

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ROBERTS SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
FEBRUARY 23, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Roberts School District No. 5, Roberts, Montana was called to order by Chair Michelle Swansborough at 5:00 p.m. on February 23, 2024 in the library at the Roberts School.

ATTENDANCE

Michelle Swansborough, Chair
Brandon Crane, Vice Chair
Joel Bertolino
Nick Dobbel
Mariah Holdbrook

Alex Ator, Superintendent
JaLayne Obert, Business Manager/Clerk

Guests: Marvin Brown, Peter Wisniewski, John Holdbrook, Sanford Langager, Steve Keebler, Patti Keebler, Lacy Kircher, Tess Kosel, Nyles Greer, Aimee Bailey, Luke Holdbrook, Jen Larson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Mariah Holdbrook and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting January 17, 2024 and special meeting January 29, 2024 as presented. (YES: Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

WARRANTS

Motion was made by Brandon Crane, seconded by Joel Bertolino and carried unanimously to approve warrants 49931-49988 and expenditure transfers 49515 through 49519 as presented. (YES: Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

TEACHER REPORTS

TEACHER REPORTS – Theresa Kosel gave the teacher report for the month.

Mrs. Kosel stated she teaches K-12 physical education and health. She stated she attended a training this summer and got some new information for health, an outside group is presenting information on domestic violence, and then she will conclude with a chapter on vaping.

Mrs. Kosel stated for elementary PE/Health, she did a unit on how to win and how to lose, and students are working on different motor skills such as skipping and doing stairs. She added there will be more physical activity when classes can be held outside.

LITERACY REPORT – Caitlin Hall stated the third Annual Literacy Night is scheduled for March 20. She added she is trying to get representatives from the Red Lodge and Joliet libraries to be

in attendance and the Red Lodge Bookstore has donated two gift cards. She added various events will be added during the month as March is Literacy Month.

Mrs. Hall stated HB352 established the Early Childhood Education Initiative, funding for a three-part voluntary program for schools to help all students be reading on grade level by the end of third grade. Components of the law include summer school, early education, and a home-based program. She added there is \$1.5 million dollars in funding which is likely to serve 1000-1500 students.

Mariah Holdbrook stated we do a good job with students coming in not prepared.

John Holdbrook asked if our students are achieving their goals. Mr. Ator stated last month we shared DIBEL scores that show all students moving and improving at all levels.

ACTIVITIES REPORT – Sarah Wade reported the following for Activities:

1. High school basketball postseason has begun with both teams progressing to the divisional tournament in Miles City.
2. Junior high girls' basketball season has begun.
3. FFA is busy with district events with several members qualifying for state in their events.
4. BPA is getting ready for state competition March 10 – 12.
5. Track season is coming up in a couple weeks.
6. Rocket Leadership is helping plan prom which is scheduled for April 19.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Ator asked Nyles Greer, an attorney with Felt Martin, to speak about public comment and open meeting laws.

Mr. Greer stated there are two laws that deal with these issues, the Right to Participate and the Right to Know. He stated board meetings are open meetings and public comment is usually held at the beginning of the meeting. He added if comment is made on something not on the agenda, the board can't act on it at the meeting.

Michelle Swansborough stated she always thought salaries were confidential information but has been told when the salaries are paid by taxpayer dollars, they aren't confidential and asked if that is correct.

Mr. Greer stated under the Right to Know law, there is no privacy issue with contracts and the public has a right to know. He added the public can't ask for private information for staff such as phone numbers and addresses.

Mr. Greer stated items where individual privacy supersedes the public's right to know would include such things as dealing with a student, litigation strategy and evaluation of the superintendent but negotiations are typically done in an open meeting.

Michelle Swansborough asked if two board members are negotiating as a committee representing the board, where does that fall.

Mr. Greer stated a committee meeting is like a board meeting and it would still need to be held in an open meeting.

Joel Bertolino asked what happens if there is conflict in public comment and someone crosses the line.

Mr. Greer stated in Billings, the board has a policy to keep the meeting under control and it is up to the board to decide if someone has crossed the line.

The meeting was opened up to public comment from the audience.

Steve Keebler thanked the board for the very hard work they do voluntarily.

Patti Keebler stated she has been involved with the pre-school program since it started and her appreciation for all teachers is overwhelming. She stated she is on the board of the Roberts Community Foundation which is very supportive of the school and community. She thanked board members for listening to concerns.

John Holdbrook stated on the subject of grants and the positions funded by those grants, does the district have to fund those positions after the grant ends.

Mr. Ator stated there is nothing in the grants that says positions have to continue being funded when the grant is over.

Marvin Brown asked if local tax dollars can be saved from one year to the next. Mr. Ator stated in the General Fund it is a use it or lose it situation with no way to carry over surplus funds.

Lacy Kircher stated she has been doing some substitute teaching and it is chaotic. She stated many assignments are in Google Classroom and it only takes the students a short amount of time to complete them and she would like teachers to help the subs out by having something to engage the students with. She added the rule for phones not being out is not respected for substitutes and asked what she can do.

Mr. Ator stated she should contact him and he will take care of it.

Mrs. Kircher stated along with sub notes there should be a list of rules and if a student is sent to the office because of bad behavior, will there be consequences.

Mr. Ator asked if Mrs. Kircher would come to a staff meeting or PIR day to discuss expectations with the teachers.

NEW BUSINESS

SCHOOL BOARD TRAINING – Mr. Ator introduced Nyles Green of Felt Martin to lead a session on boardmanship.

Mr. Green presented the following 10 Truisms of Boardmanship:

1. Individual trustees have no authority.
2. Trustees should not circumvent proper channels.
3. Trustees should not violate confidentiality.
4. Trustees should not represent special interests.
5. Trustees should not speak or vote for political purposes.
6. Trustees should not have hidden agendas.
7. Trustees should not engage in conflicts of interest.

8. Trustees should not engage in surprises.
9. Trustees should not say or do anything that is not in the best interest of the district and community; and
10. Trustees should not interfere in administration.

Mr. Greer stated trustees are protected under state law unless they are acting out of the range of their position and only have power when at a board meeting.

Mr. Greer stated trustees should be familiar with Policy #1700, Uniform Complaint Procedure, and ensure all steps are followed with a complaint.

Joel Bertolino asked if grievances have to be written and Mr. Greer stated they do.

LEVY RESOLUTION – Mr. Ator stated the Trustee Resolution Calling for an Election was included in the board packet and needs to be approved and submitted to the County Election Administrator.

Motion was made by Mariah Holdbrook, seconded by Brandon Crane and carried unanimously to approve the Trustee Resolution Calling for an Election as presented. (YES—Swansbrough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

Mr. Ator stated last night we heard people say they wanted to see a levy used for staff raises. He stated he will put together a fact sheet of what a levy would be used for along with the teacher matrix.

Jackie Douglas stated the district isn't scoring high on different reports on the internet.

Mariah Holdbrook stated students come in to the district below where they should be and we get them to or above grade level.

REVIEW OF FORMAL COMPLAINT UNDER UNIVERAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE – Mr. Ator asked that this item be tabled.

RECESS

Michelle Swansborough called for a short recess at 7:25 p.m. and returned the meeting to regular session at 7:30 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

SUPERINTENDENT NEGOTIATIONS - Mr. Ator stated included in the packet is a superintendent contract that contains a salary freeze but reduces days of the contract from 260 to 220 to align with the rest of the staff after going to a four-day week.

Nick Dobbel stated he feels Section 28, Clarification of hours when school is not in session, should be struck as the details don't need to be included.

Mariah Holdbrook stated she thinks Section 28 adds clarification.

Mr. Ator stated he wants all five board members to be comfortable with the language and if the committee is not in consensus, this should be tabled.

JaLayne Obert stated most of Section 28 is covered under the definition of a salaried employee.

Mariah Holdbrook asked if Section 28 was deleted, how many trustees would be in favor of this contract. All board members replied they would be.

Nick Dobbel asked about the purpose of Friday School.

Mr. Ator stated students can use Friday School to make up work and hours and usually he has covered those days but we have a new grant that can pay someone else to cover and receive a \$100 stipend. He added the Friday Program is a time for field trips once per month.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Nick Dobbel and carried unanimously to approve the superintendent's contract as presented with the deletion of Section 28. (YES—Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

ADJOURNMENT

Michelle Swansborough adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Board Chair

District Clerk

ROBERTS SCHOOL

Expenditure List - March.
2023-2024

03/19/2024
3:32:30 AM

* To the right of a check number, denotes missing check number.
Select All (All Transactions).
Filename: FoxieToExpList (Roberts Public School).tsv
Location: C:\Program Files (x86)\Foxie Lady Computers\Fund Accounting\Output\

Check 50030, Reissued for Check 49961, Date 02/21/2024, Amount 42.83
PO 16835 LITERACY BUS FUEL
Check 50031, Reissued for Check 49962, Date 02/21/2024, Amount 23.94
PO 16835 BLEACH

Print by Number - Totals Only

Transaction	Number	To Whom	Amount	Date	Status
Direct Deposit - ACH	201	Dir.Deposit - ACH	60,762.62	03/06/2024	Cleared
High School Check	49989	BRITTNEY N DIMICH	250.60	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49990	VICTORIA HERRON	229.87	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49991	LACY KIRCHER	46.17	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49992	RYLEE LLOYD	92.35	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49993	Rodney J Melton	198.09	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49994	SADIE ROPP	323.22	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49995	BANK OF BRIDGER	8,262.17	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49996	BANK OF BRIDGER	5,385.24	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49997	BANK OF BRIDGER	443.23	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49998	BANK OF BRIDGER	2,323.46	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	49999	BANK OF BRIDGER	188.96	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50000	BANK OF BRIDGER	143.62	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50001	AFLAC WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS	111.02	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50002	AFLAC WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS	190.84	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50003	EBMS	1,956.30	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50004	EBMS	16,863.15	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50005	Teachers Retirement System	140.18	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50006	PERS	968.78	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50007	PERS	1,778.82	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50008	PERS	344.42	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50009	PERS	195.13	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50010	PERS	88.56	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50011	BANK OF BRIDGER	2,369.14	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50012	BANK OF BRIDGER	402.86	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50013	BANK OF BRIDGER	112.79	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50014	BANK OF BRIDGER	87.00	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50015	BANK OF BRIDGER	48.21	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50016	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	4,101.25	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50017	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	4,765.50	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50018	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	2,138.09	03/08/2024	Written
High School Check	50019	DPHHS-BHDD	5,362.56	03/06/2024	Written
High School Check	50020	Alex Ator	2,119.60	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50021	KENNEDEE S BLANKENSHIP	1,732.40	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50022	RYLEE LLOYD	2,073.46	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50023	SARAH WADE	2,359.14	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50024	BANK OF BRIDGER	1,240.57	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50025	BANK OF BRIDGER	811.57	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50026	BANK OF BRIDGER	410.00	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50027	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	673.60	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50028	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	782.70	03/07/2024	Written
High School Check	50029	ALEX ATOR	63.30	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50032*	BANK OF RED LODGE	1,420.21	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50033	BANK OF RED LODGE	975.01	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50034	BANK OF RED LODGE	757.93	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50035	BEARTOOTH ELECTRIC	1,459.87	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50036	CENTURY LINK	161.36	03/20/2024	Written



ROBERTS SCHOOL

Expenditure List - March.
2023-2024

03/19/2024
3:32:30 AM

Print by Number - Totals Only

Transaction	Number	To Whom	Amount	Date	Status
High School Check	50037	CENTURYLINK	3.73	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50038	FELT MARTIN FRAZIER & WELDON	1,042.00	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50039	HANSON CHEMICAL LLC	389.15	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50040	INTERMOUNTAIN HEALTH	105.00	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50041	JALAYNE OBERT	139.36	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50042	MONTANA DIGITAL ACADEMY	5,473.50	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50043	MT FFA ASSOC	1,392.00	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50044	NORTHWESTERN ENERGY	2,688.62	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50045	PITNEY BOWES	77.37	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50046	REPUBLIC SERVICES	885.71	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50047	RIMROCK COMPUTER COMPANY	2,357.90	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50048	ROBERTS/CC WATER & SEWER	262.61	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50049	RURAL BROADBAND	172.80	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50050	SHAMROCK FOODS CO. -003	2,901.04	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50051	SNOW CREST CHEMICALS	185.00	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50052	SYSCO	726.26	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50053	TRANSFORMATIVE READING TEACHER	5,000.00	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50054	YELLOWSTONE BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH	1,993.95	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50055	Mont. Schools Unemployment Ins. Pro	590.56	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50056	Mont. Schools Unemployment Ins. Pro	74.50	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50057	MSGIA	220.18	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50058	MSGIA	591.69	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50059	MSGIA	47.42	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50060	MSGIA	149.38	03/20/2024	Written
High School Check	50061	MSGIA	69.69	03/20/2024	Written
			=====		
			165,254.34		

Overall Fund Totals

ESSA Totals by Fund

111,775.95	201-GENERAL	90,343.27	
5,874.43	210-TRANSPORTATION		
6,246.68	212-FOOD SERVICES		
14,114.39	214-RETIREMENT	11,955.31	
26,052.20	215-MISC. PROGRAMS	9,360.78	
1,190.69	261-BUILDING RESERVE	1,190.69	165,254.34 High School
=====			
165,254.34	Overall Total		

ESSA Totals by School Code

Overall ESSA Code / Legal Entity (LE) / School Code (SC) Totals

37,784.44	20 - 0069-0000	District Wide
47,867.99	21 - 0069-0095	Roberts School
19,492.83	22 - 0069-0096	Roberts High School
7,704.79	23 - 0069-1676	Roberts 7-8
=====		
112,850.05	Overall Total	



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

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 30.42 mills, for the purpose of maintaining and operating the General Fund for FY25?

Passage of this proposal will increase the taxes on a home with a market value of \$100,000 by approximately \$41.07, on a home with a market value of \$300,000 by approximately \$123.20, and on a home with a market value of \$600,000 by approximately \$246.40. 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 each year thereafter. However, lowering over-BASE tax levies in any year will lower the amount of permissively over-Base levies in subsequent years.

FOR the Additional Levy

AGAINST the Additional Levy

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.

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, 2024, 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