

March 7, 2023

REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Trustees of School District #4 and Forsyth High School District held a Regular Meeting on March 7, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 9 of the Middle School Building with the following in attendance:

Jennifer Anderson, Chairman	School District #4 & Forsyth High School District
David Sorenson, Vice Chair	“ “
Doug Roberts, Trustee	“ “
Ethan Bell, Trustee	“ “
George Simmons, Trustee	“ “
Donald John Cameron, Trustee	“ “

Also Present:

Chris Hess, Superintendent
Stacy Montgomery, District Clerk/Business Manager
Dixie Seleg, K-6 Principal
Shelly Weight, 7-12 Principal

Guests present: Kelsey Bird, Eric Herndon, Stacey Herndon, Idzel Ferrer, Karen Harms, Rian Pinkerton, and Wendy Killebrew

Guests present via ZOOM meeting:

Janell Mischel, Blake Schwagler, Jan Banks, Kaybree Cole, and Susan Treible

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
The Chairman led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation: none

Revise/Review Agenda: none

Consent Agenda

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Ethan Bell, to approve the consent agenda consisting of the following,

1. March bills in the amount of \$402,762.88 including warrants #48944 through #48988
2. Minutes for the: February 7, 2023 Regular Meeting
3. Warrant lists from 02/01/2023 through 02/28/2023 including the following:
 - Claims 48908 - 48959 \$ 574,141.78*
 - Payroll 313466 - 313487 \$ 36,736.93
 - [*Includes direct deposit check 48853 \$ 131,416.04]
4. Activity Cash Report
5. Correspondence
 - a. Diana Robinette Resignation – Kitchen Assistant
 - b. Donation Letter
 - c. Thank you card
 - d. Thank you card

Upon call for a vote, all trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Administrative Team Reports

Video shared by Elementary and High School

K-6 Principal

Dixie Seleg presented the K – 6 Principal’s report.

- 3rd grade students held their Wax Museum
 - Parents were invited in to see their costumes and listen to the information on their historical people they chose
- One School, One Book wrapped up with a showing of the movie “Nim’s Island”
 - Thank you to Rita and the kitchen crew for the great snacks
 - Thank you to Evergreen Lanes, Rosebud County Healthcare Center and Art’s Tires
 - These businesses donated treats for the winners of our competitions we held throughout the month
 - Zoo Montana assembly was held
 - They brought 3 species that live on islands
- February Student of the Month Assembly was held
 - Jennifer Anderson was our community guest
 - She spoke about pride in themselves, Dogie Pride, being involved in school and taking care of one another
- Safety Drill for February – Counter and prepare to barricade
 - We will hold another drill in March as we need to be more intentional about not talking while the drill is being held
- Kindergarten registration is taking place this week – March 6-10
- Calendar committee met and designed 3 calendar options
 - Options were sent to the 3 buildings and votes were collected
- Attended the Strategic Planning session with MTSBA
 - Reaching out to staff to encourage their input and attendance at the next meeting
- Worked with Mr. Hess and Mrs. Treible on the Plan B proposal
- All teacher evaluations have been completed
- With the resignation of Diana Robinette, the position has been filled with substitutes for the remainder of the year
 - Mr. Hess and I decided to wait until May or later to open it as the official start of the position will not be until August

7-12 Principal

Shelly Weight presented the 7 -12 Principal’s report

- Two grants have been written for the 11/12 Educational trip to the Helena capitol building and Lewis and Clark caverns to assist with lodging expenses.
- Student Council put together the Senior night for basketball, cheer and speech & drama. The mothers received flowers and the Dads received travel tumblers with straws with personal messages from their son or daughter.
- Payne Reilly placed 3rd at State wrestling and Trey Starcher placed 5th.
- The approved FCS standards have been placed in the Chalk lesson planning system for use by Mrs. Knoche to attach to her plans. Teachers can easily track the completion of their standards in that way.
- Letters have gone out to parents concerning sex education in Health. Mrs. Schacht created a back-up lesson for those students whose parents did not want them included.

- Evaluations – 3,
- IEP – 2, 504 - 1
- Completed the language test for potential Foreign Exchange student and completed the contract for the 2023-2024 school year.
- Pep Assembly for the basketball teams prior to Districts.
- School improvement committee set goals for this year and next, based on feedback from the surveys staff completed this fall. Goals address complacency and staying positive during change. High marks for collaboration and collegiality.
- Amber Icopini, Andrew Buck & Wendy Killebrew attended the Singletons in PLC conference. They brought back several ideas that we may adopt for the coming year. All staff is doing a book review of “How to Develop PLCs for Singletons and Small Schools.”
- With other discipline issues, the vape detectors that were installed in the bathrooms have been working well.
- Triple A (Academics, Attendance and Attitude) awards given to students and prizes drawn.
- The schedule for Spring Standardized and District testing has been created. It works around the activities calendar and minimizes class disruptions as much as possible.
- Transcript reviews for 2 new students.
- Teacher interview
- Intruder in the Building Drill. He came in the back door, so we found several holes in the system. One is that the phone system does not work well to project to all classes and admin.
- Finalizing the 9-10 Educational Trip to the Cameron Museum in Terry, DCC, and Makoshika State Park.

Activities Director -

Chris Hess for Jill Dana presented the Activities Director report

Winter sports finished up this month. HSWR had a great showing in the post season with two wrestlers placing at State. HSBBS finished up their season at the district tournament. The girls placed second at districts and made it to the divisional tournament but lost out with two tough games against Columbus and Shepherd. JHBSB started practice on February 13th. They have 16 boys out and had their first game yesterday vs. Custer/Hysham. Both squads won.

I attended a 3B meeting during districts and one during the all-conference basketball meeting that was held on 2/27. A lot of what is covered at those meetings is looking forward to next year, so it really doesn't pertain to us. The master basketball schedule for next year has come in and I am beginning to work on dates for those games. We are in a tipoff tournament in Broadview/Lavina. We also are keeping a home and away with Colstrip and picked up Absarokee and Fromberg/Belfry as non-conference games. The rest of the games will be conference games: Custer/Hysham, Broadview/Lavina, Harlo/Ryegate/Judith Gap, Melstone, Northern Cheyenne. Volleyball scheduling for next year has been challenging. With ten teams in our conference and playing a home/away with each, it would leave us no room for any non-conference games or regular season tournaments. Most schools are not in favor of this. We are trying to figure out a way to possibly play some teams only once or not at all to allow for some outside the conference games to occur. Seems like a redistricting would be the best solution, but that has been brought up with little success. Will keep you updated as I know more. HS Spring sports schedules have been slowly filling up. I have a couple JHTR meets scheduled as well. Waiting for the rest to come in. Will have that schedule out as soon as it is more complete.

District Clerk/Business Manager

Stacy Montgomery presented the Business Manager's report

- 1095's completed and submitted to the IRS
- Requested info sent to auditors for the 2021-2022 year
- Negotiations info

Superintendent

Chris Hess presented the Superintendent's report

It's been a fast and furious month. Spent a lot of time this month in meetings, negotiations, the teacher housing project, the tennis court project, and travelling and attending post season tournaments.

Susan Treible, Dixie Seleg and I met through out February looking at various options for next year to consider what a dean of student's position could look like and feel we have a solid outline to share with the board.

Dixie Seleg, Shelly Weight, and myself conducted 1 teacher interview and will have a recommendation for the board at the April Board meeting. We are looking to work out a few scheduling items and teaching assignments but believe we have a great fit once we connect all the pieces.

Marty and I had to call off out of town bus routes during the cold spell that hit us in February. No out of town routes ran on the 23rd and 24th of February. The decision to cancel routes is mostly determined by Marty, he is here at 4:30am and begins checking routes and whether snow plows have had a chance to help clear roads. -24 is about the limit of our boilers to keep rooms at a comfortable level, so that temperature along with road condition factors is what is used to determine whether we cancel any routes or call for a snow day.

I spoke with a few surrounding area schools as we do not have a specific protocol located in any of our handbooks. This will be something I will work to add to the handbooks for next year. However, all the schools I checked with (including Colstrip and Glendive) have similar systems and temperatures they use.

Once it is determined what the course of action will be, I then notify the building principals, radio station, and send a district wide power announcement. The principals notify their staff who relay that information on their learning and social networking platforms. Lastly, we monitor the entrances at 7:45 instead of 7:55 to ensure no students are left outside in those temperatures.

With winter activities finished up, I wanted to reiterate how pleased I was with the school pride, character, and work ethic that was demonstrated by our student athletes and activity participants. From the individual players, coaches, sponsors, cheerleaders, band members, and drum line I felt they represented Forsyth Schools in tremendous fashion. I know they made the school and community proud.

Student

Consider Approving BPA Request to Travel Out of State

The BPA chapter would like to request the Boards approval to travel out-of-state for their National Leadership Conferences to be held April 26-30 in Anaheim, CA. Qualified students will travel to Billings via school transportation and then fly to Anaheim. Cost of the trip will be paid for through fund-raising efforts.

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the out of state travel for the National Leadership Conference.

Donald John Cameron moved, seconded by George Simmons to approve the out of state travel for the BPA National Leadership Conference. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Personnel

Old Business - none

New Business

Consider Hiring Spring Coaches.

The following coaches are being recommended for hire for the 2022-23 season.

HS Head Golf – Gina Sorenson

HS Asst Golf – Rob Sorenson

HS Head Track – Eric Herndon

HS Asst Track – Craig Knoche

HS Asst Track – Heaven Zuehlsdorf

HS Tennis – Melanie Martens

JH Head Track – Lynda Montgomery

JH Asst Track – Andrea Schacht

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve hiring the coaches as presented for the 2022-23 season

George Simmons moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve hiring the coaches as presented for the 2022-23 Season. 5 trustees voted in favor of the motion. David Sorenson abstained. Motion carried

Consider Approving Employee’s Termination

Executive Session – 6:35 pm

Reconvened at 6:43 pm

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Donald John Cameron that the Board accept the recommendation of the administration to terminate the employment of Charlene Dyer. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Appointing Volunteer Golf Coach

Based on the recommendation from the head coach and letter of interest from the applicant, Chad Erickson is being recommended to be appointed as volunteer golf coach for the 2022-23 season.

Donald John Cameron moved, seconded by George Simmons to appoint Chad Erickson as volunteer golf coach for the 2022-23 season subject to result of a fingerprint and background check. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Approving Dean of Student/AD position

Mr. Hess presented a new position of Dean of Students/AD to the Board of Trustees. This position would replace the HS Principal position. The current Elementary Principal would act as Principal for both schools. The current Counselor would be doing the HS scheduling. A job description was presented and discussed.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve the Dean of Student/AD position and advertise the position concurrent with the HS Principal opening. All trustees voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Donald John Cameron moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve the closing date of the Dean of Students/AD and the HS Principal positions to be set for April 1, 2023. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

District

Old Business

Coal Board Grant Application – Update

Mr. Hess will be presenting to the Coal Board this Thursday in Helena.

Presented for informational purposes

Teacher Housing - Update

The asbestos report was returned from Ingraham stating there was a trace of asbestos, so demolition would only require a general contractor who is bonded, licensed and insured. We have received 2 estimates and will discuss these at the next board meeting. Various plans for modular will also be presented at the April meeting.

Presented for informational purposes

Strategic Planning Update

Board discussed strategy moving forward. This includes postponing the next scheduled MTSBA strategic planning meeting with MTSBA and having the group meet to set priorities. The main priority moving forward will be gathering data and hearing from all stakeholders before the actual strategic planning process begins.

Presented for informational purposes

Renew America's School HVAC Grant -Update

The concept paper that was submitted was denied so no further action will be put forth for this grant.

Provided for informational purposes

Consider Approving World Language Curriculum – Second and Final Reading

The World Language curriculum was discussed and presented at the regular February meeting. The curriculum is being presented for second and final reading.

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the World Language curriculum as presented on second and final reading.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve the World Language curriculum as presented on second and final reading. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Trustee and Levy Election Update

To date, no candidates have applied for any of the three available trustee positions. The last day for candidates to submit an intent to run is March 23, 2023. According to the Preliminary Budgets received from OPI, the HS and the Elementary are unable to run a mill levy election.

Provided for informational purposes.

New Business

Consider Approving Teacher Move on Salary Matrix

FEA is respectfully asking the Board of Trustees to consider three certified educators be given additional years on the district pay matrix, if they sign a contract with our District for the 2023-2024 school year.

It states in our Collective Bargaining agreement:

- Contract page 12: VII – Salary Schedule Provisions, F-2:
 - Out of District experience credit may be given for up to a maximum of five (5) successful years of teaching experience. If a teacher enters the system with more than five (5) years of successful teaching experience, the Board, at its discretion, may add a maximum of five (5) years of experience to the original five (5) years.

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the move on the salary matrix as discussed.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve an additional 3 years to the contract of Karlene Steiger for the 2023-2024 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve an additional 5 years to the contract of Idzel Ferrer for the 2023-2024 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve an additional 4 years to the contract of Eric Herndon for the 2023-2024 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Approving Change in PIR Date

The administration would like to switch the 6-hour PIR day on March 20 to two (3hour) PIR days on March 31st and May 24th. Safety training with the Billings Police Dept would be provided on March 31st and teacher check out would be on May 24th.

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the switch in PIR days as presented.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve the switch in PIR days as presented. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Approving Calendar for the 2023-24 School Year.

The calendar committee was activated in January and later met to develop three different calendar options. The calendars were voted on by staff:

- Option 1 – last day of school May 17 – 8 votes
- Option 2 - last day of school May 22 – 30 votes
- Option 3 – last day of school May 24 – 18 votes

It was recommended the Board of Trustees approve option 2 for the 2023-24 school year.

George Simmons moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve option 2 for the 2023-2024 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried

Consider Approving Commencement Speaker

The Senior Class has asked Mr. Hess to be their speaker for the 2023 graduation ceremonies.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve Mr. Hess as the 2023 graduation speaker. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Approving Curriculum Director

Dixie Seleg and Shelly Weight are currently the appointed curriculum directors for the District. With the resignation of Shelly Weight, the position will be consolidated to 1(one) person.

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees appoint Dixie Seleg as the Curriculum Director for the 2023-24 school year.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve Dixie Seleg as the Curriculum Director for the 2023-24 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Insurance Premium Updates

Currently we have received a quote from Pacific Source insurance. Blue Cross Blue Shield indicated they would have a quote to the District by the end of March.

Provided for informational purposes

Consider Approving Senate Bill 307 Resolution

It is necessary to disclose the District’s estimated intent for permissive levy taxes for the next fiscal year. The Board of Trustees must approve and pass a resolution for SB 307, which allows the district to increase or decrease permissive levies. Mrs. Montgomery presented to the Board of Trustees estimated figures based on the preliminary budget numbers that were provided by the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The building reserve permissive levy was explained that the amounts levied would be used for facility upkeep and safety. These figures are just estimates; final figures will be determined when the final budget is completed in August 2023. It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve SB 307 permissive levies as presented.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve SB 307 as presented. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Forsyth School District #4
 NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCREASE NONVOTED LEVIES
 March 7, 2023

The Forsyth School District is committed to financial transparency. Senate Bill 307 (SB307), requires the District to provide notice of its intent to increase non-voted levies in the ensuing fiscal year. However, understanding the District’s budgets requires considering all levy-supported funds. As a result, the proposed notice contains projections for all of the District’s levy-supported funds:

TOTAL - ALL FUNDS USING PROJECTED TAXABLE VALUE:

<u>ELEMENTARY</u>	<u>2022-23 Actual Levies</u>		<u>2023-2024 Projections</u>					
	\$	Mills	\$	Mills	Change \$	Change Mills	Est. Annual Tax Impact \$100K home	Est. Annual Tax Impact \$200K home
General - BASE	\$ 201,637	31.66	\$ 198,557	31.18	\$ (3,080)	(0.48)	\$ (0.65)	\$ (1.30)
General - OverBASE	\$ 429,119	67.38	\$ 476,276	74.78	\$ 47,157	7.40	\$ 9.99	\$ 19.98
Transportation	\$ 80,289	12.61	\$ 76,957	12.08	\$ (3,332)	(0.53)	\$ (0.72)	\$ (1.44)
Bus Depreciation	\$ 26,011	4.08	\$ 30,000	4.71	\$ 3,989	0.63	\$ 0.85	\$ 1.70
Tuition	\$ 25,000	3.93	\$ 25,000	3.93	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Adult Ed	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Technology	\$ 45,000	7.07	\$ 45,000	7.07	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Flexibility	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Service	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Building Reserve Permissive	\$ 16,441	2.58	\$ 39,970	6.28	\$ 23,529	3.70	\$ 5.00	\$ 10.00
Building Reserve Voted	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Grand Total	\$ 823,497	129.31	\$ 891,760	140.03	\$ 68,263	10.72	\$ 14.47	\$ 28.94

TOTAL - ALL FUNDS USING PROJECTED TAXABLE VALUE:

Fund	2022-23 Actual Levies		2023-2024 Projections				Est. Annual Tax Impact \$100K home	Est. Annual Tax Impact \$200K home
	\$	Mills	\$	Mills	Change \$	Change Mills		
General - BASE	\$ 113,026	16.36	\$ 117,320	16.98	\$ 4,294	0.62	\$ 0.84	\$ 1.68
General - OverBASE	\$ 402,774	58.30	\$ 360,604	52.20	\$ (42,170)	(6.10)	\$ (8.23)	\$ (16.46)
Transportation	\$ 111,554	16.15	\$ 101,635	14.71	\$ (9,919)	(1.44)	\$ (1.94)	\$ (3.88)
Bus Depreciation	\$ 29,213	4.23	\$ 30,000	4.34	\$ 787	0.11	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.30
Tuition	\$ 12,467	1.80	\$ 20,000	2.89	\$ 7,533	1.09	\$ 1.47	\$ 2.94
Adult Ed	\$ 41,536	6.01	\$ 29,887	4.33	\$ (11,649)	(1.68)	\$ (2.27)	\$ (4.54)
Technology	\$ 45,000	6.51	\$ 45,000	6.51	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Flexibility			\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Service			\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Building Reserve Permissive	\$ 8,053	1.17	\$ 24,450	3.54	\$ 16,397	2.37	\$ 3.20	\$ 6.40
Building Reserve Voted			\$ -	-	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -
Grand Total	\$ 763,623	110.53	\$ 728,896	105.50	\$ (34,727)	(5.03)	\$ (6.78)	\$ (13.56)

The District intends to use the permissive Building Reserve levies listed above for building upkeep and maintenance repairs to ensure school safety. The approximate increase in mills for this permissive levy will be 3.70 for the Elementary and 2.37 for the High School. This will increase taxes on a \$100,000 home by approximately \$5.00 for the elementary and \$3.20 for the HS, and on a \$200,000 home by approximately \$10.00 for the elementary and \$6.40 for the HS. The Tuition Levy is intended to subsidize the Special Education Funding. Due to the continued reduction of state funds, it is necessary to levy for Tuition and Adult Education.

These estimates are the District’s best estimates at the current time. They are based on the current year’s taxable value, as required by the proposed law in SB307. **If the District’s taxable value increases as expected, the mill and taxpayer cost increases will be less than presented here.** These estimates are preliminary and changes are expected before the final budgets are set in August. Please contact the District Business Office at (406) 346-2796 or smontgomery@forsyth.k12.mt.us if you have questions or need additional information.

Multi District Agreement Review

During the 2011 Legislative Session (SB 329), changes were made to a section of law that permits two or more districts to enter into agreements for sharing costs related to services and projects. It also permits these districts to fund the agreement with transfers from budgeted funds.

The agreement currently in place is for the 2021-2023 fiscal years. Stature requires that the agreement be renewed every three years and reviewed annually. Attached is the revised Multidistrict Agreement between Forsyth Elementary District #4 and Forsyth High School District #4 for the 2023-2026 fiscal years for review.

It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the agreement between Forsyth Elementary District #4 and Forsyth High School District #4 for the 2023-26 fiscal years.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by George Simmons to approve the agreement between Forsyth Elementary District #4 and Forsyth High School District #4 for the 2023-26 fiscal years. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Business Manager/Clerk Evaluation

The Board of Trustees were given 2 copies of the evaluation for the Business Manager. The Trustees need to complete the evaluation and return it to Jennifer Anderson in the SASE no later than April 4th. The evaluation will be reviewed and discussed at the Regular April Board Meeting.

Next Meeting

The next Regular Meeting will be Tuesday, April 11, 2023. The meeting will be held in Room 9 of the Middle School Building at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Montgomery
District Clerk/Business Manager

Jennifer Anderson
Chairman of the Board