

**RIVER VALLEY LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION
BUDGET HEARING, ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
AND REGULAR BOARD MEETING
RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER (LMC)**

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In order to be successful with our mission, we focus on the following goals:

- Safe Learning Environment
- High Student Achievement
- Effective and Efficient Operation
- High Performing Workforce
-

ANNUAL BUDGET HEARING - 5:35 p.m.

Brittany Keller, Treasurer, presented the 2026-2027 tax budget.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING - 6:10 p.m.

President Pro Tempore, Don Rengert, called the meeting to order at 6:10pm and led in the pledge of allegiance.

Swearing In Of Newly Appointed Board Members:

The Treasurer Will Administer the Oath of Office for the Newly Appointed Board Members, **Ben Albright, Cheryl Beineke, and Bob Stump**, as follows:

“Do you solemnly swear that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Ohio; and that you will faithfully and impartially discharge your duties as members of the Board of Education of the River Valley Local School District, Marion County, Ohio, to the best of your ability and in accordance with the laws now in effect and hereafter to be enacted, during your continuance in said office, and until your successor is elected and qualified?”

Answer, “I do.”

ROLL CALL AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mrs. Keller called roll call with the following members present: Mr. Albright, Colonel Beineke, Mr. Rengert, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Stump. Board members present at the meeting acknowledged receiving and reviewing a copy of the board meeting agenda, background material, and any other pertinent information prior to being in attendance.

Election of Board of Education President and Vice President

Colonel Beineke nominated Don Rengert as River Valley Board President for 2026.

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Res. 001-26 Colonel Beineke moved, seconded by Mr. Albright to close nominations for Board President for 2026.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Beineke, Albright, Smith, Stump

Nays:

Don Rengert abstained.

President Pro Temp Don Rengert declared the motion carried.

ELECTION OF BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

Don Rengert nominated Ben Albright as River Valley Board Vice President for 2026.

Res. 002-26 Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Colonel Beineke to close nominations for Board Vice President for 2026.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Rengert, Beineke, Smith, Stump

Nays:

Mr. Albright abstained.

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA

Res. 003-26 Mr. Albright moved, seconded by Mr. Stump, to approve adoption of the agenda as presented, except for the removal of the first executive session and building reports.

Discussion: President Rengert explained that Mr. Wickham was not having the other administrators report this month due to not being school for most of the time between the December and January meeting. President Rengert also explained that the first executive session would not be used, but that the second executive would be.

Vote: Ayes: Albright, Stump, Smith, Beineke, Rengert

Nays:

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President Rengert declared the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Res. 004-26 Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Mr. Smith to approve adoption of the minutes from the December 11, 2025, Regular Meeting.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Rengert, Smith, Albright, Stump
Nays:

Colonel Beineke abstained.

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Recognition of Visitors:
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of 30 minutes of public participation may be permitted at each meeting.

Each person addressing the Board shall give his/her name and address. If several people wish to speak, each person is allotted three minutes until the total time of 30 minutes is used.

During that period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity to do so.

Persons desiring more time should follow the procedure of the Board to be placed on the regular agenda. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the board.

- Board Policy BDDH - Adopted October 12, 1999.
A. Introduction of Visitors
B. Comments from Visitors

No visitors were in attendance.

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Regular Session Meetings

Res. 005-26 Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Colonel Beineke to establish the second Thursday of each month at 6:00pm as the time for the Board of Education Regular Board Meetings. The location will be at River Valley High School Media Center unless otherwise advertised.

Discussion: Board discussed whether everyone agreed to continue having board meetings the second Thursday of each month and whether they'd like to continue having the meetings at 6pm or if they'd prefer to move them to 5pm. The Board ultimately decided that continuing to have meetings the second Thursday of each month at 6pm worked best with everyone's schedules.

Vote: Ayes: Rengert, Beineke, Albright, Smith, Stump
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Organizational Items/ Procedures

Establish Board Service Fund: Board approval of the following resolution:

Res. 006-26 Mr. Albright moved, seconded by Mr. Smith to approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Ohio Revised Code, Section 3315.15 provides for setting aside from the general fund a sum not to exceed \$2.00 per child or twenty thousand dollars, whichever is greater, as the "service fund"; and

WHEREAS, this money shall be used only in paying members of the Board of Education expenses actually incurred in the performance of their duties; and

WHEREAS, the October enrollment for 2025 was 1,880.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the River Valley Local School District hereby establishes a service fund to be set aside as an amount within the general fund. The amount established and appropriated will not exceed \$20,000, which shall be incorporated in the appropriations of the District for FY26.

Discussion: Mrs. Keller explained that the \$20,000 is the minimum amount to be approved and established based on the language in the resolution, but this does not mean that all of these funds are expected to be used each year, nor does it mean that they have been in years' past.

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Vote: Ayes: Albright, Smith, Stump, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Resolution Adopting Standing Authorizations for the Treasurer

Res. 007-26 Colonel Beineke moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to approve the following standing authorizations for the Treasurer for the Calendar Year 2026:

1. **Authorization for Advances on Tax Settlements**: Authorization for treasurer to request advance draws from the county auditor on River Valley tax settlement as money becomes available.
2. **Authorization for Investment of Interim and Inactive Funds**: Authorization for the treasurer to invest interim funds as money becomes available in accordance with the district investment policy.
3. **Authorization for Appropriation Modifications**: The treasurer is hereby authorized to make appropriation modifications between fund accounts with these modifications being reported to the Board of Education for approval.
4. **Authorization for Payment of Bills and Payroll**: The treasurer is authorized to pay all bills and payrolls within the limit of the appropriation resolution as bills are received and when merchandise has been certified as received in good condition by the Superintendent or his designee.
5. **Authorization To Pay Stipends**: Authorization for the treasurer to pay stipends to staff and community members when authorized by grant applications, i.e., Local Professional Development Committee, Schoolnet, etc.
6. **Authorization for Advancement of Funds**: The treasurer is authorized to advance monies from the General Fund to other funds in anticipation of future receipts. When the anticipated money has been received, the advance will be returned to the General Fund.
7. **Authorization For Establishment Of Bank Accounts**: The treasurer is hereby authorized to establish the necessary banking account he/she sees necessary to

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properly account for district funds providing that said accounts are within the limits established in the depository contracts with the banking institutions.

8. **Authorization for Signatures on Check**: The treasurer is hereby authorized to sign all checks drawn on bank accounts of the school district as provided for in Section 3313.08 O.R.C.
9. **Authorization for Expending Public Funds**: The treasurer is hereby authorized to expend public funds to purchase coffee, meals, refreshments or other amenities for professional development/meetings as a means to promote public health, safety, morals, general welfare, security, prosperity and contentment of all participants.
10. **Resolution: Authorization To Process Dock Leave**: Authorization for the treasurer to process dock days taken by an employee's leave, with or without prior approval and to adjust employee's pay to reflect such absences. As outlined in your background materials.
11. **Resolution: Authorization to appoint Public Records Training Designee**: Authorization to appoint Brittany Keller as Board Designee to attend Public Records Training as provided by the Ohio Attorney General.

Discussion: Mrs. Keller explained that these are standard authorizations approved by school districts statewide every year during the organizational meeting, required every January.

Vote: Ayes: Beineke, Stump, Albright, Smith, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Resolution Adopting Standing Authorizations for the Superintendent for Calendar Year 2026

Res. 008-26 Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Mr. Smith to approve the following standing authorizations for the Superintendent for the Calendar Year 2026:

1. **Appointment of Purchasing Agent/Business Manager**: Appointment of the Superintendent as the purchasing agent/business manager for Calendar Year 2026.
2. **Authorization for Emergency Employment/Substitute Compensation**: Authorization of Superintendent to employ individuals and establish the rate of

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substitute compensation in emergency situations. Such employment(s) to be submitted for approval by the Board at the next meeting following the emergency.

3. **Authorization for Superintendent to Hire Staff between Board Meetings:**
Authorization for the Superintendent to employ individuals between board meetings as follows:
 - a. Authorizes the Superintendent, during periods when this Board is not in session, to make offers for employment directly to candidates for either teaching or non-teaching positions on behalf of this Board, and to acknowledge acceptance of such offers on behalf of this Board, subject to a subsequent vote of ratification by this Board; provided, however, that upon ratification by this Board, the employment shall be deemed effective as of the date and time of the employee's acceptance of the Superintendent's offer.
 - b. Nothing in this resolution shall require the Board of Education to employ or continue to employ an individual who has not provided a criminal records check satisfactory to the Board or who has not satisfied any other prerequisite to employment created by law or Board policy.
 - c. Authorization provided by this resolution shall remain in effect until withdrawn by formal action of this Board.
4. **Authorization For Superintendent to Make Application For State and Federal Grants:** Authorization for the Superintendent to make application for state and federal grants as appropriate for the benefit of the River Valley Local School District during Calendar Year 2026.
5. **Authorization for Superintendent to Accept Resignations between Board Meetings:** Authorization for the Superintendent, on behalf of this Board, to accept resignations which have been submitted by employees during times when this Board is not in session. Such resignations shall be deemed effective as of the date and time of the Superintendent's acceptance. The authorization provided by this Resolution shall remain in effect until withdrawn by the formal action of this Board.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Rengert, Smith, Albright, Stump, Beineke

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Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Special/Subcommittee Assignments Of Board Members: General discussion of Board members' desires and wishes for serving in the following special assignments or subcommittees for 2026.

1. **Special Assignments:**
 - a. OSBA Legislative Liaison- Cheryl Beineke
 - b. OSBA Student Achievement Liaison- Don Rengert

2. **Subcommittee Assignments:**
 - a. Finance Subcommittee- Nathan Smith and Don Rengert
 - b. Policy Subcommittee- Cheryl Beineke and Ben Albright
 - c. Strategic Initiatives Subcommittee- Don Rengert and Ben Albright

3. **Other:**
 - a. Negotiations RVTA Team- Ben Albright and Bob Stump
 - b. Negotiations RVEA Team- Cheryl Beineke and Ben Albright

Re-adoption of Board Goals

Res. 009-26 Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Stump, to approve the re-adoption and extension of the following five (5) proposed goals for the balance of this year and for the 2026-2027 school year:

1. To promote continuous educational improvement through the implementation and monitoring of our district and each building's One Needs Assessment.
2. To foster student learning and success through, but not limited to, the achievement of the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce criteria that are used for district and building report cards.
3. To increase the involvement of parents and community members in educational activities in order to build understanding and support of our children and reinforce the value of education.
4. To continue efforts in staff development and professional growth especially as it pertains to the accomplishment of district/building plans and goals.

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5. To continue to support the integration of technology and emerging technologies into the curriculum and teaching/learning process for students and staff.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Smith, Stump, Albright, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Resolution: Appointment to Tri-Rivers Board

Res. 010-26 Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Mr. Stump, to nominate Benjamin Albright as the Tri Rivers Board Member for a 3-year term.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Rengert, Stump, Smith, Beineke
Nays:

Mr. Albright abstained.

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS

Superintendent Shares Oral/Written Correspondence/Communications

Mr. Wickham shared that the implementation of the OpenGate Weapons Detectors at the High School and Middle School is going well and students are getting into the buildings before the tardy bell now.

The roof replacement project is moving along nicely. The shingles are off the athletic buildings and weatherproof underlayment have been installed. Brad Morrow, the Buildings & Grounds Supervisor, was able to install new exterior LED lights on the concession buildings prior to the roof replacement of that building beginning. The District Office will not be completed until all of the other buildings have been completed.

The bus garage fencing project is almost complete, they are just waiting on the gates to arrive. The trenching for the electricity needed for the gates to be operational is almost complete as well.

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The backstop poles have been set; knee walls and backstop walls have been completed.

“The Station” is a new development we are anticipating will go up quickly at the corner of 309 and University in our district. The development will include 72 low-income units. The Zoning Commission has approved the plans, and it is now with the Regional Planning Office.

Mr. Wickham shared that preliminary conversations regarding collaborating with First Consolidated on a new training center and new fire station through a capital budget request have taken place. It is yet to be determined whether Tri Rivers will collaborate as well given their role in career technical education and adult education.

Mr. Wickham, Mr. Douce, and Mr. Gliebe recently visited Tolles Technical Center. Tolles shared a “2x2” model that they use and their focus on work-based learning opportunities. Tolles has 80% of their student population attending part-time, therefore present at Tolles for their labs and careers classes only, then going back to their home school for their core classes.

River Valley Local Schools Building Reports/Updates: At this time, we would like to have building principals and our student representative give the board a brief update.

No building reports took place this month.

River Valley Local Schools Tri-Rivers Career Center Representative: At this time the board would like to recognize Dr. Bob Haas for his 15 years of service to the Tri-Rivers Career Center Board of Education.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Keller shared that all four property tax reforms were signed by Governor DeWine, as discussed during the tax budget presentation. We continue to learn how these bills will work together and impact schools statewide, but more specifically for us, River Valley. The fiscal year 2025 CUPP Report was released mid-December and is a great tool that can be used to compare River Valley’s demographic, personnel, property valuations and taxes, local effort, operating expenditure per-pupil data, revenue by source data and district financial status from the five-year forecast).

Res. 011-26 Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to approve the following information:

A. **Treasurer’s Report:**

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1. **Tax Budget**: Approving the 2026-27 Fiscal Year Tax Budget (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027).

Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.28 requires each school district to approve the tax budget for the next fiscal year, by January 15th, and that the tax budget be filed with the County Auditor no later than January 20th. The tax budget is a preliminary estimate of the school district's operating revenues and disbursements. The purpose of the tax budget is to demonstrate the district's need for existing inside and outside millages to the County Budget Commission. The tax budget projects the need for our operating levies. A public hearing, as required by Ohio Revised Code, was held on January 8, 2026 at 5:30 pm prior to the 2026 organizational/regular board meeting.

It is recommended by the Treasurer that the tax budget for Fiscal Year 2027 be approved by the Board of Education, as presented.

2. **Acceptance of Donations:**

Donations:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
12/8/2025	Lindsey Henry	\$100.00	MS Volleyball
12/8/2025	Ashley Klingel	\$20.00	MS Volleyball
12/8/2025	Patty Smallsreed	\$12.00	MS Volleyball
12/12/2025	American Legion Post 401	\$1,000.00	MS DC Trip
12/12/2025	American Legion Auxiliary	\$969.60	MS DC Trip
12/18/2025	Christmas Clearing House	\$25.03	LES Candy Cane Sale
12/18/2025	Caledonia Memorial Methodist Church	\$500.00	LES Candy Cane Sale
12/19/2025	Ohio Health	\$15,000.00	RV Athletics Sponsorship
12/23/2025	Ohio Energy	\$200.00	Careers Event Trip

Rebates:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
12/4/2025	Kroger	\$80.87	General Fund
12/4/2025	Kroger	\$224.15	Sophomore Class

3. **Asset Disposals:** Board approval to dispose of the following assets, per the information presented in your background materials:

- Hamilton Baldwin piano at Liberty Elementary on GovDeals
- Sale of Three Sets of Assorted Plates with racks and an Incline Bench Press with Barbell on GovDeals.
- Disposal of Wooden Podium

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4. **Acceptance of Financial Reports**: Acknowledge receipt of the following financial reports for the month of December 2025:

Cash Financial Summary
Appropriation Summary
Revenue Summary

5. **North Central Ohio Education Service Center Substitute Teacher Approval**: Board approval of the updated Substitute Teacher List for January 2026 as recommended by the North Central Ohio ESC and as presented in your background material.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Smith, Stump, Albright, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Superintendent Reports / Recommendations

Res. 012-26 Colonel Beineke moved, seconded by Mr. Albright to approve the following information:

1. **Agreements/Resolutions**:

a. **Resolution - Proclamation School Board Recognition Month**:

Superintendent announces OSBA's/RV's designation of January 2026 as "School Board Recognition Month" and distributes a Certificate of Appreciation for each Board member and asks the Board to approve the following Proclamation/Resolution at this time. Further, all River Valley citizens are encouraged to publicly and privately thank our school board members for serving this community and for their dedicated service to our children.

WHEREAS, it shall be the mission of the River Valley School District to provide all students with the best possible education;

WHEREAS, the school board sets the direction for our community's public schools by envisioning the community's education future; and

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WHEREAS, the school board sets policies and procedures to govern all aspects of school district operation; and

WHEREAS, the school board keeps attention focused on progress toward the school district's goals and maintains a two-way communication loop with all segments of the community; and

WHEREAS, serving on a school board requires an unselfish devotion of time and service to carry on the mission and business of the school district; and

WHEREAS, the school board must respond on behalf of the community to the educational needs of students; and

WHEREAS, the school board voluntarily accepts the above-mentioned responsibilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Adam K. Wickham, Superintendent of the River Valley Schools, on behalf of staff, students, parents and community, and in concert with the Ohio School Boards' Association, does hereby proclaim January 2026 as School Board Recognition Month in the River Valley School District.

b. **Resolution: Ohio School Board Association Membership**: Board approval to join Ohio School Boards Association for CY 2026 at a total cost of \$7,334 which includes electronic subscriptions to School Management News, and as presented in your background materials.

Discussion: Mr. Wickham apologized for not having the Board's recognition certificates ready for this meeting, but unfortunately they have not been received from OSBA yet.

Vote: Ayes: Beineke, Albright, Smith, Stump, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Executive Session- Not Needed

Certificated Personnel

Res. 013-26 Mr. Albright moved, seconded by Mr. Smith to approve the following information:

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- a. **Certificated Personnel – Employment**: Board approval to employ the Kayleigh Aiken as a Permanent Substitute for River Valley Middle School, on a one-year limited contract for the 2025-2026 school year, effective January 5, 2026, as presented in your background materials, and contingent upon completion of any necessary requirements for employment/certification.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Albright, Smith, Stump, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Classified Personnel

Res. 014-26 Mr. Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Rengert, to approve the following information:

- a. **Classified Personnel – Resignation**: Board approval to accept the letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement from Jackie Blevins, Part Time Cook, Liberty Elementary School, effective January 7, 2026, with regrets and best wishes and as presented in your background materials.
- b. **Classified Personnel – Education Level Adjustment**: Board approval of an education level adjustment for Troy Thrush, Technology Repair Technician at River Valley Local Schools who has completed the necessary requirements for such an adjustment. Education level adjustment effective January 5, 2026, as presented in your background materials.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Smith, Rengert, Albright, Stump, Beineke
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Supplementals

Res. 015-26 Mr. Stump moved, seconded by Mr. Albright to approve the following information:

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WHEREAS, this Board has posted positions as being available to employees of the district who hold educator licenses, and no such employee meeting all of the Board's qualifications has applied for, been offered, and accepted such positions, and

WHEREAS, this board then advertised these positions as being available to licensed individuals not employed by this district, and no such person meeting all of the Board's qualifications has applied for, been offered, and accepted such positions,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that coaching positions may be granted to non-licensed individuals for the 2025-2026 school year, contingent upon completion of any necessary requirements for employment/certification, per information in your background materials.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the individual(s) listed are employed for the 2025-2026 school year with the understanding that they WILL NOT be able to direct, supervise or coach a pupil activity program that involves athletics, routine or regular physical activity (practices, scrimmages, workouts, etc..) or health and safety considerations until they have obtained a valid Pupil Activity Permit, and said permit is on file in the Superintendent's Office. The Athletic Director along with the respective building Principal will be responsible for assuring that the individual(s) listed are in full compliance with the above requirements.

- a. **Supplemental - Resignation:** Board approval to accept the letter of resignation from Matt Waddle, Head Football Coach at River Valley High School with regrets and best wishes and as presented in your background materials.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Albright, Smith, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Board Policies

Res. 016-26 Colonel Beineke moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to approve the following information:

- a. **First Reading of Recommended Revised Board Policies:**
Board approval of the first reading of the revised board policies/regulations, as outlined below, and presented in your background materials.

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ING - Animals In the Schools (1. Addition of Therapy Dogs)
ING-R - Animals In the Schools (2. Addition of Therapy Dogs)

Discussion: The Board discussed that these policies are to support the newly implemented Therapy Dog at Liberty Elementary. The Board decided to approve only the first reading of these policies this month with the plan to approve the second reading and adopt the policies at the February meeting.

Vote: Ayes: Beineke, Stump, Albright, Smith, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Executive Session

Res. 017-26 Mr. Stump moved, seconded by Mr. Albright, to move into Executive Session at 6:58pm for the purpose of:

In accordance with ORC 121.22G4 – Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation.

In accordance with ORC 121.22G6 – Details relative to the security arrangements and emergency response protocols for a public body or a public office.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Albright, Smith, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Res. 018-26 Mr. Albright moved, seconded by Colonel Beineke, to reconvene in Regular Session at 7:42pm and upon roll call vote the following members were present: Albright, Beineke, Smith, Stump, Rengert.

DISCUSSION: Any items of discussion by the Board.

No items of discussion were brought up by the Board.

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ADJOURN: Thank you for coming.

Res. 019-26 Mr. Stump moved, seconded by Mr. Albright to adjourn the meeting of the River Valley Board of Education at 7:43pm.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Albright, Smith, Beineke, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Board President

Attest

The records commission will met at the conclusion of the 01/08/26 regular board meeting in order to comply with annual meeting requirements. The records commission consists of the Board President, Superintendent Wickham, and Treasurer Keller. The commission recommends to approve the certificate of records disposal (RC-3). Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Mr. Wickham to approve the certificate of records disposal, as presented. The motion carried and the form will be submitted to the Ohio Historical Society for approval.