

**September 10, 2024  
REGULAR MEETING**

The Board of Trustees of School District #4 and Forsyth High School District held a Regular Meeting on September 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Room 9 of the Middle School Building with the following in attendance:

School District #4 & Forsyth High School District

Jennifer Anderson, Chairman	“	“
David Sorenson, Vice Chair	“	“
Kyle Fulton, Trustee	“	“
Doug Roberts, Trustee	“	“
Ethan Bell, Trustee	“	“
Donald John Cameron, Trustee	“	“

Also Present:

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

Guests present: Wendy Killebrew and Craig Knoche

Guests present via ZOOM meeting:

Beth Hall, Erica Bidwell, and Jayme Nelson

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:** moved item F. under District New Business to top of list

**Consent Agenda**

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by David Sorenson, to approve the consent agenda consisting of the following,

1. September bills in the amount of \$267,407.03 including warrants #49824 through #49902
2. Minutes for the: August 6, 2024 Regular Meeting  
August 22, 2024 Special Meeting
3. Warrant lists from 08/01/2024 through 08/31/2024 including the following:  
-Claims 49813 - 49865 \$ 190,186.64\*  
-Payroll 313846 - 313853 \$ 10,352.04  
[\*Includes direct deposit check 49852 \$ 36,332.63]
4. Activity Cash Report

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

## **Administrative Team Reports**

### **K-6 Principal**

#### **Dixie Seleg -**

- I attended a training session in Miles City on MAST, our new State achievement test. This test will be given in 4 testing windows throughout the year. The teachers must determine which testing window they want certain math standards assessed in. They have been holding grade level meetings to map out their year and outline this process.
- New teacher orientation was held on August 12. Blake Schwagler and Noah Taylor were able to attend. Policies, procedures and practices were discussed. They were also allowed time to work with their mentor teachers.
- Open House was held on the night before school began, August 20, from 5:30-6:30. As usual, our students and staff are well supported by our parents and community with 96% of our students attending.
- Quade Stephens, Stephens Fencing, completed the fence on the North side of the playground field. This will provide a much-needed barrier between the students and the increased traffic.
- Our first safety drill was held. We had a fire drill on August 28th. The students responded quickly and appropriately.
- PTSA sponsored an ice cream treat for our students. The students enjoyed that on August 30th which was a great way to end our first full week of school. A shout out to PTSA for always being supportive of our staff and students.
- On August 30, Mrs. Hall and Eckroth Music held an instrument exploration night for the 5th grade students interested in band. Eckroth Music sends a representative with various instruments to Forsyth so parents and students can look at the instruments and discuss which is most appropriate.
- Again, this year, Mrs. Stevens reached out to businesses and organizations for donations so she could purchase purple shirts for all of our students. The shirts were handed out last Friday and Scott McDermott was on hand to use his drone and take a picture of the students standing in an “F” formation. The Little Dogie Cheerleaders participated in the event and led the student body in a cheer and the 6th grade band played the school song.
- Our character trait for September is Dogie Pride. We hope to continue to build school spirit and pride with our elementary students.

### **7-12 Principal**

#### **Aaron Morgenstern**

- We have successfully launched the new Yondr Program. We started with an Open house presentation on Aug 20th with the parents and then a presentation with the students on the first day of school. So far incidents involving cell phones at school have dropped significantly with only two incidents this year. Teachers are reporting that students seem more engaged in the classrooms.
- The students engaged in some activities and fun on the afternoon of the first day of school out on the west yard by the tennis courts. The Boosters Club helped us by providing some ice cream for the students and staff at that event.
- Working to initiate some of the ideas that have come out of the strategic planning process, the senior class has selected three traits they feel represent them as a class. These traits will be painted on the west wall of the commons and worked into their senior mural. They also represent traits they’d like to see embodied within the school. These traits are Pride, Unity, and Relentless.
- We have several seniors taking advantage of our work-study program this year. This allows them to attend classes at the school in the morning and then go work at a job in the afternoon. Their employer reports back to the school to let us know how well the students are doing in their job and the students receive a

grade and credit in the process. The program was expanded from 2 periods to 3 last year, with students having the choice to pick between the two options based on how many credits they need to graduate.

- The JH and HS will be attending a Montana Repertory Theatre production tomorrow afternoon at 1:00. This is an educational production we are sponsoring in collaboration with the public library to bring live performing arts to our community. They will also have a performance for the public starting at 5:30 PM.
- Homecoming planning is well underway. Homecoming is the week of Sept 23rd this year. The student council has picked this year's theme, which is vacations. The students will again have spirit days throughout the week. The student council will be sponsoring a Dodge Ball tournament on Wed, and possibly a movie on Tuesday night. The boosters will be sponsoring a bonfire pep rally after the Volleyball game on Thursday evening.

### **Activities Director -**

#### **Chris Hess**

Fall participation Numbers

Junior High Football – 18 Total Participants

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: 10  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade: 3  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade: 5

Junior High Volleyball – 25 Total Participants

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: 11  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade: 6  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade: 8

High School Football – 25 Total Participants

9<sup>th</sup> Grade: 10  
10<sup>th</sup> Grade: 8  
11<sup>th</sup> Grade: 4  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade: 3

High School Volleyball – 20 Total Participants

9<sup>th</sup> Grade: 6  
10<sup>th</sup> Grade: 5  
11<sup>th</sup> Grade: 5  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade: 4

### **District Clerk/Business Manager**

#### **Stacy Montgomery presented the Business Manager's report**

Completed TFS and Final Budget

### **Superintendent-**

#### **Chris Hess presented the Superintendent's report+**

August was full of PIR teacher training, orientations, open houses, and welcoming students and staff back into the building. I've been excited about the positive culture in each building.

Weekly Newsletter (Scoop from the Supt.)

During strategic planning, communication was a central area where we received feedback. This year, I am writing a weekly newsletter sent out via power announcement to parents in the District, posted on Facebook, and printed and distributed to local businesses. I am writing short descriptive items about various happenings in

the district, posting our athletic write-ups, and will include staff contributions as they come in. The end goal of this will be a student-run newspaper class.

MSGIA—I received the MSGIA Service Commitment summary. Our workplace injury claims showed a \$47,494 decrease from last year. A significant claim in 2018 came off our report, decreasing our premium. Our most frequent claim is Custodial/Maintenance, which is expected due to the physical workload. Second was the Slips and Falls of certified staff. Overall, we are doing exceptionally well on work-related claims.

School Website—I've spent considerable time trying to update the school website with the required and current information. I will explore this area this year as I don't find our website user-friendly, and we need a better organizational system built for it.

Dogie Book Club – Another strategic planning item calling for more interaction between the school and community, the JH/HS English department (Serena Derricks, Andrew Buck, Amber Icopini) organized and held their first book club night. I had 12 staff members and three community members there. I believe it was an excellent start, and the book *The Anxious Generation* addresses so many of the issues we are dealing with in education as parents and community members.

#### **Student - none**

#### **Personnel**

#### **Old Business- nothing**

#### **New Business**

#### **Consider Approving Substitute Teachers**

It is necessary to hire substitutes for certified and non-certified positions. Shawn Hollowell is being recommended as a substitute for the 2024-25 school year

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to hire Shawn Hollowell as a substitute teacher for the 2024-25 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Consider Hiring Assistant HS Football Coach**

Pete Fritz was recommended for the HS Football Assistant coach position. Coach Fritz is also the head coach of the JH Football team. He has already been serving double duty by attending all high school practices when the JH team finishes their practice.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by Donald John Cameron to approve hiring Pete Fritz as the Assistant HS Football coach for the 2024-25 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Consider Hiring Assistant JH Girls Basketball Coach**

Amy Jones was recommended for the Assistant JH Girls Basketball Coach for the 2024-25 school year. Mrs. Jones has been active in AAU and youth sports during her tenure at Forsyth Schools.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to approve hiring Amy Jones as Assistant JH Girls Basketball Coach for the 2024-25 season. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Consider Hiring Assistant HS Girls Wrestling Coach**

After adding HS Girls Wrestling to the athletic program, an assistant coach needs to be hired. An interview was conducted with Jen Pinkerton. It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the hiring of Jen Pinkerton for the Assistant HS Girls Coach position

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve hiring Jen Pinkerton as Assistant HS Girls Wrestling 1 Coach for the 2024-25 season. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

### **Consider Approving Pep Band Volunteers**

Based on a recommendation from the Pep Band Sponsor, Mr. Radue, the following were recommended as volunteers to assist with the Pep Band for the 2024-25 season

Jeff Aasland  
Andrew Buck  
Jason Forberg  
Beth Hall  
Mindy Macioroski  
Riley Paris  
Rachel Radue  
Gail Rainey  
Keith Raymond  
Joe Wilson

Ethan Bell moved seconded by Donald John Cameron to approve the Pep Band volunteers as listed. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

### **District**

#### **Old Business**

#### **Strategic Planning**

On 9/4/24, the Strategic Planning working group met to review the Culture and Facilities Action plans. We are underway in our Dogie Branding project and have received 4 mock-ups, which we have sent back with suggestions.

Culture Items coming up:

Crosswalk Painting  
Welcome to the Herd (senior and Kindergarten connections)  
Senior Traits/Mural  
Homecoming Coordination  
Inclusion of student council at Strategic Planning working group meetings

We are scheduled to meet again on 10/9/24. We will begin our 1-year Action Plan for Communications.

#### **Coal Board Application Update**

Our application was approved with no deficiencies and recommended for funding by the Department of Commerce. This should be cut and dry, but I can't predict how they will vote. The meeting is this Thursday. Marty Cox and I will attend, as will a representative from TRANE (the company that did the quote).

We are requesting \$139,150 – the total project cost is \$185,532. 46,382 is the difference.

#### **Consider Approving Safety App Contract or Campus Security**

This item was tabled until additional information could be received. Information on various safety apps were presented to the board for review and discussion

After discussion Ethan Bell moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to approve the purchase of the SaferWatch app. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

### **Consider Developing a Forsyth School Endowment Committee**

Mr. Hess contacted the Community Foundation to see if Board Chair Anderson and he could attend their next board meeting on October 14th at 6 p.m.

### **New Business**

#### **Acknowledge Out of District Attendance Agreement – Rosebud**

The Board of Trustees must formally acknowledge the Out of District Attendance Agreements received from Rosebud School. These agreements involve students residing with the Forsyth School District but enrolled in Rosebud School District. In accordance with HB 203, the Forsyth School District will be obligated to pay the tuition for the students. It was recommended that the board of Trustees acknowledge receipt of the attendance agreements as presented.

The Board so acknowledged the agreements.

#### **Consider Approving Obsolete Equipment**

Often there are old, outdated or non-functioning items that are of no use to the district. Also, when items are replaced, there is no value for trading in the old item. These items are placed in storage in various rooms or in the Middle School building.

In order to dispose of these items, it is necessary to hold a public hearing and declare them as obsolete.

Following is the list of Equipment:

Emerson VCR Player; LCD Projector; Sharp VCR Player; Bretford Cart; Toshiba DVD Player; Memorex DVD/CD Player; Phillips VCR/DVD Player; Sharp Television

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the resolution for the disposal and sale of school district property as presented.

Kyle Fulton moved, seconded by Doug Roberts to approve the resolution for the disposal and sale of school district property as presented. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Consider Amending Policy 2410 to Match 7-12 Handbook Graduation Requirement**

A contradiction was found between Board Policy and the School Handbook regarding High School Graduation requirements.

Board Policy 2410 (adopted 11/02 and reviewed 9/1/04) requires a Forsyth student to earn 25 credits to graduate. Our 7-12 Handbook requires students to earn 23 credits to graduate. MCA Law 10.25.5905 requires a minimum of 20 credits for a student to graduate. After researching the handbooks, it was found that the shift from 2006 to 2010 reduced the requirements from 25 to 23 over that time span. However, the policy manual was not updated at that time. It was recommended that the Board of Trustees amend policy 2410 to require 23 credits instead of 25 credits.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by Donald John Cameron to amend Policy 2410 on first reading to require 23 credits to graduate. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

#### **Consider Appointing a 4-day Week Exploratory Committee**

Mr. Hess asked the board to consider and discuss activating a 4-day school week exploratory committee. The 4-day week has many components a can take on many forms, such as hybrid or alternating, but the discussions needs to occur with staff, students, parents and community members.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to activate a 4-day week committee. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motions carried.

Doug Roberts and Kyle Fulton volunteered to be on committee.

**Consider Approving Activity Driver Hourly Rate**

It was recommended that the Board approve an increase to the hourly wage of the Activity Bus drivers.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to increase the Activity Bus Driver hourly y rate to \$18.00 for the 2024-25 fiscal year and then to an hourly rate of \$20.00 for the 2025-26 fiscal year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

**Consider Approving Purchase of a New Route Bus**

Marty Cox, Transportation Director, addressed the Board regarding the purchase of a new route bus. The cost is \$187,161.00. Marty Cox asked that the 2012 Bluebird (trade in value of \$9,000) and the 2017 Blue Bird (trade in value of \$31,000) be traded, which make the cost \$147,161.00. It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the purchase of a new route bus for the net price of \$147,161.00 with 2 busses being traded.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Donald John Cameron to approve the purchase of a new route bus for the net price of \$147,161.00 with 2 busses being traded. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

**Next Meeting**

The next Regular Meeting will be Tuesday, October 8, 2024. 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 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Stacy Montgomery  
District Clerk/Business Manager

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Jennifer Anderson  
Chairman of the Board