

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ROBERTS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5  
MARCH 19, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Roberts School District No. 5, Roberts, Montana was called to order by Vice Chair Nick Dobbel at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2025.

**ATTENDANCE**

Nick Dobbel, Vice Chair  
Joel Bertolino  
Michael Bissonnette  
Brad Norman

Absent: Michelle Swansborough, Chair

Alex Ator, Superintendent  
JaLayne Obert, Business Manager/Clerk

Guests: Sanford Langager, David Jarussi, John Holdbrook, Peter Wisniewski, Katie Day, Ed Zink, Skye Mitchell, Cody Mitchell, Tiana Rivera, Rio Chadde, Ravipau Smith, Jackie Jessen, Patti Keebler

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES**

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Michael Bissonnette and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2025 regular meeting and February 27, 2025 special meeting as presented. (YES--Dobbel, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

**WARRANTS**

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to approve warrants 50957 through 51032, direct deposit listing of 222, payroll listing, and non-payroll warrants for March, 2025. (YES—Dobbel, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Tiana Rivera stated a concern with the lack of communication with parents about injuries of students at school and suggested an incident report be sent home to parents.

Mr. Ator asked that Mrs. Rivera meet with him so he can determine where the breakdown in reporting is occurring.

Katie Day stated she is a paraprofessional at the school and is working on a grant for a community garden with help from the grant writer from the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation. She stated she wanted to keep the board informed of that being submitted.

## **TEACHER REPORTS**

**ACTIVITIES** – Mr. Ator reported the high school basketball season is over and three seniors were selected to play in the Senior Classic. He added high school track started on March 10, junior high track begins on March 31, and junior high boys' basketball just ended. He stated it takes a lot of work to make these program run.

Rio Chadde and David Jarussi gave teacher reports for the month.

Mr. Jarussi stated this is his first year teaching 7-12 math, which is a very wide range of math subjects. He gave an overview of what the students are doing in each class.

Mr. Chadde stated he teaches 7-12 science and coaches in several areas. He reviewed what is being studied in each of his classes.

## **STAFFING**

Alex Ator stated he plans to advertise both the science and math teaching positions as they were both filled under emergency authorizations. He added he hopes both people currently holding those positions will apply.

Mr. Ator stated he did receive the first application for the superintendent position this morning.

## **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE** – Brad Norman reported the Discipline Committee is almost done with its work.

**SAFETY COMMITTEE** – Peter Wisniewski reported the Safety Committee will have its quarterly meeting on March 25. He stated we had one lead test come back bad and that faucet has been turned off. He added we will be replacing more emergency lights.

**CERTIFIED NEGOTIATIONS** – Brad Norman stated the teacher negotiators submitted an offer and the board negotiators have given them a counter offer. He added the teachers will be meeting tomorrow to discuss the counter offer.

**CLASSIFIED NEGOTIATIONS** – Mr. Ator stated the classified staff met yesterday and he expects to see a proposal from them soon.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION FOR PERMISSIVE LEVIES** – Mr. Ator stated the resolution regarding an increase in permissive levies was included in the board packet. He stated he is recommending no increase in permissive levies which results in a savings for taxpayers.

Cody Mitchell asked if the bill for a county-wide levy for schools being considered in the legislature would be good for the district.

Mr. Ator stated it would be advantageous for our district.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to approve the Resolution of Intent to Impose an Increase in Levies as presented (see attached). (YES—Dobbel, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

**CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION FOR TECHNOLOGY LEVY** – Mr. Ator stated the Technology Levy was first passed ten years ago and expires on June 30, 2025. He stated the board needs to decide if they want to run another Technology Levy and General Fund Levy or combine the two.

Motion was made by Michael Bissonnette, seconded by Joel Bertolino and carried unanimously to discuss how to run the levies. (YES—Dobbel, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

Mr. Ator asked if there are two levies on the ballot, will voters vote for both or vote for one and not the other.

Joel Bertolino stated maybe it would better to put the two levies together and run the General Fund Levy at \$95,000.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Brad Norman and carried unanimously to run a General Fund Levy for \$95,000 which includes funding for technology (see attached). (YES—Dobbel, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Michael Bissonnette and carried unanimously to not run a Technology Levy for the 2025-2026 year. (YES—Dobbel, Bertolino, Bissonnette, Norman. NO—none).

**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT STAFF AND SCHOOL** – Mr. Ator stated the board received a letter from the Roberts Community Foundation asking the board to put the following items on the agenda for discussion in April or May:

1. Community Clean-up Day
2. Replace lights on the school's pine tree for the 2025 holiday
3. Back to School picnic at the park paid for by RCF
4. Permission to proceed with planning the installation of a large U.S. flag on school property with green space, benches, and a small monument that describes the Roberts Activities Committee's veterans honor project, funded by RCF and Activities Committee
5. Permission to proceed with grant writing to fund additional solar panels for the school
6. Time in the school day to visit with students and staff about RCF scholarship opportunities and local volunteer opportunities to fulfill community service requirements

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **POLICY REVIEW**

Mr. Ator asked that this item be moved to next month.

**SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

STARS ACT –Mr. Ator stated the Stars Act is a bill in the legislature with incentives to set the base pay for teachers at about \$42,000. He stated this is a bipartisan bill with the support of Governor Gianforte and it is anticipated it will pass.

INFLATIONARY FUNDING – Mr. Ator stated the bill to set inflationary funding for public schools at 3% hasn't been dealt with yet.

SUPERINTENDENT ADVERTISEMENT UPDATE – Mr. Ator stated he has received one application for the superintendent position which closes on March 31. He recommended having a special meeting on April 1 for application review.

Board consensus was to set a special meeting on April 1, 2025 to review superintendent position applications.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Nick Dobbel adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

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Board Vice Chair

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District Clerk

## Resolution of Intent to Impose an Increase in Levies

As an essential part of its budgeting process, the Roberts School District #5 Board of Trustees is authorized by law to impose levies to support its budget. The Roberts School District #5 Board of Trustees estimates the following increases/decreases in revenues and mills for the funds noted below for the next school fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, using certified taxable valuations from the current school fiscal year as provided to the district:

Fund Supported	Estimated Change in Revenues*		Estimated Change in Mills*		Estimated Impact Home of \$100,000*		Estimated Impact Home of \$200,000*	
Bus Depreciation	\$0.00	increase	0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase
Transportation	\$0.00	increase	0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase
Tuition	\$0.00		0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase
Building Reserve Elementary	\$0.00	increase	0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase
Building Reserve High School	\$0.00	increase	0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase
Adult Education	\$0.00	increase	0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase
Total	\$0.00	increase	0 mill	increase	\$0.00	increase	\$0.00	increase

\*Impacts above are based on current certified taxable valuations from the current school fiscal year.

Regarding the building reserve levy referenced above, the following are school facility maintenance projects anticipated to be completed at this time:

1. Construction and Repairs of Existing Facilities
2. Electrical and Mechanical System Upgrades
3. Weatherization of Existing Facilities
4. General Grounds and Facilities Maintenance

**OFFICIAL BALLOT  
GENERAL FUND MILL LEVY**

This ballot should be marked with an "X" in the square before the words "FOR the Additional Levy" if you wish to vote for the additional levy or mark an "X" in the square before the words "AGAINST the Additional Levy" if you oppose the additional levy.

Roberts School District No. 5 of Carbon County

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**PROPOSITION**

Shall the board of trustees be authorized to impose an increase in local taxes to support the general fund in the amount of NINETY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$95,000 ) per year which is approximately 29.51 mills, for the purpose of: maintaining and operating the General Fund for FY26?

Passage of this proposal will increase the taxes on a home with a market value of \$100,000 by approximately \$39.84, on a home with a market value of \$300,000 by approximately \$119.52, and on a home with a market value of \$600,000 by approximately \$239.03. An increase in property taxes may lead to an increase in rental costs.

The durational limit of the levy is permanent once approved by the voters, assuming the district levies that amount at least once in the next five years.

FOR the Additional Levy

AGAINST the Additional Levy

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School districts must obtain voter approval for an increase in the number of dollars budgeted for the over-BASE tax levy. The ballot language above contains all information required to be included per 15-10-425, MCA. As long as the information listed in 15-10-425, MCA is included in the ballot language, trustees are allowed to use their discretion in formulating ballot language for general fund elections.

**NOTE:** The proposition lists an approximate number of mills, since taxable valuation and other information necessary to determine an exact number of mills are not available at the time of the election. Actual mills will commonly differ from this estimate.