

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ROBERTS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
JULY 17, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Roberts School District No. 5, Roberts, Montana was called to order by Michelle Swansborough at 6:00 p.m. on July 17, 2024 in the library at the Roberts School.

ATTENDANCE

Michelle Swansborough, Chair
Joel Bertolino
Michael Bissonnette
Brad Norman

Absent: Nick Dobbel

Alex Ator, Superintendent
JaLayne Obert, Business Manager/Clerk

Guests: Peter Wisniewski, Sanford Langager, Ed Zink

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

WARRANTS

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded Michael Bissonnette and carried unanimously to approve warrants 50410 through 50479 in June and 50480 through 50521 in July as presented. (YES: Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peter Wisniewski stated concern with the number of hours he is allocated for maintenance, six hours per week in the school year and 27 hours per week in the summer. He stated he doesn't feel this is enough hours to get done what he needs to do but he can't keep giving his labor away.

Joel Bertolino stated we need to look at the position and the budget and see what we can do.

Mr. Ator stated if there are things that don't get done, for now we have to be okay with that.

Mr. Wisniewski stated when he isn't here, other custodial staff don't have a leader.

Michelle Swansborough stated she understands Mr. Wisniewski's desire to keep the school clean and looking good but doesn't know what the solution is. She stated the board may need to again look at the Safety Coordinator position but we also don't want to run you into the ground or have you work for free.

Mr. Ator asked Mr. Wisniewski to give the Facilities Update that is listed later in the agenda.

Mr. Wisniewski reported there may be more to do in the shop than we anticipated and that will require more time. He added the foam insulation in the shop has made a huge difference.

He stated the boiler inspection went well and the inspector recommended running the boiler at a lower heat.

Mr. Ator stated he would like to speak under Public Comment about a problem he discovered while working on the out-of-district student list in that an individual who doesn't live in our district ran for a school board position and may have voted in that election. He stated we need to have a special meeting to discuss how to address this and who we need to contact.

Michael Bissonnette asked if we check where a student lives when they enroll.

Mr. Ator stated we do but this error was not on our part as the individual was certified by the County Elections office.

STAFFING

RESIGNATIONS – Mr. Ator recommended acceptance of the resignation of Ressa Herta from her elementary teacher position. He added Ms. Herta does owe us some training costs as she attended a conference in the spring but is willing to spend three days supporting the transition of the new first grade teacher.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Michael Bissonnette and carried unanimously to accept the letter of resignation from Ressa Herta, contingent on her giving us three days supporting the transition for a new first grade teacher. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

Michelle Swansborough thanked Ms. Herta for her service to the district.

EXTENDED CONTRACT – Mr. Ator recommended approval of the extended contract for Darryl Grove in the amount of \$5,015 for the 2024-2025 school year.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to approve the extended contract for Darryl Grove in the amount of \$5,015 for 2024-2025. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

ACTIVITIES AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR – Mr. Ator stated he needs some people to interview for extra-curricular positions for high school girls' basketball, junior high girls' basketball, and junior high boys' basketball.

Joel Bertolino and Brad Norman will assist with the interviews.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

PATH TO RECOVERY – Mr. Ator stated Nick Dobbel, Michael Bissonnette, Peter Wisniewski, and Jon Milligan have all expressed interest in the Path to Recovery committee and the newsletter will ask for others who may want to be on the committee. He stated non-tenured staff have expressed some apprehension of being on the committee.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE – Mr. Ator stated Brad Norman and Nick Dobbel will serve on this committee and he is hoping to set a date so staff can also be involved.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE – Mr. Ator and Michelle Swansborough will attend the County Transportation Committee meeting on August 1.

NEW BUSINESS

BUS ROUTES – Mr. Ator recommended approval of bus routes as presented.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Michael Bissonnette and carried unanimously to approve the bus routes as presented by the superintendent. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

OUT-OF-DISTRICT STUDENTS – Mr. Ator presented the list of out-of-district students for board approval.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to approve the list of out-of-district students presented by the superintendent. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

RATIFICATION OF CONTRACTS FOR 2024-2025 – Mr. Ator recommended ratification of all contracts for 2024-2025 that have been returned. He also asked that the increase from \$200 per day to \$300 per day for stipends for professional development and curriculum development be effective on July 1, 2024 so staff can take advantage of the increase this summer.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to approve ratification of returned contracts with the increase from \$200 per day to \$300 per day for stipends for professional development and curriculum development effective as of July 1, 2024. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

SUMMER SCHOOL WAGES – Mr. Ator recommended an increase for summer school wages from \$25.00 per hour to \$37.50 per hour for this year.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Michael Bissonnette to increase the hourly wage for summer school teachers from \$25.00 to \$37.50 per hour for this year beginning July 1, 2024. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

REVIEW OF 2022-2023 AUDIT – Mr. Ator recommended approval of the 2022-2023 audit as it has been completed.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to approve the 2022-2023 audit. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

OLD BUSINESS

CHANGES TO SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (SCHOOLWIDE FREE LUNCH) – Mr. Ator stated we discussed the CEP program which would allow all students to have free breakfast and lunch. He added the CEP is only available to students as school lunch programs do not cover adults.

GRANT ORDERS – Mr. Ator stated the order with Hanson Chemicals has not been completed yet.

POLICY REVIEW

POLICY 3630 – CELLPHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT – Mr. Ator stated last month the board approved Option 2 of Policy 3630 dealing with the use of cell phones for students. He stated for the second reading he would like to change the grade span from 9-12 to 7-12. He added the teachers have also agreed this is the best option.

Michelle Swansborough stated if we require students can't have their phones on them during the day, we have a huge liability for thousands of dollars for those phones. She stated it also teaches the students self-control.

Brad Norman asked if an individual teacher can say it is okay to use the phone in their classroom.

Ed Zink stated this policy only works if everyone is on the same page and if the policy is adopted, teachers are responsible to enforce it.

Michael Bissonnette stated he does want to see accountability with this policy.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Michael Bissonnette and carried unanimously to approve Policy 3630 – Cell Phones and Other Electronic Equipment as amended on second reading. (YES—Swansborough, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Staff Training Updates – Mr. Ator stated two staff members will be attending new teacher training in Billings in August and asked if it is okay for them to stay in a motel in Billings or do we have them drive back and forth. He added much of the value of training such as this is the opportunity to network with other participants at the end of the sessions.

It was determined the teachers attending the training can stay in Billings.

SUPERINTENDENT SCHEDULE – Mr. Ator stated he will be on vacation August 5-8.

Mr. Ator asked as he does not have bereavement leave, can he take a sick day for a funeral?

The board indicated that would be okay.

NEXT MEETING DATE – Mr. Ator stated the next meeting is scheduled for August 14, 2024 as it will be the final budget hearing date.

ADJOURNMENT

Michelle Swansborough adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Board Chair

District Clerk