

**RISING STARS ACADEMY**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 18, 2021**

1. Call to Order: 6:32 p.m.
  - a. Attendance: Bob Nowak, Susan Uhl, Charisse Cossu-Kowalski (via Zoom)
  - b. Others Present: Debbie Prentiss, Mark Prentiss, Marsha Salome, Lori Monti, Frank Patterson, Allen Gambrell (Lewis & Knopf via Zoom) and Robert Spada (prospective new board member).  
ABSENT: Annette Duda (board member)
2. Citizen Non-Agenda Items: None.
3. Communication: None.
4. Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 16, 2021
  - a. Motion to approve made by Susan Uhl
  - b. Seconded by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski
  - c. Roll Call: 3 Yes 0 No – approved by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski, Susan Uhl, and Bob Nowak.
5. Presentation (Zoom) of the Audit from Lewis & Knopf  
Mr. Gambrell discussed the two separate audits that were performed. The main school audit was clean with no issues. The second audit, deemed a “single audit”, was necessary due to federal revenue of over \$750,000 due to food distribution during pandemic. Food service contracts need to have prior approval by the state (submit draft contract, send to MDE, one approved, MDE returns contract). A Corrective Action Plan (CAP) by the state was received. It stated a pay back of \$103,000 was due. Repayment will be a monthly amount for the next 12-18 months.  
Food service balance was \$240,000 and now \$280,000.  
General fund balance as of 6/30/21 was \$247,000 and now it is \$301,000, an increase of \$50,000. Pension liabilities discussed. Pension is a liability, although highly unlikely. MPSERS would have to fall apart. It is a balance sheet item but contingent on other things happening at state level. Liability changes as we add or subtract staff. If 0 staff participate, liability is 0.
6. Acknowledgement of receipt of check register for September, 2021
  - a. Motion to approve made by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski
  - b. Seconded by Susan Uhl
  - c. Roll Call: 3 Yes 0 No – approved by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski, Susan Uhl, and Bob Nowak.
7. Acknowledgement of receipt of check register for October, 2021
  - a. Motion to approve made by Sue Uhl
  - b. Seconded by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski

c. Roll Call: 3 Yes 0 No – approved by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski, Susan Uhl, and Bob Nowak.

8. Business Management Report

October state aid was \$101,272. November state aid was \$110,000. No lunch revenue due to CAP/reimbursement to state. Frank stated that the \$280,000 fund balance for food service will have no revenue for this year. It will have to have the CAP payment total of \$103,000 deduced as well as all operating expenses. Balance will go down.

9. Building and Grounds Report

Debbie and Mark discussed the kitchen renovation that includes two new ovens. Mark stated that instead of buying food through Gordon Foods, the plan is to make our own food. Mark utilizes “commodity pricing” that allows for larger amounts of food to be purchased at a low rate of pay. Example: a case of meat containing multiple pounds can cost only \$2.80 per case. There are grants and monies available per meal served if cooking own food through the President’s Build a Better America plan.

Building has had windows replaced in all rooms but one.

10. Approval of PAC Representative, Jayne Reinhard

a. Motion to approve made by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski

b. Seconded by Sue Uhl

c. Roll Call: 3 Yes 0 No – approved by Charisse Cossu-Kowalski, Susan Uhl, and Bob Nowak.

Debbie discussed the need for a PAC representative to be present and active due to a \$90 million dollar hit to Macomb County and services in same if state system is privatized.

11. Interviews for Open Position on the Board of Education.

Board members questioned Mr. Robert Spada concerning his application to the BOE. Mr. Spada shared his background and experiences. He has an adult niece with special needs and was very involved with her as an adolescent. He was a career prosecutor dealing with the special victims unit, advocating for defendants who had intellectual and emotional disabilities. He retired as a prosecutor and works as staff attorney for State of Michigan. Mr. Spada stated he brings to the school: team building, connections in the community, expanding awareness and knowledge of the school. He has real life experience in creating, setting up, and planning strategic direction of an entity. He was the key planner in 2009, instrumental in implementing and coordinating a path in how to deal with the ballistic evidence problem in the Detroit Police Department when multiple untested rape kits were discovered. Mr. Spada stated he is committed to attending the third Thursday of each month to attend board meetings.

12. Superintendent Reports for October, 2021 and November, 2021

Debbie discussed the multiple CBIs students have taken to Belle Isle, the Detroit Riverfront, CVS, and Learning Gizmos.

Positive: Positive interactions and the off-site jobs returning, starting with Henry Ford Hospital on Tuesday, November 30.

Adverse: MM1 time clock. Student count of 114 (expected more). Stathis Paulis's last day is November 19, 2021 (farmer/gardener). Debbie discussed new double-sided marketing flyer. Hoping to have January elective Fridays return. Hoping all virtual students will return but a few will not. Home Hub numbers are down. Debbie shared that Nicole Lambert is now at Macomb Academy; however, with the loss of Stathis and Nicole, \$84,000 has been brought back into the budget. Debbie discussed changing of banks. Discussion of recent school donations. Store will be open each Saturday starting November 20-Dec 18<sup>th</sup> except November 27 at request of public. Both RSA and Home Hub will be involved. Sue Uhl expressed concerns about salting the lot and asked about talking to Center Line about doing this when they plow the lot. Mark stated the school has a quad and can spread salt. She also asked if an agreement about liability has been established with Home Hub in terms of transporting RSA students. Debbie said yes.

### 13. Motion to Adjourn Meeting

- a. Motion to adjourn made by Bob Nowak
- b. Seconded by Sue Uhl

Meeting ended: 8:05 p.m.