

School District of Rhinelander
Board of Education
Annual Meeting of the Electors

Monday, October 27, 2025

MINUTES

The Annual Meeting of the Electors of the School District of Rhinelander was called to order on Monday, October 27, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Superior Diesel Advanced Learning Center - Rhinelander High School, 665 Coolidge Avenue, Rhinelander, WI.

Pledge of Allegiance

Judy Conlin, Board Vice-President, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Members Present: Judy Conlin, Mary Peterson, Mike Roberts, Kurt Helke, Duane Frey, Patricia Townsend (arrived at 5:42), Ronald Lueneburg, and Merlin Van Buren

Board Members Absent: Ron Counter

Also present at this meeting were Superintendent, Eric Burke; Director of Business Services, Robert Thom; Director of Human Resources, Michele Cornelius; Director of Instruction, Ryan Ourada; Director of Learning Support, Richard Gretzinger; Secretary/Deputy Clerk, Shelley Anderson; Heather Schaefer of the Northwoods Star Journal, and Beckie Gaskill of the Northwoods River News. No one else was present.

Election of Chairperson

NOMINATION: Mary Peterson nominated Judy Conlin as Chairperson of the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Electors. Mike Roberts seconded the nomination.

Judy Conlin called three times for further nominations.

No further nominations were made.

Nominations were closed, and a vote was taken on the motion to appoint Judy Conlin as Chairperson for this meeting.

All qualified electors present voted “aye,” and Judy Conlin was named Chairperson of the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Electors.

Opening Remarks

Eric Burke, Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent Eric Burke reported that the School District of Rhinelander will present a balanced 2025-26 budget, made possible through the passage of the April operational referendum. He noted that while the district remains committed to responsible financial management and high-quality education, the budget remains somewhat uncertain due to potential fluctuations in federal funding and rising operational costs.

Looking ahead, Superintendent Burke highlighted ongoing challenges with the state's school funding formula, which does not adequately support rural and northern districts, and the lack of funding increases aligned with inflation. He also expressed concern about the growing diversion of state tax dollars to private school voucher programs, which reduces resources available to public schools.

He emphasized the importance of continuing to invest in and retain quality educators and support staff, advocating for a fair and sustainable funding system for all Wisconsin schools. Superintendent Burke closed by expressing appreciation for the strong community support that enables the district's continued success.

Treasurer's Report

School Board Treasurer Mike Roberts presented the Treasurer's Report for the District's General Fund for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, reviewing receipts and expenditures.

MOTION: Kurt Helke, seconded by Ronald Lueneburg.

Accept the Treasurer's Report as read.

The motion passed with a voice vote.

Presentation of the Budget

Robert Thom, Director of Business Services, gave a presentation on the budget, which included the following topics:

- Revenue Cap History
- Property Taxes and State Aid History
- Tax Levy Comparisons by Municipality and Township for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026
- Budget Adoption 2025-2026
- Fund 73

Those in attendance were given the opportunity to ask questions.

RESOLUTIONS A-E

RESOLUTION A: RESOLUTION TO LEVY A TAX FOR TRANSPORTATION, SITES, BUILDINGS, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATION OF THE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND TO RETIRE DEBT AND PAY INTEREST THEREON

MOTION: Judy Conlin

BE IT RESOLVED that the School District of Rhinelander tax levy for transportation, sites, buildings, vehicles, maintenance, and operation of the schools during 2025-26 be \$26,980,318.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School District of Rhinelander tax levy to retire debt and pay interest thereon be \$1,893,000 for Fund 39 and \$114,322 for Fund 38.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School District of Rhinelander tax levy for community service be \$1,400,000.

The motion was seconded by Mike Roberts.

The motion passed with a voice vote.

RESOLUTION B: RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT OF ACTUAL AND NECESSARY EXPENSES OF BOARD MEMBERS WHO TRAVEL IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES

MOTION: Ronald Lueneburg

BE IT RESOLVED that the School District of Rhineland is authorized to reimburse the actual and necessary expenses of school board members who travel out of the district in the performance of their duties.

The motion was seconded by Kurt Helke.

The motion passed with a voice vote.

RESOLUTION C: RESOLUTION TO DIRECT AND PROVIDE FOR PROSECUTION OR DEFENSE OF ANY LEGAL ACTION OR PROCEEDINGS IN WHICH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS INTERESTED

MOTION: Kurt Helke

BE IT RESOLVED that the School District of Rhineland is authorized to provide for prosecution or defense of any legal action or proceedings in which the school district is interested.

The motion was seconded by Ronald Lueneburg.

The motion passed with a voice vote.

RESOLUTION D: RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE MINIMUM DISTANCES FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

MOTION: Ronald Lueneburg

BE IT RESOLVED that the walking distance in the City of Rhineland to school will be:

1. Secondary (6-12) students – up to two (2) miles
2. Elementary (4-5) students – up to two (2) miles
3. Elementary (1-3) students – up to one (1) mile
4. Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten students – up to three-quarters (3/4) of a mile

Walking distance outside of the City of Rhineland to a safe bus stop will be:

1. Secondary (6-12) students – up to three-quarters (3/4) of a mile
2. Elementary (4-5) students – up to three-quarters (3/4) of a mile
3. Elementary (4K-3) students – up to one-half (1/2) of a mile

Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten students must have their parent(s) or another responsible adult or a child supervisor who is 12 years old or older, or a child who

has a babysitting certificate, present to send and/or receive them to and from the school bus stop.

Exceptions can be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The motion was seconded by Mike Roberts.

The motion passed with a voice vote.

RESOLUTION E: RESOLUTION TO ADJOURN THE ANNUAL MEETING FROM TIME TO TIME OR ESTABLISH A DIFFERENT DATE AND TIME FOR A SUBSEQUENT ANNUAL MEETING

MOTION: Patricia Townsend

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2026 Annual Meeting be held on Monday, October 26, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

The motion was seconded by Merlin Van Buren.

The motion passed with a voice vote.

OTHER BUSINESS WITHIN THE POWERS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

No other business within the powers of the Annual Meeting was presented for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Kurt Helke.

Move to adjourn.

The motion was seconded by Ronald Lueneburg.

The motion passed with a voice vote at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Peterson, Board of Education Clerk