

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2022. The meeting was held at Maury River Middle School.

Present: Chairman Wendy Lovell; Trustees Corey Berkstresser, Catie Brown, Kathy Burant, and Neil Whitmore; Superintendent Phillip Thompson and Clerk Rhonda Humphries.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lovell called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

RECOGNITION / SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

- Mr. Adam Haynes, Athletic Director, Rockbridge County High School, recognized Ali Pfaff, student, Rockbridge County High School. Ms. Pfaff won state championships in the girls' 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle races at the Class 3 state meet at the SwimRVA Collegiate School Aquatics Center in Richmond. Ms. Pfaff also set a Class 3 state meet record in the 50-yard freestyle, and is the first female Rockbridge County swimmer to win a state title.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon recommendation by Chairman Lovell, motion by Trustee Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Brown, the board voted 5-0, the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes: 1) January 12, 2022 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 2) February 8, 2022 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 3) February 8, 2022 [Regular Meeting]; 4) February 9, 2022 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 5) February 22, 2022 [Discipline Committee Hearing]; 6) February 28, 2022 [Discipline Committee Hearing]

- Field Trip / Bus Use Requests
- Fundraising Requests
- Application for Use of Facilities
- **Appointments and Resignations**

APPOINTMENTS

Professional Staff

Appointments

Professional Staff

Katie Clemmer, Teacher, Maury River Middle School, 2022 – 2023 school year

Robert Hinkle, Jr., Teacher, 2022 – 2023 school year

Jason Breeding, Assistant Principal, Maury River Middle School, 2022 – 2023 school year

Appointments

Support Staff

Keller Blackburn, Teacher Assistant, Central Elementary School, effective March 9, 2022

Jeff Blalock, Teacher Assistant, Rockbridge County High School, effective March 9, 2022

Food Service Substitute

Dawn Clark

Spring Coaches 2021-2022

Rockbridge County High School

Softball

Tristen Ayers Volunteer Softball Coach

Girls' Soccer

Kevin Kendall Volunteer Girls' Soccer Coach

Boys' Soccer

Robert Humston Volunteer Boys' Soccer Coach

Boys' Tennis

Rebekah Butler

Girls' Tennis

Andrew Bellairs

Maury River Middle School

Outdoor Track

Paul Spangler Head Track Coach

Cynthia Spangler Assistant Track Coach

Resignations**Professional Staff**

Sandra Hayslette, Teacher, Rockbridge County High School, resigning end of the 2021-2022 school year

Leave of Absence (Not Returning)

Skyla Mendenhall, Teacher, Central Elementary School, LOA for the 2021-2022 school year, resigned effective February 17, 2022

Sarah Smith, Teacher, Maury River Middle School, LOA for the 2021-2022 school year, resigned effective February 11, 2022

Retirement**Support Staff**

Barbara Harris, Secretary, Maury River Middle School, retired effective March 1, 2022

- Business Items
 - Approved Monthly Financials in the amount of \$3,258,067.35.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BUDGET PLANNING: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

INSTRUCTIONAL REPORT:

Ms. Erin Allen, Studio Art/Theatre and Dance, Rockbridge County High School, provided information on the Rockbridge County High School Theatre Department. She stated that there are currently thirty-four students in the program who are learning theatre and dance skills and are currently preparing for a full-scale musical of "The Wizard of Oz" on March 25 and March 26, 2022 at 7:00 PM at Rockbridge County High School. She shared improvements that have taken place:

- Theatre projection screen upstage which was purchased with Theatre Department funds
- Repaired apron lights in the house ceiling, with appreciation to Mr. Hackman and Mr. Lindburg of the W & L Theatre Department
- Lighting board donated by the W & L Theatre Department
- Installation of a wireless mic system, with appreciation to Rockbridge County Public Schools

Ms. Allen, Director, and Ms. Miranda Fitzgerald, Music Director, and their students provided an excerpt of "The Wizard of Oz". The cast members were Parizad Irani, Julia Newhall, Ethan Forbes, Kendellyn Clemons-Jenkins, Lena Greer, Holly Ramsey, Lynnette Salins, Taina Covington, Ella Schmidt, and Cinylou McNeil.

- Chairman Lovell reflected that several years ago, patrons addressed the board in favor of the return of the Theatre Department.

Dr. Mike Craft, Principal, Rockbridge County High School, introduced Mr. Kurt Bennett, Building Trades Instructor, Rockbridge County High School. Mr. Bennett provided a presentation and information on the 2022 Timber Frame Project. The first Timber Frame project took place in April 2018, with the leadership of the Mullens'. The facility has been used as an outdoor meeting space, outdoor classroom, and a multi-purpose facility. Shortly after completion in 2018, conversation began with the Mullens' about constructing another timber frame behind the cafeteria. The current timeframe for the project is April 1-5, 2022. The current Timber Frame Project will be for daily use, as well as enhance the ability to have classes there. Professor Greg Mullen, a retired VMI Engineering Professor, continues to work with VMI engineering students in sharing knowledge with students; RCHS student also learn from his guidance. There will be approximately 120 volunteers from community and VMI. This will be a curricular event in which meals will be prepared for the volunteers by the Culinary Arts Department. Mr. Bennett reflected that the Building Trades Program thrives on community involvement, which excites and motivates students. It allows the students to give back to the community.

- Chairman Lovell inquired if any of the former students who worked on the 2018 project had gotten involved with the current project.
 - Mr. Bennett stated that there has been a lot of interest in the project and added that it is not a single person job.

INFORMATIONAL ITEM:

Mr. Timothy Martino, Assistant Superintendent, provided information and requested approval of the policy for Public Complaints about Learning Resources.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Lovell, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Burant, the board voted 5-0, to approve the policy as presented.

Dr. Mike Craft, Principal, Rockbridge County High School, stated that a project has been initiated for a "Rockbridge County High School Hall of Fame". Mr. Adam Haynes, Athletic Director, and Dr. Craft will co-chair the project. There are tentative plans for a banquet on September 24, 2022 for the first class of Rockbridge County High School Hall of Fame. Mr. Haynes stated that there are 23 sports programs with 33 sports teams reflecting 514 participants. He stated that the spring rosters are set with an increase of 62 more students from last year; March 15, 2022 will begin the season. He stated that the uniform rotation is right on mark and able to meet the needs of students and stayed on schedule.

- Chairman Lovell expressed her sentiments that students benefit greatly by participating in sports.

ACTION ITEM:

Upon recommendation by Chairman Lovell, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Whitmore, the board voted 5-0, to approve the Procurement Guidelines as presented.

Superintendent Thompson stated that there are many local businesses who contribute in many different ways to our school community. The Virginia School Boards Association Business Honor Roll is one way in which Rockbridge County Public Schools can recognize and honor these businesses and thank them for their support. Local businesses offer support in many ways to include financial, in-kind contributions, donating to a scholarship program, supporting extracurricular activities, internship opportunities for RCPS students, volunteer in our schools, and sponsor field trips. There are many other ways that businesses contribute to our schools that are valuable in adding to the experience that students may not otherwise be able to do.

Superintendent Thompson previously had requested Rockbridge County Public Schools administrators to submit businesses who they would like to nominate for this VSBA recognition. There are two winners this year:

MP2Contractors, LLC, Phillip Swisher, Owner: MP2 Contractors has played a vital role in providing cooperative education and internship opportunities for the students at Rockbridge County High School. Mr. Swisher and Mr. Kurt Bennett, Building Trades Instructor, have had a strong partnership for many years that has provided numerous students with a co-op or internship opportunity. Many of these experiences have turned into full-time employment with MP2 Contractors, LLC and then eventually led to those individuals starting their own businesses. This is the longest running work-based learning partnership at Rockbridge County High School. Mr. Swisher has also provided Rockbridge County High School with donations in the past. He recently donated one is his business's older diesel trucks, which benefitted multiple programs with the Floyd S. Kay Vocational Center.

Rockbridge Area YMCA, Bobbie Wagner, Executive Director: Bobbie Wagner and other YMCA hardworking employees have gone above and beyond to help the community in as many ways as possible during the past twenty-four months of the global pandemic. In the early days of the pandemic, there was a large need for childcare workers in the community and the YMCA offered childcare for frontline workers' children from Monday through Friday during those hard times. In June of 2020, the YMCA opened summer camp and met the needs of nearly 50 children in Rockbridge County, from Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. When the school year began in September 2020 in the virtual learning model, the YMCA was able to launch a total of six enrichment centers helping students and families navigate through virtual learning. Additionally, in December of 2020, the Rockbridge Area YMCA opened a temporary preschool on-site to serve area students with access to a high quality licensed preschool program. This preschool is now in partnership with our Rockbridge County Virginia Preschool Initiative program to ensure sustainability for both programs. Ms. Wagner and her staff are always willing and eager to problem solve and collaborate with Rockbridge County Public Schools to provide services beyond the school day for our students. This includes afterschool programming in our 21st CCLC grants, afterschool care, and afterschool enrichment sessions. The YMCA continues to adapt to the needs of the community through the vision and leadership of Bobbie Wagner.

Upon recommendation by Chairman Lovell, motion by Trustee Burant, and roll call vote, the board voted 5-0, to approve the resolutions to nominate MP2 Contractors, LLC and Rockbridge Area YMCA for the 2022 Virginia School Boards Association Business Honor Roll. The recipients will be recognized at a later meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: None

SCHOOL BOARD:

There will be a Special Meeting / Budget Work Session on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 5:00 PM. The meeting will be held at Maury River Middle School.

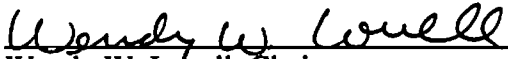
There will be a Joint meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board and the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors on Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at Maury River Middle School, 600 Waddell Street, Lexington, Virginia. The meeting date may change if information is not received from the General Assembly.

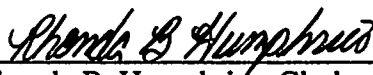
The next regular monthly meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at Maury River Middle School, 600 Waddell Street, Lexington, Virginia.

One patron approached the board requesting, with permission given, to address the Board because of late arrival and missing the Public Comment Period. The patron shared concerns that the school board members, Superintendent Thompson, and Assistant Superintendent Martino had broken their oaths as public servants. The patron went on further to threaten to revoke "their bonds as public servants and file claims" against them for doing so. At the conclusion of patron's public comment, the patron handed each of the board members, Dr. Thompson, and Mr. Martino, the allegations in writing.

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon motion by Trustee Burant, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.


Wendy W. Lovell, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board