

TRI-VALLEY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 3

OFFICIAL MINUTES

February 15, 2023

I. ROLL CALL

The Tri-Valley Board of Education held a meeting in Downs, Illinois, on Wednesday, February 15, 2023. Board President, Mr. Carl Neubauer, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Upon roll call, the following members answered present: J.B. Goff, Brian Myers, Carl Neubauer, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. Others Present: Mr. Ben Derges, Superintendent. Board Secretary, Jessica Alt was absent.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Brian Myers to approve the Consent Agenda that included the following items:

- Board Meeting Minutes from January 18 & January 31, 2023;
- Board Bills from February 2023;
- Student Activity Accounts for January 2023;
- Treasurer's Reports for January 2023; and
- Destruction of Executive Session Tapes Dating Back Eighteen Months.

Seconded by Lori Stickling. The following members voted aye: J. B. Goff, Brian Myers, Carl Neubauer, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. The motion carried.

III. VISITORS AND REPORTS

A. Visitors: Jay Levin, ProStar Energy
Cade Hasselbring, District Maintenance and Transportation Director
Jillian Johnson, 6th grade Special Education Teacher
Michael Wallace, Jessica Clark, Amy Ptizer, Jeff Clark, Stacy Bierman, Nancy Warne, Jesse Luesing, Cathy Luesing, Casey Misch, Maggie Durbin, Nisa Johnson, Abby Cervantes, Andrea Raycraft.

B. Committee Reports: None

C. Administrator Reports: *(reports attached)*

Elementary School: *(see page 4)* Mr. Swearingen reviewed his report, no questions.

Middle School: *(see page 5)* Mrs. Burnett reviewed her report, no questions.

High School: *(see pages 6-7)* Mr. Arnolts reviewed his report, no questions.

Superintendent: *(see page 8)* Mr. Derges reviewed his report, no questions.

Maintenance: *(see page 9)* Mr. Hasselbring reviewed his report, no questions.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

- A. **Approve the 2nd Reading of Board Policy Manual Updates & Revisions**
Motion by J.B. Goff that the Board approve the 2nd reading of Board Policy Manual Updates and Revisions. Seconded by Bobby Brown. The following members voted aye: J. B. Goff, Brian Myers, Carl Neubauer, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. The motion carried.
- B. **Approve the Superintendent's Evaluation:** *Tabled from January 18 meeting.*
Action not required. Item removed from agenda topics.
- C. **Approve the proposed school year 2023-2024 calendar**
Motion by Jill Messamore that the Board approve the proposed School year 2023-2024 calendar. Seconded by Bobby Brown. The following members voted aye: J.B. Goff, Carl Neubauer, Brian Myers, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. The motion carried.
- D. **Approve the Certified & Non-Certified Employee Seniority lists for 2022-2023**
Motion by Brian Myers that the Board approve the Certified & Non Certified Employee Seniority lists for 2022-2023. Seconded by Jill Messamore. The following members voted aye: J.B. Goff, Carl Neubauer, Brian Myers, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. The motion carried.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. **Solar Energy Project**
Mr. Jay Levin conducted a Q&A for members of the community. A guide is attached. (see page 10-12)
- B. **Annual School Safety Review:**
The following is a summary of recommended changes to the School Safety Plan:
- All representatives felt the plan was largely effective and did not need additional changes beyond the specific area addressed below.
 - Recommendations were made to rewrite Part 3: Evacuation (“Specifics of Reunification Site”).
 - The following specific recommendations were made:
 - Change the Reunification sites to facilities within Downs, but away from the three school buildings.
 - Minimize the option of bussing students to a reunification site because of the timing and logistical issues bussing would create.
 - Research and evaluate the effectiveness of the facilities reunification:
 - Downs United Methodist Church
 - Downs Community Fire Protection Building
 - Downs Police Department Building
 - Starting with the 2023-2024 school year, begin annual, district-wide reunification training. This would be in addition to the annual active shooter training and would

be on a separate date each fall.

C. Positions for 2023-2024

Many positions currently open for next school year including: HS Chemistry Teacher, Computer Sciences Teacher, Food Service Director. Immediate positions open: 2nd or 3rd shift Custodian.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT TO THE BOARD

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Brian Myers to move to executive session to discuss the appointment, employment, resignation of personnel, or acquisition of property pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Open Meetings Act.

Seconded by Lori Stickling. Motion carried and all members voted aye. Executive session was entered at 7:50 p.m.

Motion by Bobby Brown to exit executive session. Seconded by Brian Myers. All members voted aye.

Motion by Bryan Myers to approve the closed session minutes previously read in closed session just ended, and seconded by Bobby Brown.

Executive session was exited at 8:02 p.m.

VIII. PERSONNEL REPORT

Motion by Jill Messamore that the Board approves the Personnel Report as presented. Seconded by J.B. Goff. The following members voted aye: J.B. Goff, Brian Myers, Carl Neubauer, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. The motion carried.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by J. B. Goff to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lori Stickling. The following members voted aye: J.B. Goff, Brian Myers, Carl Neubauer, Jill Messamore, Lori Stickling and Bobby Brown. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Board President

Approved

Board Secretary

Administrator: Tyler Swearingen
Building: Tri-Valley Elementary
Board Meeting: February 15th

Enrollment:

Total Enrollment (as of 02/7/23): 426
Grade Levels: PK-3rd

Facilities & Finances:

- Looking at raising prices for our Little Viking Program
 - Last rate change was 2018-2019 school year
 - Compared weekly full day rates to Little Jewels, Katie's Kids, Scribbles
 - Little Jewels-\$61/day, Katie's Kids- \$63/day, Scribbles- \$57/day
 - TV Little Vikings - \$47/day
 - Current Prices
 - ½ day preschool- \$18/day
 - ½ day Viking Care- \$16/day
 - Full Day LVS- \$37/day
 - Extended Day LVS- \$47/day
 - Proposed Price increase (5%)
 - ½ day preschool- \$19/day
 - ½ day Viking Care- \$17/day
 - Full Day LVS- \$39/day
 - Extended Day LVS- \$49/day

Educational Opportunities:

- We are looking at ways to increase our STEM offerings through donations from NextEra Energy. Mrs. Mouser is looking at ways to implement into her curriculum but also things to be used in classrooms.
 - Items for consideration:
 - Robotic programming sets
 - 3D printers
 - iPads

- Staff will lead a PD opportunity on building a classroom culture on February 16th.
- The Ecology Action Center is visiting to present to the 3rd grade.
- Parent group is looking into re-starting a chess club at the elementary level and possibly middle school depending on interest.
- Preschool screening will take place February 21-23rd
 - 18 registered so far

Celebrating Students & Staff:

- All staff are doing a great job promoting a positive culture through cold weather and restless kids.
 - STAR scores in Math and Reading are in from the Winter benchmark
 - Reading: 86% 1-3 graders are at or above benchmark levels
 - Math: 89% 1-3 graders are at or above benchmark levels
-

Administrator: Sara Burnett

Building: MS

Board Meeting: February 2023

Enrollment:

Total Enrollment (as of January 2023): 464

Grade Levels:

4th: 80

5th: 95

6th: 95

7th: 103

8th: 91

Facilities & Finances:

- *In the fall, the middle school had our annual “unfundraiser” which raised \$13,500. This money has just been distributed to each classroom teacher. Everyone in the building received \$250 and the remaining money will stay within the MS office accounts. The remaining money is to purchase updated classroom novels and books to offer choices for literature circles.*

Educational Opportunities:

- *Our TVMS teams have had some fantastic performances and great achievements throughout the cold season and we are very proud of them!*
- *Volleyball is continuing with its strong season. The team will continue the tradition to have a special night supporting St. Jude at the end of February*
- *Scholastic Bowl has had 2 official matches. In total, there are 33 students participating. We have a very strong team with the varsity and 3 separate JV teams which rotate throughout the season. The students have been working hard and are WAY smarter than I am...*
- *Wrestling has also been strong while dominating several matches throughout the season.*

Celebrating Students & Staff:

- *The December Vikings of Valor emphasized the importance of responsibility.*
 - *4th Grade: Chase Johnson, Finnley Wilson, Ansley Bardwell, Addy Epperson*
 - *5th Grade: Henry Hoschek, Ava Redd, Estyn Warne, Avery Pacha*
 - *6th Grade: Charley Lampe, Parker Hawn, Chloe Bruce, Kylee Epperson*
 - *7th Grade: Jayden Jordine, Elle Fesler, Ellison Bryant, Izzy Bruning*
 - *8th Grade: Maddie Gentry, Jacob Julian, Hayden Shine, Nicole Crane*

Administrator: Frank Arnolts
Building: Tri-Valley High School
Board Meeting: February 15, 2023

Enrollment: As of 2/7/23

Grade	Current	Jan 23	Sep 22
12 (2022)	79	80	81
11 (2023)	77	78	78
10 (2024)	70	70	71
9 (2025)	72	72	73
Total	298	300	303

Facilities & Finances:

- Our high school building is in really good shape. The maintenance crew continues to do an excellent job and are paying close attention to details.
- We have used \$1113 out of the Building/NOW account leaving over \$3000 for the remainder of the year. Despite the upcoming graduation and end of year costs, we are projected to be on budget.

Educational Opportunities:

- **Honor Roll** - The First Semester Honor Roll was released via the Viking Scroll.
- **Freshman Orientation** - Tri-Valley High School hosted 8th grade orientation on Wednesday January 25th. We were thrilled that all but three current eighth grade students and their parent(s)/guardians were in attendance.
- On February 22nd TVHS will be taking 20 students to a Construction, Trades, and Manufacturing event at LeRoy High School. The event will have recruiters, employees, and information from over twenty businesses such as: Rivian, Caterpillar, KNAPP Builders, and Stark Excavating.
- The Horticulture and Ag 120 students have been working hard in the greenhouse planting perennial seeds, transplanting cuttings, and making hanging baskets. The community can enjoy their efforts this spring when they host the annual greenhouse sale!

Celebrating Students & Staff:

- The **LeRoy/Tri-Valley wrestling** team has had an incredible season. Over the last month they were crowned HOIC Dual Team Champions, HOIC Individual Team Champions and recently won the IHSA Regional Championship. Among those advancing to Sectionals are: **Brady Mouser, Connor Lyons, Colton Prosser, Jack Green** and **Jacob Bischoff**.
- The Boys basketball and Girls basketball teams are reaching the conclusion of their seasons. Last Tuesday the girls basketball team celebrated: **Izabelle Hasselbring, Katelyn Ashenbremer** and **Caitlyn Swearingen** during their senior night. The Lady Vikings are the #7 seed and will open the IHSA Regional at home on Saturday, February 4th at 1 p.m. against Monticello. The boys basketball team and cheerleading squad will celebrate their seniors on Friday, February 6th against El-Paso Gridley. Seniors to be recognized are: **Reagan Waugh, Logan Petrilli, Will McNeely, and Luke Simpson** as well as cheerleaders, **Kami Myers, Kenna Trower, James Clark, Lauren O'Rourke, and Kaelyn Thoele**.
- The Tri-Valley Speech team spent Saturday, Feb 4th, in Olympia at IHSA Regionals. Both **Sarah Hill** (Oratory) and **Callie Davis** (Radio) broke into Varsity Finals. The girls ended their season, both placing 7th in their respective events.

Administrator: Ben Derges

Level: District

Board Meeting: February 2023

Finances:

- Researching the potential benefits of moving our board packets, minutes, and agendas to an online platform called BoardDocs LT. Annual subscription would allow for our district office to create, edit, and share these items to you and the community in real time. The financial considerations of making this change would be the annual subscription and the access to Chromebooks by board members during meetings.

Facilities:

- Board Retreat meeting on January 31 focused on researching and considering future facilities work. This included presentations by Stifel financial advisor Kevin Heid, and BLDD architect Damion Schlitt. Currently no new facility builds or bonding actions are planned.
- MS Gym HVAC project planning and prep continues. Anticipated delivery for the new units will not be until October which has pushed completion date until November 2023.

Educational Opportunities:

- Superintendent is participating in the regional HEAT working group. Initial meeting was held on January 23, with the next meeting scheduled for February 21. The HEAT (Healthcare, Engineering, Agri-Business, Technology) Academy is a developing concept through a collaborative of McLean County Schools, the Bloomington Area Career Center, Heartland Community College, and local Business/Industry partners. Currently working on timelines (3 years) and presentations to local communities.

Community Relations:

- Meeting with Downs mayor Mike James and Maintenance Director Cade Hasselbring to discuss and review water quality. T-V3 has established a plan to be prepared in advance for a future boil order announcement.
- A new format has been established for our Board Minutes with the intention of providing more details from the meeting. This includes digital note-taking and new administrator reports. The new format started with the January meeting and was approved in this month's consent agenda.
- Initial stages of planning a district statement and invitation to the community to attend the presentation from ProStar concerning the solar energy project in March. This is dependent upon progress in negotiations of the lease and usage agreement terms.

TRI-VALLEY MAINTENANCE AND TRANSPORTATION BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT
MAINTENANCE: ROE INSPECTION WAS A SUCCESS!!

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Compressor change on the chiller \$25,000 - Grant
- Exterior wall pack LED upgrade
- Custodian position OPEN

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- AC for the gym starts in May
- 4,5,6 grade wing roof will need repairs from wind damage

HIGH SCHOOL

- Custodian position OPEN
- RTU #4 operation
- HS and MS gyms are getting refinished over spring break
 - This will eliminate the scheduling challenges for the summer

ATHLETICS

- Spring sports challenges - Fields, track, transportation
- New scoreboards for SB and BB will be installed this summer

COMPLETED PROJECTS

- ES parking lot
- ES roof
- MS entrance concrete
- Roof on MS baseball shed
- Asbestos abatement
- Solar energy

TRANSPORTATION:

We are an approved federal training facility

Two new drivers needed

One driver in training

Route efficiency

- Travel Tracker Software
- Example
 - Eliminate 2 stops on a route
 - 4 stops total am/pm route
 - 4x180=720 stops eliminated
 - Brakes, door, stop arm, crossing arm, time=\$\$\$\$\$\$

Lease

- 5 year lease on half our fleet and a 5 year lease to own on the other half
 - Delivery of new buses around April-May timeframe
 - We have done a good job of monitoring miles and keeping up on PM
 - Bus cameras???
- We have 3 buses with cameras. Additional camera systems are \$4500.**

- **We received our activity bus!!!!**

To: Benjamin Derges, Superintendent for Tri-Valley CUSD #3
From: Kate Sudol, VP of Business Development for ProStar Energy Solutions
Cc: Jay Levin, VP of Renewables for ProStar Energy Solutions
Re: Q&A for Tri-Valley CUSD #3 Boarding Meeting
Date: Tuesday, February 6, 2023

Q1: What are the benefits of proposed Community Solar (“Project”) to the school district and community?

A1: Tri-Valley will benefit by purchasing nearly all its annual electric load from this clean energy source, taking advantage of Illinois’ strong incentive program for community solar. Energy will be priced at a discount to current electric rates and act as a hedge against rising power costs. Since Tri-Valley only needs 40% of the solar project’s power to offset its annual load, the remaining 60% is available to be purchased by members of the community through community solar subscriptions.

Q2: How will community members sign up?

A2: ProStar Energy Solutions (“ProStar”) will have a sign-up sheet for community members interested in purchasing energy from the facility. This will include 1-, 2-, or 3-year term options.

Q3: Why solar versus wind?

A3: Illinois Shines (i.e., Adjustable Block Program) is a solar incentive program that creates favorable economics for the Project. Additionally, solar has lower upfront capital and development costs and lower ongoing maintenance compared to wind, which also optimized the economics for a renewable energy project to utilize a land area of this size.

Q4: Why hire ProStar to develop and execute the Project versus a local company?

A4: ProStar’s depth and breadth of national experience in delivering over 400 MW of commercial and utility scale solar, including in Illinois, mitigates execution risk and delivers reliability for the community. This experience is particularly important now, during a time when many projects have become stranded due to a variety of economic factors, such as rising interest rates, changing policy, supply chain constraints, and international trade laws. Additionally, as required by the Illinois Shines (i.e., Adjustable Block Program), ProStar will be partnering with local companies and technicians to install the Project and administer the REC contracts.

Q5: Why should we execute now, amidst high prices with global supply chain challenges?

A5: The following economic and risk factors will be mitigated with immediate action:

1. Our preliminary due diligence indicates minimal utility upgrades at the Project's expense; however, waiting could result in additional projects entering the queue for this circuit that exposes us to the possibility of the utility requiring more extensive and expensive upgrades to accommodate the Project.
2. There is a temporary ban on new US solar panel tariffs that expires in June 2024, which could lead to supply shortages.
3. The Illinois Adjustable Block Program (ABP) for solar has a "first come, first served" allocation for schools.

Q6: What if solar technology improves in the future?

A6: Solar efficiency has slowly improved over the last fifteen (15) years, but there has been no game-changing technology. The system will continue to produce power for its entire asset life. Since the system is offsetting nearly 100% of Tri-Valley's load, there will be no reason to replace the system with newer solar panels.

Q7: What are the solar panels made out of? Are there any hazardous materials?

A7: ProStar will use polysilicon solar photovoltaic modules with aluminum frames, a polyvinyl fluoride-based backsheet, an EVA adhesive encapsulate membrane, copper/aluminum conductors, and a thin glass cover. There are no hazardous materials.

Q8: How long will the system operate and what happens at the end?

A8: The system has a design life of thirty-five (35) years; however, many engineers within the solar industry believe they (these systems) will continue to produce power well beyond that timeframe.

Before the system is fully commissioned, ProStar is required to submit a "deconstruction plan" to McLean County consistent with the standards of the Illinois Department of Agriculture and provide a financial surety (e.g. a "decommissioning bond") for the removal of the system.

Q9: What is the Project execution timeline?

A9: After interconnection approval and acceptance into the Adjustable Block Program, the Project will take approximately four (4) months to permit, then an additional five (5) months from the start of construction to system operation.

Q10a: Who owns the system?

A9a: A third party solar asset owner referred to as an "IPP" (Independent Power Producer) will own the system and be responsible for selling power to Tri-Valley and other energy subscribers throughout the life of the system.

Q10b: How is the system operated and maintained?

A9b: ProStar will operate and maintain the performance of the system for the IPP system owner. They will dispatch technicians to the field once a year for routine preventive maintenance, along with troubleshooting the system when required. Additionally, the lawn will be mowed, as needed, to prevent vegetation from interfering with solar production.

Q11: Do the panels need to be washed?

A11: Typically, the panels are not washed in areas that routinely get rainfall. However, if the system is not producing its expected power due to soiling, the Operator (ProStar) will wash the panels.

Q12: Will the solar array be protected?

A12: Yes. The National Electric Code requires a 7-foot fence around the perimeter of the facility.