

BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
September 9, 2025

Jenni Starman, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Fort Benton High School and Elementary School Districts to order September 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Board Room.

Members present: Joellyn Clark, Jenni Starman, Brant Hasbrouck, Kyla Wright, Will Scott, Kayle Axtman and Darin Arganbright. 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; Roxie Benjamin, Elementary Principal; Mark Ayers, Myla Clark, Emily Wicks, Angela Fondale.

Jenni Starman opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PLEDGE

It was moved by Kayle Axtman, seconded by Brant Hasbrouck, to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2025 regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES

It was moved by Dusty Schuler and seconded by Brant Hasbrouck, to approve payment of warrants. The motion passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

Payroll: 98335-98373

Claims: 63233-63294

Jenni Starman asked for public comment. None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Communications to and from the Board. None.

COMMUNICATIONS TO
AND FROM THE BOARD

Jenni Starman, Board Chair- Reported that if anyone would like to attend the MCEL conference to please let Cali or Connie know. The conference is in Helena this year. Introduction of new teachers: Myla Clark- High School Science teacher and Angela Fondale- High School Math teacher.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Jamie Ball, Athletic Director –Reported that things are off to a great start. High School football has 26 players and 1 manager, they will play Friday at home against Rocky Boy. High School Volleyball has 25 players and 2 managers, they will play Thursday at Cut Bank. High School Cross Country has 8, they have 3 who have already qualified for state at their first meet, Etta Wicks, Mikell O'Hara and Emmery O'Hara. They will run again Friday in Havre. Middle School Football has 20 players, Middle School Volleyball has 14 players they will play Saturday in Conrad. Middle School Cross Country has 3, Middle School Tennis has 21, their next meet will be Friday in Great Falls. High School Robotics had their interest meeting and looks like they will have 4. High School Band will head to MSU days on the 20th.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Thank you to Russ for the prep work and support. Our field looks great. Again, thank you to all the volunteers, they are incredible. Sorry for the camera not working at the last home football game, the procedure to get it fixed can be complicated when this happens during a game Arbiter roll over continues. Just a reminder to our fans if you are removed from a game, the penalty of 3 games and everything in between those games.

Russ Axtman, Maintenance- Thank you to Larry for all his years of service. Thanks to Jordan and Dani they are doing a great job. Jordan will be cleaning after the games as well. Thank you to the City crew for painting all of the bus zones and handicap spots. Thank you to Craig Ferris for coming and spraying the football field - the mosquitos were bad. Thank you to Dusty's Sprinklers for all the clean up around the football field. They have started the plumbing for the new heaters in the high school. Brock and Ben have the trees removed. At the elementary the north end of the plumbing project is completed, they have asked if we would like to put a hold on the project until next summer when they can come in and finish the rest of the project without disturbing the students. Milk River will extend the contract until next June. The vent stack has been started, and they will bring in the crane next week to get the rest of the project under way.

MAINTENANCE

Roxie Benjamin, Elementary Principal- Reported that the back-to-school carnival was a success. Thank you to the parents that came to help. Emily Anderson and the parent team came to assist with carnival stations as well. 1st fire drill of the year has been completed. Thank you to Russ for helping cook breakfast on the playground for our Buckaroo Breakfast. Thank you to the parent team for all the help with the playground. We have 2 new students starting tomorrow. Thank you to Erich Wellman for the new sports equipment for the playground. Starting to schedule Dibels and Mast testing and training. Thank you to Russ for doing anything we need. Picture day is tomorrow. Heritage Days is coming up.

ELEMENTARY
PRINCIPAL

Cali O'Hara, Clerk- Reported that the intercap loan for the elementary school has been approved for \$500k and the loan for the high school was approved for \$250k. Have received 2 bids for the kiln and no bids for the pick-up.

CLERK

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Kayle Axtman to accept bid of \$52.00 for the small kiln. The motion passed unanimously

OBSOLETE PROPERTY

Pat Hould, Superintendent- Reported that things are off to a great school year. Interviews for new high school secretary will be Wednesday. The crew of the USS Montana will visit our school on the 11th. Homecoming week will be Sept. 22-26. Longhorn family picnic will be Thursday, Sept. 18 at the golf course. The Academic Excellence awards assembly was on the 3rd. Sophomores will attend the World of Work on September 23.

SUPERINTENDENT

CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS EARLY GRADUATION REQUEST

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Darin Arganbright to approve the early graduation request, after completion of fall semester and allow the student to walk in the spring ceremony. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports-

Buildings and Grounds –

It was moved by Will Scott and seconded by Kayle Axtman to approve the extension of the elementary plumbing project with Milk River Plumbing. The motion passes unanimously.

It was moved by Brant Hasbrouck and seconded by Joellyn Clark to approve the completion of the Longhorn Café grease trap / sewer project. The motion passes unanimously.

Personnel-

It was moved by Will Scott and seconded by Kyla Wright to approve a \$3,500 salary increase for Transportation Director contract. The motion passed unanimously.

Resignations –

Amy Hanson-MS/HS Secretary
Samantha Dennison- Middle School Paraprofessional

Hires-

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Will Scott to hire Melissa Guillen as Kitchen help. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Kayle Axtman and seconded by Will Scott to hire Patricia Petty as Sub Teacher and Sub Kitchen help. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Kayle Axtman and seconded by Brant Hasbrouck to hire Chad Hartsell as Activity Driver and Substitute The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Darin Arganbright to hire Brad Utterback as Volunteer Student Tutor. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Darin Arganbright and seconded by Will Scott to hire Jenna Botts as elementary paraprofessional. The motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

EARLY GRADUATION REQUEST

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDINGS AND GROUND ELEMENTARY PLUMBING

LONGHORN CAFÉ SEWER

PERSONNEL

TRANSPORTATION

RESIGNATIONS

HIRES

KITCHEN HELP

SUBSTITUTE

VOLUNTEER STUDENT TUTOR

PARAPROFESSIONAL

Future Agenda Items-

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Policy Meeting – TBA
Personnel Meeting- TBA
2nd Reading of Policy
MCEL

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Brant Hasbrouck, to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

ADJOURN

CLERK _____

ATTEST

BOARD CHAIRPERSON _____

ELEMENTARY PARA PROFESSIONAL