



Board Briefs

A report of the Beauregard Parish School Board meeting

The Beauregard Parish School Board met Thursday, January 10, 2019, with Martha Jackson, District 1, Casey Jones, District 2, Kathy Bruner, District 3A, Garrett Greene, District 3B, David Vidrine, District 3C, Cassie Henry, District 3D, Wesley Taylor, District 3E, Darrin Manuel, District 4A, Ray Bowman, District 4B, Nikki Weldon, District 5, and Courtney Smith, Student Representative present.

BPSB 2019 Officers: David Vidrine was elected as President and Darrin Manuel was elected as Vice President for the 2019 term.

BPSB Student Representative: The School Board seats a non-voting student representative each year as a voice for the students of the parish. The students are nominated by their school's student government association to interview for the position. A committee selects a representative and an alternate to serve for the year. Outgoing representative Maili Bartz handed over the seat to Courtney Smith of DeRidder High School. Jenna Pottmeyer of East Beauregard High School will serve as the alternate for the year.

Superintendent's Report: The 2019 Student Representative Courtney Smith addressed the board for the first time and expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to represent the students of the parish recognizing that not all school boards provide such an opportunity to their students.

Col. Jarret Thomas, Garrison Commander of Fort Polk, shared that the website for the post has been improved and is more user-friendly. He also announced that there is a new information App available that can be found by searching "JROTC Fort Polk Home of Heroes." The App is designed to help people stay more connected with what is happening on post and to serve as a communication vehicle between the post and the public.

Superintendent Timothy Cooley announced that the Harvey Rabbit program would be presented in elementary schools January 14-17 with drug free and bullying prevention messages.

He presented the renewal of contracts for Lesia Casanovas, Director of Finance, Margie Hieronymus, Director of Title I, Eddie Joslin, Instructional Supervisor, Wesley Henry, Principal of SBUE, Chad Schulz, Principal of SBE, and David Wentzel, Principal of DJHS through June 2021.

Financial Report: Director of Finance Lesia Casanovas presented the board with financial information for December including the revenues, expenditures, and balances of the six accounts: Ad Valorem with a -\$4.1M, Debt Services with a - \$316,163, General Fund with a +\$4.5M, SFS with - \$638,787, Capital Projects with -\$142,675, and Sales Tax with + \$429,747. The board received disbursement of the ad valorem tax collections on January 4 of \$12.9M changing the account balance of three accounts: Ad Valorem +\$3.39M, Debt Services + \$3.6M, and General Fund +\$5.7M. Casanovas explained that December is usually a month where accounts with millage revenues may show a negative balance until the property tax collections for the calendar year are distributed in early January.

Bond Special Election: The board approved a motion to adopt a resolution calling for a special election to be held to authorize the incurring of debt and issuance of bonds not to exceed \$29 million in one or more series for 20 years for the purpose of acquiring and improving lands for building sites, including construction and improving of school buildings and other related facilities. The board would set forth a “Capital Improvement Plan” to be approved prior to the election on Saturday, May 4, 2019. The bonds would be payable from ad valorem taxes with no estimated increase in the millage rate.

Bonding attorney Grant Schleuter explained that due to a broader-than-expected tax base and the accumulated savings on previous bond series that the board has realized through a reduction in interests rates over the past several years, the board would be able to issues bonds for the \$29M without incurring any more costs to taxpayers. The current rate of 17.8 mils would be sufficient to pay the current bonds and the new bond premiums and interests.

Tax Collection Agreement: The board approved a tax collection agreement with Ricky M. Moses, Sheriff and Ex-Officio Tax Collector. The agreement is in effect for three years beginning January 1, 2019, for the Sheriff to collect all taxes for the School Board to be disbursed on a monthly basis at a commission rate of 1.87 percent. One representative from the School Board will participate in an advisory board meeting quarterly. An annual audit of collections will be provided to the School Board concerning the collection of its taxes.

RFP for 2015-2016 E-Rate funds: The board voted to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the remaining 2015-2016 Category 2 E-Rate monies. These federal funds were approved for the purchase of technology equipment and license to upgrade Wifi capabilities at all schools. The board realized a savings in these funds which are being offered back to the board at the original rate. The board will receive approximately \$100,000 in equipment for a cost of approximately \$20,000. Funds will be used for access points, switches, license, and other Wifi upgrades at the schools.