, once again, in the process of creating our annual budget in an effort to: provide our children with a quality Riverview education and to be as fair as we possibly can be to our taxpayers.

Over the past few weeks, we have received many emails, phone calls, and we have had many conversations with people in our community who have taken time to share their ideas and their input regarding next year's budget. I would like to personally thank all of you who took the time to share your thoughts and ideas. There is no doubt that we have an incredibly caring community and that our community values our children, our schools, and our staff.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS**

MAY 7, 2018

It is obvious to all of us that Riverview is a very special place.

I am sure you would agree that our school district is unlike most school districts in western PA.

The reality is, that it is difficult to find a place where children walk to school, have small class sizes, receive personalized and caring attention, and are afforded with opportunities that extend beyond the classroom walls. And on top of all of that, our parents, our community and our staff, care an awful lot about our kids and our communities. This truly is a special place.

I believe wholeheartedly that everyone here tonight wants the same thing.

We all want to provide our kids with the best education we are able to provide. We want to provide that education to our kids – The Riverview Way.

No one in this room wants reductions. No one in this room wants cuts. In fact, if there was a way to add more to our current programs, I think most of us would agree that we should do it.

At the same time, we are all faced with the realities of financing these programs.

Over the past few years, we have been able to find creative, one time revenue sources. Many of which were one time pops to the budget.

We have examined the use of attrition, sometimes following through with it, and at other times deciding to hold off on it.

As a result of having less support from the state and federal government, we continue to see a decrease in revenues and we continue to find ourselves having to rely more on our local taxpayers. This reality can't be taken lightly either.

And now, we must find a way to provide our children with a Riverview education – knowing the realities of having less students, and less revenue sources.

This reality has led to the need for us to take some time to examine our current situation very closely and look at it from the perspective of our future as a school district.

Future revenue projections tell us that we will need to continue to monitor our expenditures closely in order to plan for our future sustainability.

We are faced with seeking out additional revenue in order to provide our students with the programs that we all value.

All the while, we want to make sure that Riverview is available; with the priorities we all know and share, for future generations. We must make this part of our plan.

We are no longer a school district that provides an education for and prepares 1,400 students for their future.

Like other districts in western PA, we too have seen a drop in enrollment.

Our enrollment has gone from 1,400 students in the 1970s to about 980 students in 2018. We now prepare about 980 students for their futures, not 1,400 students. This in itself has financial and staffing need implications.

- Addressing a declining enrollment,
- Not being able to rely on additional revenue sources from the state and federal government (the way most districts could rely on those same revenues in the past)
- Honoring the contractual obligations of a more veteran faculty,
- And paying for the obligations we have to unfunded mandates

This will require that we all work together, we all think creatively, and at times we will need to make some tough decisions.

Tonight, we are presenting a budget that includes an expenditure plan that supports our District priorities and our future sustainability as a school district.

The expenditures presented do not eliminate any programs.

Some programs will be altered at bit, but none will be eliminated.

We have examined every option in this process.

We have taken this responsibility very seriously.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS**

MAY 7, 2018

We do not take the implications of our expenditure decisions lightly.

Our goal is to provide for our students' education both now -- and in the future.

And in this process, we can't forget that we must also be fair to the taxpayers who live in Oakmont and Verona; we want them to continue to call this special place HOME.

Ms. Good then walked the Board and those in attendance through the 2018-2019 Proposed Final Budget Presentation. (This same presentation is located on the school district's website)

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS Dr. McClure thanked everyone for coming. She explained that none of us want to be here. We have a great respect for teachers and are up against decisions that aren't our fault. She wanted to thank everyone in advance for their responses. Our problem will only get worse. Our district continues to face declining enrollment, an aging staff, and an aging community. Projections show we will lose an additional 50 more students in five years. Taxation is the Board's primary job. Many residents are happy to pay more in taxes while many others have difficulty. We also need a responsible expenditure plan that follows the strategic plan and we need to balance our needs. Mr. Muscante explained the furlough process, school code, and teacher evaluation and seniority.

HEARING OF CITIZENS Approximately 60 residents shared their comments with the board including: need to increase taxes, the need to work together, gratitude to the board for their time, marketing is not necessary, consider cutting a reading specialist, consider administrative cuts, do not make cuts in the arts, a resource officer should not be hired, concerns for transparency, importance of following the strategic plan, consider other creative cuts, current budget is not sustainable, the need for guidance, the need for nurses, using textbooks online, concerns about furlough letters, allow parents to volunteer their services so that cuts can be made elsewhere, cuts have occurred over the past several years, what a wonderful school district we have, the use of booster group and PTO monies to pay for programs, several teachers were complimented, willingness to pay higher taxes, unwillingness to pay higher taxes, the score of the Penguins game, quality of Verner's educational program, students' excitement to participate in school activities, district is special, how difficult it is when you raise taxes for the elderly, endorsement of the music program, endorsing the athletic programs, request to start an educational foundation, request to use a different budget template, request to table the budget, consider innovative ideas,

A five minute break was taken.

Additional comments included: need to continue lessons, offer of soccer organization as means of marketing, endorsement of the physical education and art programs, sadness and frustration over budget, importance of the arts on college applications, thank you to the board, responsibility of board to be fair, feels cuts are lack of respect for teachers, consider sending a survey, music and arts have the power to change humanity, our schools are already safe enough- we don't need an SRO.

Mr. Tillman then shared his views for the upcoming motion. He stated that he cannot support the budget with no tax increase and felt that the board should have raised taxes in previous years when it did not. Mr. Tillman also indicated that he felt the budget needed to have aligned with the strategic plan. He feels it does not. Mrs. Ashbaugh mentioned that she has listened to everyone's opinions. She feels a need to consider a small tax increase and would like to keep the music program. She does not wish to see any change to lessons. She thanked everyone for coming and was happy to see so many people in attendance. We have been lucky to have public education. She will be voting no. Mrs. Hurt-Robinson also mentioned that she was in favor of a tax increase. She, too, has listened to many residents and will be voting no. Dr. Loeffler asked people to call Harrisburg and voice their concerns for the lack of funding. Mr. DiClaudio felt that even if we raised taxes to the max, we may be in the same situation next year, and nobody in this room wants that. He did not think it is responsible for the board to keep doing this. Looking at other districts, he feels we have hung on longer than others. Other districts spent poorly and found themselves in trouble. We have been able to push things off. I've done soul searching and don't see a magic fix. If I thought it was a one-time hit, it would be different. Mr. Tillman talked about district sustainability and indicated that there is a need for .2 mil to be added to the budget every year. He then said we run our school district like an academy, and an academy is expensive. Mr. DiPietro commented that we are where we are faced with personnel and we can't find any more revenues. Mrs. Ashbaugh questioned the justification of no tax increase and suggested adding one more meeting. Mr. Nehlsen said this is all about a measure of efficiency. What does it cost? At what point to you say enough is enough? When do we said enough per child? It's not about inefficiency. It's about needs, not status quo. It think we are being most efficient. It already costs too much. Mr. Tillman closed by saying it costs what it costs.

MOTIONS FOR APPROVAL

Upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee (J.Nehlsen/D. DiPietro), Mr. Nehlsen moved that the following item be approved-

MOTION 1:

- Resolution 1718-022 authorizing the incurring of nonelectoral debt by the issuance of general obligation bonds, series of 2018 in the aggregate principal amount not-to-exceed eight million four hundred thousand dollars (\$8,400,000.00); covenanting to pay, and pledging all available taxing power of the local government unit for the payment of, the bonds, providing for the establishment a sinking fund and the appointment of a sinking fund depository; fixing the form, maximum interest rates, maturity, redemption and other provisions for the payment thereof; authorizing the acceptance of a proposal for the purchase of the bonds; authorizing a filing of required documents with the Department of Community and Economic Development; ratifying and directing certain actions of officers; and making certain other covenants and provisions in respect of the bonds.

Mr. DiClaudio seconded the motion which passed unanimously on roll call vote.

Upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee (J. Nehlsen/D. DiPietro), Mr. Nehlsen moved that the following item be approved-

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
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MAY 7, 2018

MOTION 2:

- Recommend approval and direct the advertisement of the Riverview School District Proposed Final General Fund Budget for the 2018-2019 school year with total expenditures of \$23,078,197 and total revenues of \$23,077,403, which budget includes a no mill increase, for a total of 23.0073 mills. The proposed budget will be available for public inspection at the Riverview School District Central Office and will be available on the Riverview School District website at www.rsd.k12.pa.us. A public hearing of the budget will occur on June 4, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Tenth Street Elementary School Library at 901 Pennsylvania Avenue, Oakmont, Pa. Citizens are invited to attend this hearing to make comments or ask questions about the Proposed Final Budget.

Mrs. Aughenbaugh seconded the motion which passed with six (6) affirmative votes and three (3) negative votes (Mrs. Ashbaugh, Mrs. Hurt-Robinson, Mr. Tillman).

Upon the recommendation of the Dr. McClure, Board President, Dr. Loeffler moved that the following motion be approved-

MOTION 1:

- Resignation of employee 1718-023 pending preparation, review and approval of a separation agreement & release by the Solicitor.

Mr. DiClaudio seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

HEARING OF CITIZENS

Several citizens commented regarding the approval of the Proposed Final Budget. One discussed her disappointment that the vote went through and stated that our teachers are needed. Another stated that she, too, was very disappointed and did not feel the board is representing the community. A parent expressed her frustration with the board. Several students indicated they were very upset.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DiClaudio moved that the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 11:40 pm. The Study Session then began.