

BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
February 13, 2024

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of Fort Benton High School and Elementary School Districts was called to order February 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Board Room, by Joellyn Clark, Chairperson.

Members present: Joellyn Clark, Will Scott, Kyla Wright, Darin Arganbright, Jenni Starman, Kayle Axtman and Dusty Schuler. Brant Hasbrouck was absent. A quorum was present.

ROLL CALL

Also present: Pat Hould, Superintendent; Cali O’Hara, Business Manager/Clerk; Russ Axtman, Maintenance Supervisor; Bethany DeBorde, reporter for the River Press; Paul Benhart, Transportation; Roxie Benjamin, Elementary Principal; Jamie Ball, Athletic Director, Ross Rettig, Allie MacDonald, Lina Vaughn, Laela Borero.

Joellyn Clark opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PLEDGE

It was moved by Dusty Schuler, seconded by Jenni Starman, to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2024 regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES

It was moved by Will Scott and seconded by Kayle Axtman, to approve payment of warrants. The motion passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

Payroll: 97153-97224
Claims: 62010-62089

Joellyn Clark asked for public comment. There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joellyn Clark, Board Chairman- The board received a letter from the teachers union to open negotiations. The seniors were here to request permission to have an overnight trip.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

It was moved by Darin Arganbright and seconded by Dusty Schuler, to approve the senior trip. The motion passed unanimously.

SENIOR TRIP

It was moved by Dusty Schuler and seconded by Kayle Axtman, to approve the use of local council to complete the deed for the land transfer. The motion passed unanimously.

LAND TRANSFER

Roxie Benjamin, Elementary Principal- The month of January was a blur. They have been busy with a variety of activities. The teachers have been doing classroom observations and have had teachers from the Chester school coming in to observe. Thank you to all the teachers for being so

ELEMENTARY
PRINCIPAL

willing to reach out and learn from each other. They will be hosting a meeting of the north central administrators later this month. See attached report.

Russ Axtman, Maintenance – Would like to thank Larry for all his work cleaning after games. Would also like to thank Josh Anderson from Northwestern Energy for helping with the moving of the building and getting the power hooked up after the building was moved to the back of the T& I building. Thank you to Mr. McKillop and students for the help with the snow and ice removal. The 8th grade class has been helping with the cleaning of classrooms during 8th period to lessen the burden on Larry until we can hire another janitor. He is just dealing with all of the other little maintenance items as they come up, there are always issues when the cold weather hits.

MAINTENANCE

Jamie Ball, Athletic Director – Reported that January has been super busy with all of the activities wrapping up in the month of February. Robotics state competition in Bozeman - the High School team finished 10th, and the Middle School competed well. FFA has had a few smaller competitions this month. Speech and Drama completed their season with 3rd at the Divisional meet, and they also placed 3rd at the State meet. Amy Hanson is now busy working on the annual school play. Wrestlers finished up their season, the divisional meet was in Wolf Point, thank you to Mr. Hould for attending and supporting our wrestlers. We took 8 girls and 4 boys to compete at the state meet in Billings. Damion Ort took 4th in the 205 weight class. Thank you to Mr. McKillop and students for helping get the gym setup for senior night. The district 9c basketball tournament will start on February 14th in Havre. The cheer team will be performing a half time dance. The middle school wrestling season is underway and will have a home meet on February 23rd. Spring Sports schedules are still being worked on and will be posted as soon as they are finalized. The first day of spring sports is March 11th.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

It was moved by Kayle Axtman and seconded by Dusty Schuler, to approve Tyler Starman as MS wrestling coach volunteer. The motion passed unanimously. Jenni Starman abstained.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
WRESTLING
VOLUNTEER COACH

It was moved by Darin Arganbright and seconded by Kayle Axtman, to approve Kim Hibl and Jenna Botts as 5th & 6th Grade BBB Coaches. The motion passed unanimously.

5TH & 6TH GRADE BOYS
BASKETBALL COACHES

It was moved by Dusty Schuler and seconded by Jenni Starman, to approve Dave Rominger, Head Golf Coach and Justin Cartwright, Assistant Golf Coach. The motion passed unanimously.

GOLF COACHES

Pat Hould, Superintendent- reported that he has enjoyed attending the speech & drama meet as well as the wrestling tournament. It is always nice to get out there and see our kids compete. We really do have great students here in Fort Benton. Child Care update, they have kind of put a pause on this due to some staffing changes. There would be less children

SUPERINTENDENT

that would attend the day care affecting the ability for the day care to be self-sufficient. Still looking at options but want to make sure that we are being diligent so that the day care wouldn't be a burden on district funding. OPI has chosen our school to participate in a new Leadership program for juniors and seniors called Figure It Out. The teachers and staff are working on a study of the book "Fostering Resilient Learners". The goal of the book study is to bring attention to the many students we have that may be struggling and to create a new level of attention to empathy within our teachers and staff. The books study is in conjunction with SOC or Student of Concern meetings with teachers and staff to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students. They are working on the school calendar for the next school year and that will go out to vote soon. HB890 - there will be a superintendent meeting on this new rule where school boards are now required to have a recording of the board meeting available to the public. So gathering more information on this to bring back to the board. This rule doesn't go into effect till June. There are 3 students seeking early graduation. The recommendation is that they be allowed to graduate as long as they complete at least 23 required credits, these students would be invited to graduate with the class of 2024 in May, but they may not participate in the senior trip or any other senior class related activities. It is recommended that the board take a look at and define the parameters for early graduation. See attached.

BROKE FOR CLOSED SESSION – EARLY GRADUATION

It was moved by Darin Arganbright and seconded by Will Scott, to approve the early graduation of students set forth by Mr. Hould. The motion passed unanimously.

Cali O'Hara, Business Manager/ Clerk - Reported that they have completed recent audits for OPI for Title 1 and Food Service. They had no findings in the Title 1 audit and are awaiting the results of the Food Service audit. Also reported on the HB890 that they will have more information at the next board meeting on how we need to proceed.

It was moved by Kayle Axtman and seconded by Jenni Starman, to approve the renewal of Frontline Education. The motion passed unanimously.

Committees -

Policy –

Will have a meeting February 27th @ 7:00 pm in the board room.

Personnel –

Will have a meeting March 18th @ 7:00 pm in the board room. To open teacher negotiations.

Transportation –

Paul Benhart, Bus Mechanic/Transportation Supervisor – Reported that he would like to offer a bonus to activity drivers, in hopes that more people will be interested. He has reached out to other local schools to see what

CLOSED SESSION

EARLY GRADUATION

CLERK

FRONTLINE EDUCATION

COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

they offer for pay and bonuses. He called I-Sate truck center and they will offer at least \$4,500 for our bus on a trade-in.

It was moved by Will Scott, and seconded by Dusty Schuler, to approve the addition of activity driver bonus after 80 hours of driving \$3500 with a CDL, \$1500 without a CDL. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Will Scott, and seconded by Darin Arganbright, to approve the trade of the old bus to I State. The motion passed unanimously.

Building & Grounds –

Brant Hasbrouck reported that the building and grounds committee has had the engineering completed on the large maintenance projects that need to be completed. And they are continuing to look at funding sources and timelines. They would like to table the teacher housing project until they have completed the maintenance projects. Joellyn shared that there is some new construction of duplexes happening so that is exciting. Ross Rettig spoke to the board and hopes that they don't forget about this idea and that it is always a good idea to understand the necessity of attracting teachers to our community.

It was moved by Brant Hasbrouck and seconded by Will Scott, to table the bond on the duplex until a later date. The motion passed unanimously.

Resignations –

Callie Olson – Elementary School Sectary
Tabitha Ringler – 7/8 Math and Science teacher
Jacob Van Every – History Teacher
Conner McKillop – Physical Education Teacher
Amy Zuhoski – Art/ FACS Teacher

RESIGNATIONS

Hires-

It was moved by Dusty Schuler, and seconded by Brant Hasbrouck, to approve Laela Borero as part time events janitor. The motion passed unanimously.

HIRES

It was moved by Brant Hasbrouck, and seconded by Jenni Starman, to approve Corey Walker as Custodian pending background check. The motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Future Agenda items:

Committee meetings

It was moved by Dusty Schuler, and seconded by Jenni Starman,
to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON _____

CLERK _____

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

ATTEST