

Regular VAL Charter Board Meeting
Wednesday, December 6, 2023
VAL Administration (639 Harrison Street, Thibodaux, LA)

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm

1) Opening of Meeting

a. Roll Call

Members present:

Michael Rieth, President; Shontell Terrebonne, Vice-President (call-in); Donald Andras, Treasurer; Curtis Bouvier, Shelba Harlan; Cheryl Thomas (call-in); Bernita Deville

Members absent: Monique Pitre, Secretary; Travis Touns

Others present: Edmond Adams, Holly Naquin

b. Pledge of Allegiance by Michael Rieth

c. Invocation by Michael Rieth

d. Public Participation Policy by Michael Rieth

e. Minutes of VAL Charter Board meeting held September 13, 2023 were approved on motion of Mr. Bouvier and seconded by Ms. Terrebonne. Motion carried.

2) School Director's Report

a. Student Enrollment Update

Mr. Adams reported that VAL's October 1st enrollment count is 475, and copies of a report containing a breakdown by site, ethnicity, gender, grade levels, and classification (special education/504) were distributed. He stated this is a good number, and hopes to maintain it for the remainder of the year. He noted that the decline in enrollment at the Bayou Blue site is a result of the removal of grades K-5 from this site, and he plans to address the situation again in March to make decisions for the next school year. He further noted based on the 475 count, VAL's MFP allocation did increase this year.

b. Staff Changes

Mr. Adams announced staff changes have been minimal, and has remained consistent across all sites.

c. Report on Sites

Mr. Adams reported that things are going well at all sites, and introduced St. Mary High's site manager, Dr. Paul Nelson, who was in the audience. He notified board members of the intentions to merge St. Mary Middle and High Schools, and with minor renovations, there should be no issues accommodating grades 7-12 in one building. With this move, he noted VAL will be able to save approximately \$115,000 per year, which will help in reaching the goal to eventually provide staff with pay increases.

Mr. Adams was proud to announce that School Performance Scores had been released, and VAL had an increase of 4.5 points for a total score of 84.9, which is a grade of a B. He noted there was improvement in every testing grade level, with most improvement occurring in math overall, and touched on several of the approaches put into place that he believes attributed to this success. He was pleased to mention that with this score, VAL outperformed 17 district schools in Lafourche Parish.

d. Finances/Budget Update

Mr. Adams stated he is looking forward to the savings that will occur as a result of merging the two St. Mary St. sites.

e. School Curriculum Changes

Mr. Adams informed board members that the state will be including grades K-2 in its testing program, which is currently for grades 3 and above. He further stated the DIBELS test will continue to be used to test the K-2 grade levels, but the results will now become part of the accountability system, and eventually part of VAL's School Performance Score. Due to this change, Mr. Adams stated it will be necessary to purchase a Tier 1 phonics-based curriculum for VAL's grades K-2 students.

Mr. Adams was questioned by Ms. Terrebonne on the timing of pay increases for VAL employees, and he stated this will not be able to occur until finances are secured and VAL is on solid ground.

3) School Board Business

a. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

b. New Business

i. Election of Officers

In accordance with VAL's by-laws to elect new board officers at its December meeting, nominations were made, and the following members were selected as board officers:

President – Shelba Harlan

Vice-President – Shontell Terrebonne

Secretary – Bernita Deville

Treasurer – Curtis Bouvier

ii. Next Board Meeting Date, Time, Place

All members agreed their next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at VAL's administrative office in Thibodaux, with times remaining the same.

4) Adjourn

There being no further business, on motion of Mr. Andras, seconded by Mr. Bouvier, the Board unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 6:44pm.


Immediately following the adjournment with all members still present, Ms. Harlan offered a motion to re-open the meeting for the purpose of changing names on VAL's bank account. Her motion was seconded by Ms. Terrebonne and unanimously carried.

Mr. Rieth announced that currently he and Mr. Andras are the officers signing on VAL's checking account. Due to the election of new officers, Ms. Deville offered a motion, seconded by Ms. Harlan, and unanimously carried, to remove the former Board President, Michael Rieth and the former treasurer, Donald Andras, from VAL's checking account at United Community Bank.

Next, a motion was offered by Ms. Terrebonne and seconded by Ms. Deville to add the newly-appointed President, Shelba Harlan, and the newly-appointed Treasurer, Curtis Bouvier, to VAL's checking account at United Community Bank. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Rieth announced a Special Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 6:30 pm for the purpose of approving the minutes from the Board's December 6th meeting.

A motion was then offered by Mr. Bouvier and seconded by Mr. Andras to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm. Motion carried.



Edmond J. Adams, Director