

The Rockbridge County School Board held their regular meeting on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at the County of Rockbridge Administration Building.

Present: Trustees Corey Berkstresser, Kathy Burant, Heather Hostetter, Wendy Lovell, Neil Whitmore; Superintendent Phillip Thompson; Clerk Rhonda Humphries.

CALL TO ORDER

Superintendent Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and requested that everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Superintendent Thompson stated that the first order of business would be the Board’s re-organization for the year 2020 and asked for nominations for Board Chairman. Trustee Whitmore nominated Trustee Lovell for Chairman and passed by a 5-0 roll call vote, with Trustee Lovell being elected as Chairman.

- Trustee Berkstresser – Yes
- Trustee Burant – Yes
- Trustee Hostetter – Yes
- Trustee Lovell – Yes
- Trustee Whitmore – Yes

Chairman Lovell asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Trustee Berkstresser nominated Trustee Hostetter for Vice-Chairman, and passed by a following 5-0 vote roll call vote with Trustee Hostetter being elected as Vice-Chairman:

- Trustee Burant – Yes
- Trustee Hostetter – Yes
- Trustee Lovell – Yes
- Trustee Whitmore – Yes
- Trustee Berkstresser – Yes

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Whitmore, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board appointed Rhonda Humphries as Clerk for the calendar year 2020.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Burant, seconded by Trustee Whitmore, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board appointed Haywood Hand as Deputy Clerk for the calendar year 2020.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Hostetter, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board named Haywood Hand as Superintendent’s Designee through January 31, 2021.

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, and passed by a 5-0 vote, Phillip Thompson, Superintendent; David Daniels, Director of Financial Services; and Haywood Hand, Assistant Superintendent were appointed as School Board Fiscal Agents with the authority to approve the payment of bills if the School Board is unable to meet.

Chairman Lovell announced that committee assignments would remain the same, noting that the Discipline Committee may need rotation as needed with scheduling conflicts.

- Discipline Committee: Trustee Berkstresser, Trustee Burant, Trustee Whitmore
- Ad Hoc Committee: Trustee Lovell, Trustee Hostetter
- Rockbridge County Public Schools Foundation: Trustee Berkstresser

Chairman Lovell announced that the Board will continue to conduct their regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Superintendent Thompson stated that School Board Members have all signed the School Board Member Code of Conduct.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

STUDENT / STAFF RECOGNITION:

Superintendent Thompson read the Proclamation from Virginia Governor Ralph S. Northam that Virginia School Principals Appreciation Week will be recognized January 19-25, 2020.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

One patron addressed the board with a concern of Rockbridge County Public Schools reading programs not allowing for a life-long ability to read effectively and to be able to creatively utilize knowledge gained through reading.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon recommendation by Chairman Lovell, motion by Trustee Hostetter, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, the board approved the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes: 1) December 10, 2019 [Regular Meeting]; 2) December 12, 2019 [Special Meeting]
- Field Trip and Bus Use Requests
- Fund Raiser Requests
- Enrollment Update
- Appointments and Resignations
Appointments
Support Staff
 Lorrie Ackerley, Transportation, Car Driver, time-sheet

ResignationsProfessional StaffRetirement

Michelle Ferguson, Teacher, Natural Bridge Elementary School, retiring end of 2019-2020 school year

- **Business Items**
 The Board approved Monthly Financials in the amount of \$3,103,749.12.

BUDGET PLANNING:

Superintendent Thompson stated that the Governor released his budget on December 17, 2019 reflecting his proposals for 1.2 billion to be added to the budget for K-12 in the Commonwealth. However, the early analysis for the purpose of planning the FY21 budget reflects a bleak situation for FY21 for Rockbridge County Public Schools. He stated that the largest factor is based on loss of student Average Daily Membership (ADM); fewer students means less dollars. He stated that more detail will be provided at the Budget Work Session on January 21, 2020.

- Chairman Lovell asked for the current ADM and if it is anticipated that the ADM will increase.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that the ADM figure used for FY20 is 2557, while noting that the March 31 ADM is the key factor. The state has proposed the ADM figure of 2492 for FY21. He noted that Rockbridge County typically budgets less than the state projection but he is not comfortable using a lower figure for FY21. The demographics from those conducting the current feasibility study indicate that in a year or two there may be an upward trend eventually but does not anticipate that happening for FY21.
- Trustee Whitmore inquired how much the LCI changed.
 - Superintendent Thompson responded that it was minimal, .008, noting that the key is that the figure went up, which is bad for Rockbridge County. There has been discussion for years with local delegates to amend the LCI, without success.
 - Chairman Lovell stated that there has been no word from Richmond on amending the LCI.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE**INSTRUCTIONAL REPORT:**

Mr. Tim Martino, Director of K12 Curriculum and Instruction, provided a report on Virtual Virginia. He stated that the Virginia Department of Education's Virtual Virginia Program offers online courses, digital content, and professional development opportunities to schools, students, and educators across the Commonwealth. Virginia public school divisions & Virtual Virginia partner together to ensure students have access and opportunity that complement those available in the physical school. He stated that the program offers online course offerings, blended learning resources, and professional development. The program will be available via electronic devices such as iPhone, iPad, computer, etc. He noted that this program may not be an option for

all students, while some students need direct teacher instruction. Regular enrollment in the program allows for up to 15 students per course (pending space-availability) on a first-come, first-served basis. The expanded enrollment program allows schools unlimited enrollment beyond the free seat allocation on a per-student, per-course fee schedule which would be \$300 per student for every student beyond 15.

- Trustee Burant inquired how the PE element will be handled.
 - Mr. Martino stated that PE will be offered in the summer for grades 9 and 10 at a cost of \$375 per student and the cost will be the responsibility of the parent. Each student who participates in the program will be required to have a mentor and access to an electronic device.
- Chairman Lovell inquired how the blended courses will be developed.
 - Mr. Martino stated that some classes are online.
- Trustee Whitmore inquired if it is self-selection by students with teachers to help facilitate.
 - Mr. Martino stated the final process has not yet been determined.
 - Superintendent Thompson further stated that the program will allow for students to take a class with no teacher needed but will need a teacher assistant which will lead to figure how to budget for the position(s). A survey method may be used to see what type of classes may be offered.
- Mr. Haywood Hand, Assistant Superintendent, stated that there are currently twelve Rockbridge County High School students enrolled in Virtual Virginia taking advanced courses that are not offered at Rockbridge County High School.
- Trustee Burant inquired when the program may begin.
 - Mr. Martino stated that administration is considering a fall begin date but want to ensure that it is done correctly with a small start-up to gage interest.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that possible future utilization of digital learning may be used for snow days at home. He stated that Dr. Lane created an opportunity to enhance school programs. He further stated that this program is not a replacement for teachers in buildings.
- Chairman Lovell inquired if the program is funded by the Virginia Department of Education.
 - Mr. Martino stated that it is part of the VDOE website with no fees connected. The only cost will be beyond the 15 allocations; summer program cost are all \$375 per student.
 - Mr. Hand stated that the school division will supply the required books.
- Trustee Whitmore reflected his sentiment that it is a cost effective way to offer more classes for students.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Mr. Hand, provided information on proposed policy changes to Section E [Support Services] and Section F [Facilities Development]. He stated that once the review has been completed of the Rockbridge County Public Schools Policy Manual, the entire manual will be uploaded to the Rockbridge County Public Schools website.

Superintendent Thompson stated that the 2020 VSBA Business Honor Roll process has begun and will be presented as an Action Item at the March board meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

Upon recommendation by Superintendent Thompson, motion by Trustee Whitmore, seconded by Trustee Berkstresser, and passed by a 5-0 vote, the Board approved the Maury River Middle School Program of Studies.

- Trustee Burant inquired what the determining factor was for the minimal class size of 14.
 - Mr. Billy Thomas, Principal, Maury River Middle School, stated that the guidelines for CTE are followed.
- Trustee Burant inquired how the foreign language at the middle school level is based. She also inquired if the program is for high school credit, is it the same rigor as high school instruction.
 - Mr. Thomas stated that the program is designed to feed into Rockbridge County High School, and takes into consideration the program at LDMS. Students can be sent to RCHS for class and online instruction. He stated the program has the same standards as RCHS.

NEW BUSINESS:

Superintendent Thompson welcomed new write-in vote board member, Kathy Burant.

- Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation to patrons for their support and having confidence in her and that she appreciates the opportunity to serve. She noted that she had attended the State of the Community Breakfast and was pleased that all local representatives were speaking to education as a priority to all.

SCHOOL BOARD

There will be a special meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 4:00 PM for the purpose of conducting a budget work session.

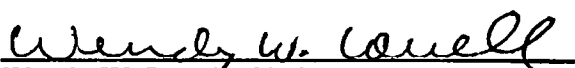
There will be a joint meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board and the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors on Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussion. The meeting will be held at the Rockbridge County School Board Office, 2893 Collierstown Road, Lexington, Virginia.

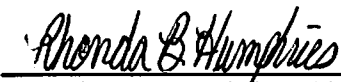
The Rockbridge County School Board will participate in Virginia School Boards Association Training on January 24, 2020.

The next regular meeting of the Rockbridge County School Board will be on Tuesday, February 11, 2020 / 5:00 PM / Location: County of Rockbridge Administration Building, 150 South Main Street, Lexington, Virginia.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Berkstresser, seconded by Trustee Hostetter, and passed by 5-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.


Wendy W. Lovell, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board