

**Rochelle Community Consolidated School District 231**  
**November 10, 2020 Board of Education Meeting Minutes**

The Board of Education of Rochelle Community Consolidated School District #231 in Ogle and Lee Counties, Illinois met in regular session in the Lincoln Elementary School Cafeteria on November 10, 2020 at 7:00 pm. Upon roll call: Mr. Builta - present via phone; Mrs. Reif - present; Mrs. Tess - present; Mrs. Vaughn - present, Mr. VanHise - present; Mr. Zepeda - present; Mr. Casey - present. Present - 7, Absent - 0.

Superintendent Harper, Assistant Superintendent Doyle, and Business Manager Dale were also present.

It was motioned by Mrs. Tess and seconded by Mr. Zepeda to approve the proposed agenda. Upon roll call all members voted as follows: Mr. Builta - aye; Mrs. Reif - aye; Mrs. Tess - aye; Mrs. Vaughn - aye; Mr. VanHise - aye; Mr. Zepeda - aye; Mr. Casey - aye. Aye-7; Nay-0. Motion carried. (Ex. "A")

It was motioned by Mrs. Vaughn and seconded by Mrs. Reif to approve the October 13, 2020 Special Meeting - David Crawford Foundation Meeting and the Board of Education Monthly Meeting Minutes. Upon roll call all members voted as follows: Mr. Builta - aye; Mrs. Reif - aye; Mrs. Tess - aye; Mrs. Vaughn - aye; Mr. VanHise - aye; Mr. Zepeda - aye; Mr. Casey - aye. Aye-7; Nay-0. Motion carried. (Ex. "B, C")

**Audience Comments:**

1. REEA Co-Presidents Cosme Becerra and Jason Deutsch commented about the Ogle County Health Department's recommendation to go remote over the holidays. Cosme Becerra shared results of a questionnaire the REEA sent to the teachers over the weekend. 82 teachers responded to the survey. He asked the Board to review the survey results that are in the Board packet.

"The best place for our students is physically in the classroom. However, we have to be willing to think out of the box/classroom. Majority of the teachers want to stay in person, but they are concerned about safety. We have to listen to those that know more than we do about this pandemic. We feel the District needs to prioritize public health over the classroom."

President Casey thanked them for taking the time to do a survey with the teachers and presenting the results to the Board.

2. Jackie Ramsey, educator and parent of elementary school and high school students, spoke in support of continuing with in-person learning. She believes we are keeping a tremendous amount of data that right now is not showing the spread in the schools. "Our schools are not reflecting the numbers in the county data. Majority of the teachers feel we have the ppe to stay safe. We need to stay in as long as it is safe and legal to do so."

3. Gloria Miza, a mother of a senior student spoke concerned about the mental health of the children. She encouraged the children to remain in school, unless the numbers get out of control, then shut down for a short time and get back to school.

**Communications:** No communications were presented.

**Special Reports/Updates:** No special reports or updates were presented.

**Consent Agenda:** It was motioned by Mr. VanHise and seconded by Mrs. Tess to approve the following Consent Agenda as presented:

1. It was approved to pay the bills as presented by Superintendent Harper. (Ex. "D")
2. It was approved to accept this month's financial reports as presented by Superintendent Harper. (Ex. "E")
3. The below Personnel Report was approved as recommended by Superintendent Harper:

### **SUPPORT STAFF**

#### **Employment**

Dorene Albaugh	Sub Paraprofessional
Julie Laws	Sub Cafeteria at Tilton
Cyndi Cunningham	Floating Paraprofessional at Lincoln

Upon roll call all members voted as follows: Mr. Builta - aye; Mrs. Reif - aye; Mrs. Tess - aye; Mrs. Vaughn - aye; Mr. VanHise - aye; Mr. Zepeda - aye; Mr. Casey - aye. Aye-7; Nay-0.  
Motion carried.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Superintendent Harper announced that WIPFLI, the district auditor, has not completed the annual financial audit for FY2020. The report is scheduled to be completed and submitted to the Regional Office of Education by November 15th to meet the statutory requirements. A representative from WIPFLI is scheduled to present the audit at the December meeting to the Board for approval.
2. Superintendent Harper presented an update on the schools reopening plan during the Covid19 pandemic.
  - There is an annual exclusion date, typically October 15th, for physicals and immunizations to be completed. We have postponed this until November 13th.
  - It is the end of the first trimester. This is when we allow more students to come back into the classroom.
  - Last week RMS had a practice remote day when there was a water main break.

- The elementary schools decided to have an in-house practice remote learning day with their teacher.
  - Tilton is the only school that has not been able to have a practice day, because some classes were doing remote learning due to quarantine.
- The Ogle County Health Department has recommended to go remote for a while during the holidays. Superintendent Harper stated “We are pretty much back to our conversations that we had in July. We are faced with the same questions. We want to educate our students in person for as long as we can for as safely as we can.” There are some legal aspects to discuss in the executive session.

**Discussion Items:** Superintendent Harper and Business Manager Dale presented a levy proposal for this year’s levy. (Ex. “F”)

Business Manager Dale stated some highlights:

We are trying to maintain financial stability and healthy reserves to get us through the year.

We do know:

- The teachers’ base pay goes up to \$40,000
- \$15 minimum gradual wage increase starting in January.
- The Fair Tax did not pass during the election. Therefore the Governor has come out and said he has hard cuts in his budget; 15% right off the top on some things. There is a possibility of not receiving all or some state fundings.

When we look at the EAV before tax appeals it is around \$320M, but we know it is going to come down. The total EAV is up 3.18% from last year. The increase for this year is spread out across all areas except for industrial, it went down 3.84%.

The increase in the proposed levy is at 3.99%. Since it is under 5% there will not be a Truth and Taxation Hearing.

- The Proposed Rate we are asking for in the Education Fund is 3.2866.
- We are levying the max rate in the Education Fund, Operations and Maintenance Fund, and Transportation Fund.
- We are levying \$.05 in Health Life Safety and Working Cash Funds.
- We are levying in Tort again this year. This is for the need we have in the Education Fund.

With these projected EAV numbers we are asking for \$9,388,250, which is 3.99%. This is what we feel will help us keep going for next year, 2021-2022.

We will bring the levy to the board next month for final approval.

**Executive Session:** It was moved by Mrs. Vaughn and seconded by Mrs. Tess to enter into the Executive Session at 7:56 pm for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, collective bargaining, pending legal action, student discipline, and other exceptions to the Open Meetings Act. Upon roll call all members voted as follows: Mr. Builta - aye; Mrs. Reif - aye; Mrs. Tess - aye; Mrs. Vaughn - aye; Mr. VanHise - aye; Mr. Zepeda - aye; Mr. Casey - aye. Aye-7; Nay-0. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mrs. Vaughn and seconded by Mrs. Tess to exit from the Executive Session at 9:04 pm and return to regular session. Upon roll call all members voted as follows: Mr. Builta - aye; Mrs. Reif - aye; Mrs. Tess - aye; Mrs. Vaughn - aye; Mr. VanHise - aye; Mr. Zepeda - aye; Mr. Casey - aye. Aye-7; Nay-0. Motion carried.

**Action Resulting From Executive Session:** Mrs. Vaughn stated “We have been taking all comments very seriously. We do affirm to continue with the hybrid model for as long as we possibly can.” Our plan is to educate our students in person for as long as we can for as safely as we can. The District will provide more information/district data as it is available.

There being no further business, Mrs. Reif moved adjournment and it was seconded by Mr. VanHise. Upon roll call all members voted as follows: Mr. Builta - aye; Mrs. Reif - aye; Mrs. Tess - aye; Mrs. Vaughn - aye; Mr. VanHise - aye; Mr. Zepeda - aye; Mr. Casey - aye. Aye-7; Nay-0. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

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David Casey, Board President

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Trisha Vaughn, Board Secretary