

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

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Roberts School District No. 5, Roberts, Montana was called to order by Vice Chair Brandon Crane at 7:00 p.m. on April 17, 2024 in the library at the Roberts School.

**ATTENDANCE**

Michelle Swansborough, Chair (attended online)  
Brandon Crane, Vice Chair  
Joel Bertolino  
Nick Dobbel  
Mariah Holdbrook

Alex Ator, Superintendent  
JaLayne Obert, Business Manager/Clerk

Guests: Darryl Grove, Misty Pitts, Sarah Clark, Caitlin Hall, Ressa Herta, Sharon Swansborough, Steve Keebler, Debra Hill, Lance Million, John Holdbrook, Tammy Helsper, Brad Norman, Ravipau Norman, Jacqui Jessen

Michelle Swansborough stated as she is not physically in attendance, she is vacating the chair and asked Vice Chair Brandon Crane to lead the meeting.

**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 board meeting March 20, 2024 as presented. (YES – Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

**WARRANTS**

Motion was made by Michelle Swansborough, seconded by Joel Bertolino and carried unanimously to approve warrants 50062 through 50144 as presented. (YES: Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Holdbrook distributed statistics on test scores for the school and a compilation of ideas from some community members on how to address concerns with the school.

Caitlin Hall submitted a letter to the board expressing her support for Mr. Ator. She added the staff would like to hear from community members and have them visit the school.

Lance Million stated he couldn't make it to the April 11 meeting but urged the board to look at the information presented to make sure it is correct.

Joel Bertolino thanked Mr. Million for looking at the information and finding the error.

Michelle Swansborough stated the information was taken off the OPI website and perhaps there are other errors on their site.

Mr. Ator stated he would love to talk to individuals about questions with the data presented at the meeting but no one has requested a meeting.

Debra Hill stated she appreciates the board listening to the community's concerns and hopes trustees realize there are issues to be addressed.

### **ACTIVITIES REPORT**

Mr. Ator stated the Activities Report was included in the board packet.

### **LITERACY REPORT**

Caitlin Hall reported Rocket Camp for incoming kindergarten students has started and Kindergarten Roundup will be held at the end of the month. She added we will also be doing a literacy screening for four-year olds.

Mrs. Hall stated the educational consultant was here this month to do observations and his focus at this time was Pre-K through fifth grade.

Mrs. Hall stated she and Misty Pitts attended an Early Childhood conference and Pete Wisniewski and Ressa Herta attended the Montana Council for Exceptional Children conference.

Mrs. Hall reported spring is the time for testing with juniors taking the ACT, MAST testing, DIBELS, and MAP.

Jacqui Jessen stated the seventh and eighth graders feel the MAST testing is much easier than previous tests given.

Ressa Herta stated the special education conference she attended was uplifting as it reminded her we need people teaching our kids, not stressing computers or PowerPoints.

### **TEACHER REPORTS**

Darryl Grove, Misty Pitts, and Sarah Clark gave teacher reports for the month.

Mr. Grove stated there are 25 high school students and 21 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in FFA and he sees all the elementary students for a short time every week. He added the FFA members were busy competing in many different competitions, will have a pancake breakfast and flower sale, help with the Fireman's Picnic, 4H fair, and Red Lodge rodeo.

Mr. Grove stated because we will be working on the shop roof this summer, equipment and supplies will be moved out of the shop.

Mrs. Pitts distributed the final copy of the Rocketeer for the year so there is time to complete the yearbook. She stated she has library classes for elementary classes, monitors MTDA classes, and provides oversight for the pre-school.

Mrs. Pitts stated she is weeding books from the library published before 1989 to create space for newer books.

Mrs. Clark stated she teaches the second/third grade combination classes. She stated she is new to Montana and Roberts and the first year in a new school is always difficult and time is spent getting students to the point where they can learn.

Mrs. Clark stated she likes to do projects with the students that are fun and interactive so the students had to design a zoo and learn facts and classifications of animals.

## **STAFFING**

RESIGNATIONS – Mr. Ator recommended acceptance of the resignation of Tera Baver from the 7-12 English position.

Motion was made by Mariah Holdbrook, seconded by Joel Bertolino and carried unanimously to accept the resignation of Tera Baver from the 7-12 English position. (YES—Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO--none).

Mr. Ator recommended acceptance of the resignation of Kennedee Blankenship for the 7-12 History position.

Motion was made by Michelle Swansborough, seconded by Mariah Holdbrook and carried unanimously to accept the resignation of Kennedee Blankenship for the 7-12 History position. (YES—Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

Michelle Swansborough thanked Mrs. Baver and Mrs. Blankenship for their service and commitment to the students.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

ORDERS – Mr. Ator stated we will look at spring orders when we have a better idea what is left at year-end.

ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWALS – Mr. Ator recommended consent approval of membership dues for the following organizations if there is less than a 10% increase in those dues:

1. MHSA (School Sponsored Activities)
2. MQEC (Organization that holds legislature accountable for funding)
3. MTSBA (School Board's Support Organization)
4. MASBO (Business Officials support Organization)
5. MASS (Administrative Support Organization)
6. MTSSA (School Counselor Services)

Motion was made by Michelle Swansborough, seconded by Joel Bertolino and carried to approve renewal of organizational dues as recommended by the superintendent. (YES – Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Holdbrook. NO—Dobbel).

JPT HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL – Mr. Ator recommended approval of the health insurance proposal from the Joint Powers Trust for the 2024-2025 school year with a 9% increase in premiums.

Motion was made by Mariah Holdbrook, seconded by Joel Bertolino and carried unanimously to approve acceptance of the health insurance proposal from the Joint Powers Trust for the 2024-2025 school year with a 9% increase in premiums. (YES—Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

CLERK EVALUATION – The date for evaluation of the Business Manager/Clerk was set for May 1, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

SUBDIVISION REVIEW – Mr. Ator recommended approval of the Miller Montana Ranch Subdivision as it won't have an impact on the district.

Motion was made by Joel Bertolino, seconded by Mariah Holdbrook and carried unanimously to approve the Miller Montana Ranch Subdivision. (YES—Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

### **OLD BUSINESS**

AG BUILDING ROOF – Mr. Ator stated the estimate of damage last year to the Ag-Shop roof was \$48,000 with \$6000 for additional items and the insurance paid around \$23,000. He added bids for labor for taking the roof off and putting it back on came in at \$14,000 from Covenant Builders and \$10,526.00 from A-Team Roofing and Solar and recommended the bid from A-Team be accepted.

Motion was made by Mariah Holdbrook, seconded by Nick Dobbel and carried unanimously to accept the bid from A-Team Roofing and Solar for labor for the Ag-Shop in the amount of \$10,526.00. (YES—Swansborough, Crane, Bertolino, Dobbel, Holdbrook. NO—none).

### **SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

NEXT MEETING DATES – May 15, June 19, and July 17.

SUPERINTENDENT SCHEDULE – Mr. Ator stated he will be on paternity leave in a few weeks and there are times he will be unreachable.

LEVY UPDATE – Mr. Ator stated an error was made on a slide for the community meeting and stated he feels we need to admit there was a mistake and not point fingers as it was unintentional.

POWER SCHOOL VS INFINITE CAMPUS – Mr. Ator stated there have been changes made in state reporting which makes it necessary to input information twice if PowerSchool is being used instead of Infinite Campus. He added he is looking for support from the board to move to Infinite Campus as it may offer a better product and is less costly.

Michelle Swansborough stated we need to look at anything that is a better product and can save us money.

PROPERTY AND LIABILITY INSURANCE – Mr. Ator stated we haven't gotten a quote for property and liability coverage from our present carrier yet we did receive a huge increase last year and asked if we should be looking at another carrier.

The board indicated it would be a good idea to get a second quote.

ALLIANCE FOR CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT – Mr. Ator stated he would like to see about getting about three years of dues for ACE, our curriculum consortium, to pay ahead as it is an allowable expense under the literacy grant.

VALEDICTORIAN SELECTION PROCEDURE – Mr. Ator stated valedictorian/salutatorian criteria calls for the student to have attended Roberts High School for a minimum of four consecutive semesters during the junior and senior years, complete four years of math, science, English, and history and have the highest GPA (valedictorian) and second highest GPA (salutatorian). He stated this year's top six seniors didn't complete a fourth year of math so haven't met the requirement but it also hasn't been met in previous years so we either have to communicate the requirement better or change it. He added one student hasn't attended four consecutive semesters and was aware of the requirement when enrolling.

Mr. Ator stated four individuals have a GPA of at least 3.9 and perhaps we look at co-valedictorians and co-salutatorians.

Joel Bertolino and Brandon Crane stated the first requirement should be enforced.

Michelle Swansborough stated we then need to look at the GPAs and not compromise any more than we have to.

COMMUNITY MEETING – Mr. Ator stated the Roberts Community Foundation is hosting a community meeting on April 20 and asked if two trustees could attend.

Nick Dobbel and Brandon Crane both indicated they could attend.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Brandon Crane adjourned the meeting at 10:32 p.m.

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Board Vice Chair

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District Clerk