

River Grove Elementary
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, November 12, 2020 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Online via Zoom
MINUTES (DRAFT)

1.0 Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:03pm by Chair Dan Miller.

1.1 Roll Call: Members present: Jessica Hansen, Angie Hong, Dan Miller, Annie Beck, Lisa Dochniak, Marcy Ost. Also attending: Drew Goodson, Ele Anderson, Kou Vang, Kyle Knudson

2.0 Approve Agenda: Hong motion to move agenda item 8 (COVID response) to the end of the meeting. Second by Ost. Roll call vote: All members vote yes. Beck motion to approve agenda as amended. Second by Hansen. Roll call vote: all members vote yes.

3.0 Approve Minutes October 2020. Dochniak motion to approve minutes from Tuesday, Oct. 20. Second by Hansen. Roll call vote: all members vote yes. Ost motion to approve Wednesday, Oct. 21 minutes. Second by Hansen. Roll call vote: all members vote yes.

4.0 Community Discussion: Chair Miller noted that the board received emails from two teachers and one parent in advance of tonight's meeting.

4.1 River Grove Community Updates

4.1.1 Board Member Driven Initiatives:

- Lisa Dochniak reached out to the K-2 teaching team and SpED team to discuss the literacy curriculum. The group scheduled a conversation for Friday, Nov. 30.
- Enrollment for 2021-22 will begin on Dec. 1

4.1.2 Authorizer Comments: not in attendance

4.2 Citizen Comments - none

5.0 May Township Conditional Use Permit (CUP) proposal (Kou Vang)

- Chair Miller talked about the goals of the CUP amendment request that will be submitted to May Township. The school's goal is to eventually grow to have two sections per grade.
- Kou Vang, who has been retained as a consultant to help develop this proposal, spoke about the process and contents of the CUP request. Issues including wastewater, traffic, and safety were included in the analysis. Vang and River Grove worked with May Twp engineers to conduct a traffic study. Vang's team also analyzed wastewater treatment capacity at River Grove and conducted a survey of the campus to locate all improvements, roads, and parking areas. The conclusion is that the current school campus and surrounding road system can support 300 students.
- Vang has helped River Grove to prepare a CUP amendment request to allow enrollment of up to 300 students. The anticipated rate of growth would be 10% per year over the next four years, growing up to 300 students total. The request also answers several questions that were asked by May Twp. in 2019.
- Our original request to May Twp last year was for 350 students, so this will be a reduction.
- Miller noted that we have many May Twp. families attending our school and we want to be good neighbors and a community asset.
- Ost: After we submit this application, they have 60 days to respond. If May Twp comes back with new questions, does that start the process over again?

- o Vang: Potentially yes, but usually communities start the clock once the CUP application is submitted and escrow paid.
- Ost: Does the CUP address the number of staff allowed on campus or just students?
 - o Vang: The septic and road study made assumptions on the number of adults that would be on campus with 300 students and incorporated that into the analysis.
- Hansen: Has anyone from River Grove communicated with May Twp recently to know if they will be receptive to this proposal?
 - o Miller: May Twp conducted their own traffic study after River Grove had already paid to do one and then submitted a bill for their study to the school. River Grove will be paying, in the interest of maintaining good relations, but has made it clear that our school will not pay for costs like this in the future if they aren't discussed ahead of time.
- Ost motion to submit the CUP as drafted to May Twp. Second by Hansen. Roll call vote. All members vote yes.

6.0 Finance Reports & Actions

- Kyle Knudson from TAG presented the October financial reports to the board.
 - o The budget has not changed since last month. Most spending is for personnel. 95% of what we have received is state aid, mostly for general education revenue. We will not receive lease aid until 2021.
 - o We have spent more on materials and contract services than projected in the budget due to receiving new grant funds.
 - o River Grove has received a new rural schools grant for \$23,495, as well as a \$14,000 grant from Washington County for COVID related expenses.
 - o \$4731 in lunch fees from last year is included in this year's revenue. FDA has now opened up free lunch for all students.
 - o Cash flow budget has been adjusted to 200 students instead of 204. Our working budget is still looking good.
 - o Goodson: Will the audit be presented at the next meeting?
 - Knudson: Board only needs to accept, not approve the audit. All paperwork needs to be submitted by Dec. 31.

6.1.1 October 2020 Approvals: Ost motion to approve October financial reports. Second by Beck. Roll call vote: all members vote yes.

6.1.2 Banking Relationship: Bell Bank proposal Follow-up

- Miller: River Grove has encountered some issues with our current bank - Security State Bank of Marine. Last month, the board had to open a second bank account at Bell Bank in order to resolve a collateral issue that will affect our financial audit in the coming year. There was also a delay in payroll last month.
- Miller recommends that River Grove move its operations and card accounts to Bell Bank. We will get earnings credits and additional fraud coverage and the Bank will ensure that our funds are divided into multiple banks to avoid going over \$250k and losing collateral insurance coverage.
- Knudson: The structure at Bell Bank is more in line with what TAG sees at most charter schools.
- Hong motion to move operations and card accounts to Bell Bank. Dochniak second. Roll call vote. All members vote yes.

7.0 Director's Report: Goodson - volunteers have continued trail clearing. St. Croix River Association has done some on-site education with students. There will be a BARR training tomorrow focused on relationship-building between students-teacher, and staff-staff.

7.1.1 PTO Report: Katherine Hardie

- PTO just opened a school merchandise store. Sent out an email today and already have several orders. The company producing the clothing is local. Everyone will pre-order now and the PTO will place a batch order. 15% of revenue will go toward River Grove's music program. River Grove will also be participating in Give to the Max Day on Nov. 19, with funds also supporting the music program. Donations can be made between now and Nov. 19.
- PTO is also looking to donate playground equipment to any interested families.
- Volunteers have made good progress clearing trails everywhere on the north side of Ostlund Tr.
- Will be placing hay bales for sledding hill. Are considering sponsoring a tree for Marine's enchanted forest. Plan to do Read-a-Thon again in the spring.

8.0 Annual Report: Goodson

- Goodson emailed a draft of the 2019-20 annual report to the board earlier today. Usually the report talks about new programs and innovative practices, but a lot of those things have been put on hold due to COVID.
- We don't have new MCA scores from last year due to COVID, so the report still has scores from the previous year.

9.0 Board Designations

- Designation of Depositories
 - Bank(s)
 - Security State Bank Marine
 - Bell Bank
 - Propel
 - Investments
 - Insured Cash Sweep Service to cover amounts over \$250k for collateral
 - Other
 - Paypal for e-processing.
 - Authorized Bank Signers
 - Board Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Director
- MDE Designations
 - Special Education Director: Indigo
 - Title Rep and Identified Official with Authority (IOWA): Drew Goodson
 - Delegation of Authority to Make Electronic Funds Transfers
 - TAG and Kyle Knudson
 - Electronic Funds Transfers can be made for:
 - Payment of employee payroll direct deposits
 - Payment of federal, state, retirement contributions and unemployment taxes (deductions and/or benefits)
 - Vendor payments (when appropriate)
 - Principal and Interest payments
 - Transfers between accounts
- Acceptance/Adoption of Retention Schedule as defined by the State of MN - <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/ComplAssist/QA/DueProcRight/055464>

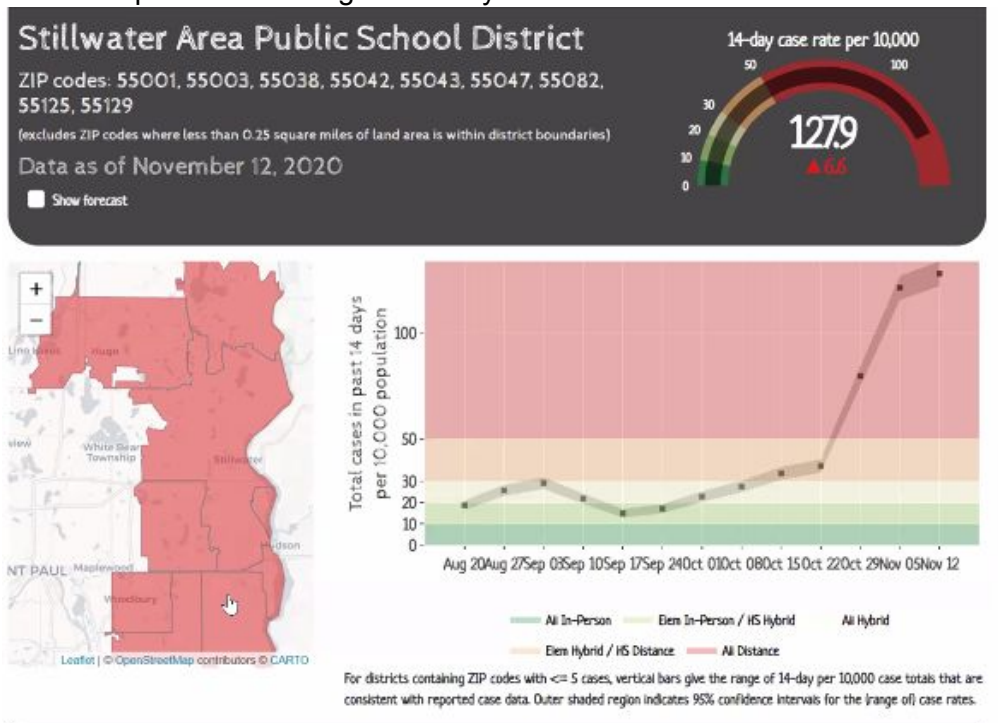
- Hansen motion to approve designations as stated above. Seconded by Ost. Roll call vote with all members voting yes.

10.1 Election of Board Officers and board meeting schedule

- Beck motion to approve a 2021 schedule with the board continuing to meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 6pm. Second by Hansen. Roll call vote with all members voting yes.
- Member Bre DeCorsey joined the meeting at 7:14pm
- Election of Board officers:
 - o President - Dan Miller
 - o Vice President - Jessica Hansen
 - o Secretary - Angie Hong
 - o Treasurer - Marcy Ost
- DeCorsey motion to approve the above slate of officers. Second by Dochniak. All members vote yes.

11.0 COVID Response Committee: Presentation from Goodson

- Miller is concerned with staff burn-out and staff shortages. There are also rumors about the state making an order to close schools between Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are very short on subs currently.
- The COVID response committee met last Thursday. Goodson also met with staff. Last week, things were still looking very good, but they have changed rapidly between then and now.
- Initial guidance from MDE and MDH recommended moving to fully-distant learning for elementary schools when there are more than 50 positive COVID cases per 10,000 residents in a county. MDH later clarified that schools should consider both county positive cases and school data when making a decision.
- In the past two weeks, we have seen sharp increases in COVID cases at the community level in all parts of Washington County.



- We have also seen our first positive student and staff cases at River Grove.


School Data

School Data:

Students Confirmed Cases of COVID-19	Students Exposed/Quarantined*	Staff Confirmed Cases of COVID-19	Staff Exposed/Quarantined*
2	105	1	11

*Individuals who have been identified as having COVID-related symptoms; have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19; or have tested positive for COVID-19

-
- Stillwater School District 834 has similar data:



STUDENT DATA: 10/16/20 - 10/22/20

	Weekly Active COVID Cases	Weekly Exposed/Quarantined*	Cumulative COVID Cases**	Cumulative Exposed/Quarantined**
ECFC	0	7	1	59
Afton-Lakeland	0	4	1	38
Andersen	1	35	4	80
Brookview	0	29	0	59
Lake Elmo	0	11	1	83
Lily Lake	0	9	0	56
Rutherford	0	18	2	181
Stonebridge	0	10	1	76
Oak-Land Middle	0	6	0	67
Stillwater Middle	0	25	1	155
SAHS & Transition	3	24	15	296

- According to MDH, Washington County is experiencing an “uncontrolled community outbreak.” District 834 has already moved its Middle and High School students to fully distant learning and is considering moving the Elementary students to distance soon as well.

Proposed Action

Letter to families to be prepared for a change in model

Proposed Timeline:

Last "In-Person" Day of School- Tuesday, November 24th

Week of November 30-December 4 Teacher Prep Days (Executive Order)

December 7 start of Full-Time Distance Learning lasting until at a minimum January 19,2021

Meeting next week (11/18 or 11/19) to vote on model change

Data and input collection (Teachers, Families)

-
- River Grove is currently very short staffed and close to an operational breaking point.
- Goodson suggested that the board call an emergency meeting next week to make a decision to allow time for a staff-level discussion and to alert parents that a change in model may be coming soon. Would also like to give families an opportunity to provide input on this decision.
- Miller: Would like to see where COVID trends go within our school - do more students and staff test positive in the coming week? Would also like to acknowledge that a move to distance learning will likely mean some staff will have reduced hours and/or be furloughed.
- Dochniak: It is undeniable that we will need to move to a new direction. Would there be any reason to separate K-2 vs 3-6?
 - o St. Paul School District considered a strategy like this but decided against it once cases started rising. Now, the earliest they all might start is January.
 - o Yes, teachers can take kids outside, but not all day, every day. Especially now that it is winter.
 - o Could River Grove move staff around to provide additional support to students that need it if we move to fully distance learning. Goodson - yes, but some staff play operational roles that won't be needed if the school isn't open.
- Beck: It is obviously best to have students in-person learning, but not if conditions won't allow that. Staff are worried about predictability for families, especially with limited subs available. With Thanksgiving approaching, moving to distance seems like the best option.
- Hansen: Would like time to plan and discuss best practices for distance learning. Major concern is the health and safety of the children. The nursing staff have been great. River Grove is definitely getting to a breaking point in terms of staffing.
- Beck: What do you think of a k-2 / 3-6 split that would allow the younger kids to stay in person?
- Hansen: Maybe that could work. It is so much harder to teach littles via distance.
- Goodson: Part of the problem is that so many people have to quarantine for two weeks that it becomes pretty difficult to keep the school adequately staffed. We are currently

very short staffed for SpEd and we are required to provide a certain number of hours of support for those students.

- Hansen: Currently, many of her students are quarantined, which is difficult as well to provide quality education for the kids still in person AND the kids at home. Weather is also a factor now that it is wet and cold. It makes it much harder to teach outside.
- Hong: It only seems reasonable to expect that the cases will continue to go up sharply, given the exponential growth of the virus. Is there a reason to wait to make this decision until next week?
- Miller: Want to be thoughtful of all angles because families will have many questions and opinions.
- Goodson will talk with teachers early next week. What questions does the board need answered to help with decision-making? Need time to plan logistics and talk with staff.
- Hong: Could there be a scenario in which we need to shut down earlier?
- Goodson: Yes. If we have multiple classes across multiple grades in quarantine or are not able to adequately staff the school.
- Miller: There is no reason to believe that students are catching COVID on campus.
- Goodson: Given the degree of community spread currently, it is hard to know where positive cases are coming from.
- Ost: Will we be able to expand daycare for students if the school moves to distance learning?
- Goodson: We'll need to provide care for students of Tier 1 workers but probably not more than that.
- Dochniak: Is that fee-based?
- Goodson: Yes, but the school is currently paying those fees for parents with COVID relief funds.
- Miller: Proposal for the board to meet next week on Thursday, Nov. 19 at 4:30pm.

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 19 at 4:30pm. Regularly scheduled meeting will then happen on Tuesday, December 15, 2020

12.0 Adjournment: Dochniak motioned to adjourn. Hansen seconded. Roll call vote with all members voting yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.