

April 9, 2024
REGULAR MEETING

The Board of Trustees of School District #4 and Forsyth High School District held a Regular Meeting on April 9, 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 | “ | “ |
| Doug Roberts, Trustee | “ | “ via Zoom |
| Kyle Fulton, Trustee | “ | “ |
| Ethan Bell, Trustee | “ | “ |

Absent:

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 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: Noah Taylor, Beth Hall, Serena Derricks, Wendy Killebrew, and Jan Banks

Guests present via ZOOM meeting:

Jayme Nelson, Patrick Nelson, Taylor Crawl, and Heather Ohs

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: Move item VIII, 2 d to after Admin Reports and move VIII 1 d to end of meeting

Consent Agenda

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

1. April bills in the amount of \$336,572.26 including warrants #49584 through #49632
2. Minutes for the: March 19, 2024 Regular Meeting
3. Warrant lists from 03/01/2024 through 03/29/2024 including the following:
-Claims 49546-49594 \$ 397,368.67*
-Payroll 313715 - 313727 \$ 15,629.12
[*Includes direct deposit check 49585 \$ 129,761.21]
4. Activity Cash Report
5. Rachel Santos resignation – Elementary Teacher
Erica Bidwell resignation – JH Boys Basketball Coach
Lynda Montgomery resignation – JH Girls Basketball Coach

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

Administrative Team Reports

K-6 Principal

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

- Mrs. Banks’ Ag I classes presented Farm Safety to the 2nd and 5th grades
- MS Music Festival in Colstrip
 - 6th grade band students attended
 - Students performed solos as well as small group performances
 - 5th grade percussion students participated
 - These students practiced before school to prepare for the festival
- Mrs. Bird invited parents in to paper mache’ with the 1st grade students
- Student of the Month for March was held
 - Deputy Logan Dutton was our community guest speaker
- 3rd quarter Academic Awards were given out
 - High Honors - 31% of the students
 - Honors - 41% of the students
 - Total - 73% of the students received E, S+, A or B
 - HAY (High Achieving Youth) - 54% of the students
 - Student need to maintain or improve their grades
 - Hay bales with their names fill the barn in the main hallway
- Whole District Interactive Activity - goal for one of our school improvement teams
 - JH/HS students were invited to participate in activities at the elementary school
 - K, 2, 3 and 6th grade students read with their JH/HS partners
 - 1st grade read and played card games
 - 4th grade played board games
 - 5th grade taught the JH/HS students a card game

7-12 Principal

Aaron Morgenstern presented the 7-12 Principal’s Report

Enrollment

JH/44

HS/100

Total/144

All ACT and pACT testing are finished, we will be working on the JH MAST tests here over the next several weeks

Spring Activities are in full swing Mr. Hess will talk more about those

The band and choir concert is tomorrow night, and they will be attending District music festival next Friday and Saturday.

Mrs. Seleg, Mrs. Trieble and myself attended a really good training on MTSS. Multi-tiered systems of support and the end of March hosted by OPI. Learned a lot about support systems to help with educational and behavioral challenges at school and accommodations and plans that would help them function in the general school setting better.

Students went over to the Elementary school today and read or played games with all the elementary students for an hour. Thank you, Mrs. Seleg, for inviting us over to read and interact with your students.

Activities Director -

Chris Hess

Spring Sports numbers

HS Track – 16 boys, 13 Girls

JH Track- 13 boys, 13 girls

HS Golf – 18 Boys, 3 Girls

HS Tennis – 10 Girls

We have had a few cancellations and reschedules - our JV golf was cancelled but we have another meet at the end of the month.

-The PreFestival concert is tomorrow night at 6pm - auditorium -

Proactive Coaching – I met with the Booster Club last month, and they agreed to sponsor Proactive Coaching and do a clinic for our students in activities, our coaches and sponsors, and our parents. This 1st session will take place on May 8th. 4-5 pm will be all students in activities, 5 pm-6 pm will be coaches and sponsors, and at 6:30 pm, they will present to parents and community members at the annual Booster Bash. This has been identified as a character and leadership-based program that aligns with our strategic planning data, aiming to improve respect, leadership, and culture in our school system.

Schedules – I was hoping to have all Fall and Winter schedules finalized by this meeting but I’m still waiting for confirmation from a few teams and have a couple dates to reschedule. Will have them to you soon.

District Clerk/Business Manager

Stacy Montgomery presented the Business Manager’s report

- Preparing for upcoming election to be held May 7th
- Out of district agreements have been sent to families for next year
- Quarterly payroll reports completed
- ESSER Data Collection report completed

Superintendent-

Chris Hess presented the Superintendent’s report

Reader Board – Sign poles are set to go up this week; everything seems to be moving along as planned, with the project being completed by June 30th. Again, most of this reader board has been funded by grants from Rosebud County Health. The Booster Club and Chamber of Commerce are also contributing funds to aid this project, which will be located at the corner of IGA at the intersection where the current IGA sign currently sits.

MSGIA – Last week, Stacy Montgomery and I met with Brenda Koch of MSGIA. We have not had any major workman comp claims. Premium will remain similar.

The Two items she wanted to visit on, were workers comp for student interns or students on work release and forming a threat assessment team to assess students displaying threatening behavior.

HB 283 was recently passed in the legislature, and the new change concerns student interns working in a “non-paid” student learning opportunity with a local business. Under the recently passed bill, the business and the school district will need to sign a written agreement affirming which entity will provide the workers’ compensation for the student internship.

- 1) The business pays and covers the student interns on the business workers' comp.

- 2) The business signs a written agreement with the school district affirming that the student internship is a non-paid position and that the business is electing to provide coverage using a volunteer endorsement on the business's workers comp policy.
- 3) The school district signs a written agreement with the local business affirming the district will pay for the non-paid position using a volunteer endorsement on the school's workers comp policy.

Bleacher Grant – Forsyth Fair Manager Chaun Scott and I have been collaborating to find funding for portable bleachers. These bleachers would be for the visitor side fans for Forsyth Football games and shared with the Fairgrounds and FFA for events. Shelly Weight is writing grants for schools and taking over this project's grant writing at basically no cost, for which I am extremely grateful. She is still very passionate about trying to help our school out. We are applying for the Community Investment Program Grant to purchase Fold and Tow Bleachers with a 107-seat capacity.

Community Foundation Grant—I applied for the CFNRC and Edna Olson Fund Grants to finish the Northeast Side of the Elementary Playground with a Privacy Fence. We were awarded \$3,000 for this project. The Estimate for this project came in at \$5,157, so the school will pay \$2,200 towards this project. Quade Stephens will again be installing the privacy fence, which will begin in late spring and continue into early summer.

HS Main Doors—Dale and Jax finally installed our new HS doors. This is a vast improvement, and our building is finally secure. We have had a few minor issues, and they will be back to touch up the hardware so that it opens and closes more efficiently.

Accreditation – The new accreditation procedure has been completed and was submitted. This was a gigantic and time-consuming process; however, with the district entering into strategic planning, it did check a lot of boxes of items we needed to complete. They have not indicated when we will get an accreditation report back. From my understanding, we will be granted accreditation status for a year or up to 3 years before we have to go through the accreditation process again.

Student

Personnel

Old Business - none

New Business

Consider Re-Hiring Certified Tenure Staff for the 2024-25 School Year:

The following individuals were presented for rehire for the 2024-25 school year:

Tenured K-6

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Erica Bidwell | Karen Harms | Jayne (Nelson) Sievers |
| Kelsey Bird | Karilea Hutchins | Karlene Steiger |
| Kaybree Cole | Amy Jones | Kayla (Stevens) Stephenson |
| Beth Hall | Kaylee Keefer | |

Tenured 7-12

| | | |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| Jan Banks | Eric Herndon | Matt Radue |
| Andrew Buck | Wendy Killebrew | Andrea Schacht |
| Shane Cole | Kim Knoche | Susan Treible* |
| Molly Fay* | Lynda Montgomery | |

*Denotes K-12 Shared Staff

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to approve the re-hiring of the Certified Tenure Staff for the 2024-25 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Re-Hiring Certified Non-Tenure Staff for the 2024-25 School Year:

The following individuals were presented for rehire for the 2024-25 school year:

| Non-Tenured 7-12 | Up for Tenure |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Serena Derricks | Amber Icopini |
| Stephanie Hess | Tina Zent |
| Joelle Neuman | |

Kyle Fulton moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve the re-hiring of the Certified Non-Tenure Staff for the 2024-25 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Certified Staff

Idzel Ferrer is a non-tenured teacher that was not recommended for renewal in the 2024-25 school year.

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to approve the non-renewal of Idzel Ferrer for the 2024-25 school year without cause. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried

Consider Hiring Elementary Teacher

Chris Hess, Aaron Morgenstern, and Dixie Seleg conducted an interview with Noah Taylor. It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve to hire Noah Taylor for the vacant elementary (3rd grade) teaching position for the 2024-25 school year.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Doug Roberts to approve the hiring of Noah Taylor as an elementary teacher for the 2024-25 school year. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Hiring Fall and Winter Coaches

The following individuals were recommended for Head coaches for the 2024-25 season

Head Football – Shane Cole
Head Volleyball – Stephanie Hess
Head HS Girls Basketball – Rian Pinkerton
Head HS Boys Basketball – Eric Lawrence
Head Cheerleading – Morgan Hubbard
Head Speech and Drama – Tina Zent
Head HS Wrestling – Ben Reilly
JH Head Football – Pete Fritz
JH Head Volleyball – Jayme Nelson
JH Head Wrestling – Ben Reilly

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Kyle Fulton to approve the hiring of Shane Cole, Stephanie Hess, Rian Pinkerton, Eric Lawrence, Tina Zent, Ben Reilly, and Jayme Nelson as Head coaches for the 2024-25 season. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve the hiring of Pete Fritz as Head coach for the 2024-25 season. 4 trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Kyle Fulton abstained. Motion carried

Ethan Bell moved, seconded by David Sorenson to approve the hiring of Morgan Hubbard as Head coach for the 2024-25 season. 4 trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Jennifer Anderson abstained. Motion carried

Consider Hiring Summer Weight Room Supervisor

The weight room requires a supervisor during the summer to allow students to lift. Pete Fritz was recommended to be approved for the Summer Weight Room Supervisor.

David Sorenson moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to approve Pete Fritz as Summer Weight Room Supervisor for the 2024 summer. 4 trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Kyle Fulton abstained. Motion carried.

District

Old Business

Strategic Planning Update

Strategic Planning working group met Monday April 8. Group has begun writing action items for the next school year. The first category is culture/climate in our buildings based on the data collected from surveys and discussions throughout the strategic planning process.

Presented for informational purposes.

Capital Improvement – Building/Facilities Projects Review

The Board of Trustees received a report on the Long-Range Facilities Plan, recent updates, and a list of needed projects. Continued discussion will take place at upcoming Board meetings to prioritize needed projects and funding.

Presented for informational purposes

Trustee and Levy Election Update

To date, two candidates have applied for each of the two total available trustee positions. The last day for candidates to submit a “Declaration of Intent and Oath of Candidacy” has passed as well as the date for the filing of intent to be a write-in candidate.

As of April 4, the number of candidates filing a “Declaration of Intent and Oath of Candidacy” is equal to the number of open trustee position to be elected. It is expected at the regular May Board Meeting the Trustee Election will be declared Election by Acclamation. There will be no need to hold a Trustee Election.

At the Regular Board Meeting of March 19, 2024, the Board of Trustees made a motion to run both an Elementary and High School Building Reserve Safety levy in the amount of \$17,000.00 for each. Therefore, the District will move forward with the Elementary and High School Building Reserve Safety levy. Mail ballots will be sent out on April 22, 2024. Election day is May7th, 2024

For informational purposes.

Business Manager/Clerk Evaluation – moved to end of meeting

Executive session at 7:50 p.m. Reconvened at 8:04 p.m.

New Business

Consider Approving Out of Country Educational Trip

The Foreign Language teacher, Ms. Derricks provided information on an educational trip for the Spanish/French Class to Costa Rica or France during the summer of 2025-2026. Ms. Derricks asked for permission to pursue the project.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to pursue the project and report back with additional information. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried

Consider Approving Purchase of Yondr Cell Phone Bags

Mr. Hess presented to the Board of Trustees the information regarding the Yondr Cell Phone Bags. He stated: One of the main issues that our HS and JH teachers deal with daily is regulating school policy regarding student cell phone use, which was strongly indicated in our strategic planning surveys. The constant monitoring and impossibility of regulating cell phone use have damaged the relationships between students and staff, which is a massive component of school culture. Yondr Cell Phone Bags are essentially a bag we would issue students, which would then become their property. The student places the phone in the bag, which is then closed with a magnet. The phone is either locked in the bag, which the student could keep with them, or it's not. If not, the phone would be confiscated, and the student would be referred to the dispatch system. It was recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the purchase of the Yondr Cell Phone Bags.

Doug Roberts moved, seconded by David Sorenson to purchase the Yondr Cell Phone Bags funded by the Safety levy if passed or by grant money. If district funds are needed the item should be brought back before the Board. 4 trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Ethan Bell opposed. Motion carried.

Consider Colstrip Transportation Request

The Colstrip School District is requesting permission to transport students from the Forsyth School District to the Colstrip School District for the 2024-25 school year. It was recommended that the Board of Trustees deny the requested transportation agreement.

Kyle Fulton moved, seconded by Ethan Bell to deny the transportation request from the Colstrip School District. All trustees present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Consider Setting Up a Montana Community Foundation Endowment Fund

Heather Ohs and Taylor Crowls of the Montana Community Foundation presented information on a school endowment's setup.

An Endowment is a pool of charitable assets that are invested, with a portion made available for charitable purposes annually. It is held permanently, allowing donors to support causes that they care about in perpetuity. Essentially, this would allow people to donate to a school endowment, for which we would receive annual interest payments. \$25,000 is needed to begin, which can be accumulated over a 5-year period. In March each year, MCF pays out 4.5% of the fund's value.

This will be a continued board item.

Next Meeting

The next Regular Meeting will be Tuesday, May 14, 2024. The meeting will be held in Room 9 of the Middle School Building at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Montgomery
District Clerk/Business Manager

Jennifer Anderson
Chairman of the Board