

River Ridge School District  
Staff and Employee Relations Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, February 1, 2017

The Committee met on Wednesday, February 1, 2017 in the Superintendent's Office in the ES/MS/HS located at 11165 County Road P., Patch Grove, WI 53817

The following business was conducted:

- I. Call to Order – Jason Cathman called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.
- II. Roll Call – The following board members were present: Jason Cathman, Cory Moravits, Kenny Nies, and Kerri Schier. Supt./Elementary Principal Dr. Jeff Athey, Business Manager Kevin Kocer, and 5-12<sup>th</sup> grade Principal Clay Koenig were also present. The following teachers/staff were in attendance: Shawn Chatfield, Sue Christ, Mickey Quick, Steph Steffensmeier, and Deb Trautsch.
- III. Proof of Giving Public Notice – Nies said the agenda for this meeting was posted twice, the most recent, revised posting, was on January 26, 2017 at 12:00 pm. Motion by Schier/second by Nies to accept that the notice was properly posted. The motion carried on a voice vote.
- IV. Appearances – Although no one from the audience had signed up to speak, they were given the Chair's permission to speak up and participate any time they wished.
- V. Administrative Contracts Ending June 30, 2017 – Immediately following this meeting, a special school board meeting will be held to allow school administrators to propose administrative contract considerations for the coming two-year cycle.
- VI. 2017/18 Compensation for Teachers, Specialty License Staff, and Support Staff – The Committee reviewed salary increase scenarios prepared by Kocer. Kocer said the office of Boardman and Clark has provided a CPI calculation of 1.26%. He also noted that he has seen this closer to 1.5% depending on the economic data used. (RRSD teachers and staff received a 2.5% increase last year.) Teachers in attendance agreed that a combination of a flat amount and a percentage increase for salaries has worked well in the past. It was noted that flat amounts for hourly wage increases were applied for support staff last year.

Teacher contracts roll over after April 30<sup>th</sup>. Typically, the Board decides on a percentage increase between April and June. Kocer said we may know more about state funding by February 8<sup>th</sup>.

Regarding employee health insurance costs, claims are higher this year than in recent years. Kocer explained that "out-of-pocket" costs for health insurance in January, 2017, went from \$1,750 to \$1,250 for singles and from \$3,500 to \$2,500 for families. The district pays 88% of

the insurance premium; employees pay the other 12%. Sometime in March, we will begin to know where we stand on insurance expense for next year.

The Committee indicated that they are not yet prepared to bring a recommendation to the full board.

- VII. Employee Handbook Review – Kocer said the district’s attorney, Eileen Brownlee, has reviewed our Employee Handbook and recommended one edit. The edit is on page 7 of the Handbook to revise the definition of termination under Grievance Procedure. The Committee recommends the Board approve the edit.
- VIII. Retirement Package Discussion – Kocer presented a financial analysis of the retirement package that three teachers retired under at the end of 2015/16. The package resulted in a net savings to the ongoing annual budget of \$59,168, not including the \$18,000 retirement package expense that was granted for the three years. The Committee discussed the idea of a standing retirement package whereby the terms would be outlined in the Employee Handbook. The Committee was asked whether a retirement package would be made available to support staff. Kocer said Eileen Brownlee knows of at least one school district where something was done for support staff. Kocer will contact Brownlee and other CESA 3 schools to see whether there is more information he can bring to the March Committee meeting.
- IX. Staff Reduction Discussion – Athey said the Committee has been asked to begin the discussion of staff reduction based on pre-referendum discussions about the possibility of operating with one less cook and one less custodian once everyone is at one site. These reductions, along with not having to pay for electricity, water, snow-plowing, lawn care, staff transit to/from Bloomington, and transfer buses, amounted to an estimated savings of \$221,000. Athey noted that support staff agreements allow for layoff with a 10 day notice. The Committee recommended that following any support staff resignations or retirements, Administration look at restructuring prior to making an external posting. With the recent news that we will need to start the 2017/18 school year using both schools until mid-November, the Committee recommends putting any support staff reduction discussion on hold.
- X. Appearances – There were no additional comments/requests directed to the Committee.
- XI. Member Suggestions and Recommendations for Future Items – Retirement package discussion, including support staff retirement, will be on the March agenda. Compensation proposals for 2017/18 will also be on the agenda for March.
- XII. Adjournment – Motion by Schier/second by Nies to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm. Next month’s meeting will be March 1, 2017 at 6:00 pm.