

Frenchtown School Board of Trustees Meeting

March 21, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Middle School Shared Common Area

- I. **Call to Order:** The Regular School Board Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Jami Romney FitzGerald. Trustees Shiloh Lucier, Bryce Simpson, Jami Wright, Noah Peters, Rainier Batt and Amanda Hansen were in attendance. Also in attendance were Superintendent Les Meyer, Principals Jake Haynes, Aaron Griffin, Riley Devins and Jodi Hall, Assistant HS Principal Beth Terzo, Technology Coordinator James Forrider and District Clerk Shauna Anderson.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The meeting opened with the pledge at 7:00 p.m.
- III. **Board Recognition**

The board recognized FHS Basketball programs. Boys Basketball Coach Brandon Robbins discussed this season as the best overall season for boys' basketball in the last 17 years. The boys' team finished fourth at the State tournament, and did a great job representing the school and community. Players Joshua Lucier and Eli Quinn attended. Joshua Lucier discussed the successful season and how the team came together. Girls Basketball Coach Tim Yeager discussed the girls' success, winning the Divisional tournament and a game at State. It has been a pleasure to coach these players. Players Sadie Smith and Maja Skinner attended. Board members asked questions of the coaches and players and congratulated them for their success this season.
- IV. **Public Comment Period**

Damon and Crystal Leishman addressed the board to discuss drug usage in the school and a recent exposure by their student. Mr. Leishman wanted to call attention to the community and the board about this coming into Frenchtown and how drug usage in schools needs to be taken seriously. Ms. Leishman commended Administration for being proactive and asked for the Board's plan moving forward to address this issue. Trustee Shiloh Lucier discussed public comment for non-agenda items and explained that the Board cannot converse with the public on non-agenda items. The Leishman's were thanked for their time addressing the Board.
- V. **Individuals and Delegations to Address the Board**

Frenchtown Community Coalition representative Reagan Mecham thanked the Leishman's for coming forward with this difficult topic. Ms. Mecham discussed the dangers in the substances that students are exposed to and would like more action to address these dangers. An age specific brief presentation was sent to teachers to show students during National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week. Ms. Mecham was discouraged to hear that not all teachers presented this information. Questions were asked regarding usage in Frenchtown. Anonymous surveys are given to students annually, and the data will show where Frenchtown stands. School districts across the nation are experiencing this and the recent summer conference provided the FCC with valuable tools, much of which was increased disciplinary action. The FCC is looking to schedule speakers for next fall.
- VI. **Staff Presentation** – none.
- VII. **Approval of Minutes**

Jami Wright made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- VIII. **Administrative Reports**

Highlights of the administrative reports were 1) Maintenance Supervisor Sean Mecham discussed the numerous service contracts under review. Spring and summer projects will be underway soon. 2) Technology Coordinator James Forrider acknowledged the benefits of the Meraki AP's to be reviewed later on the agenda. 3) Administrative Reports: Questions were asked about paraprofessional staffing needs.

Currently, all schools are staffed and there are good, dedicated substitutes who have helped tremendously. Elementary Principal Jodi Hall discussed the excellent 98% turnout for parent/teacher conferences. Principal Riley Devins discussed upcoming spring concerts and the hard work of the music department to put these together. Principal Devins acknowledged the technology improvements at the Intermediate School with security cameras added to most areas of the building. MS Principal Aaron Griffin discussed the first round of SBAC testing for 8th grade science, as well as the MS Iron Bronc award and the service component required. Activities Director Eli Field commended the HS basketball teams for their seasons. Spring sports are underway and the first ever FHS baseball game was played tonight. HS Principal Jake Haynes discussed HS registration for next year and the ACT prep for the upcoming ACT test. New HS rankings will be released very soon. Questions were asked about weighted vs. unweighted grade point averages in the HS. FHS values honors and high honors courses. Colleges will unweight GPA's submitted, so these are not used at FHS since transcripts are normalized at the college level. Trustee Shiloh Lucier commended HS Counselor Robyn Richardson for the scholarship postings and availability. 4) Superintendent Les Meyer discussed paraprofessional hiring, with hires on the agenda tonight. The upcoming election is on May 2nd, with ballots mailed April 12th. Also discussed were HB549 and HB562 regarding charter schools. These are similar bills, with the main difference being HB549 requires a charter school to be administered by the Board of Education, whereas HB562 does not, nor does it require charter schools to accept children with disabilities. HB322 creating a statewide health insurance trust was also discussed and has been tabled in committee.

IX. **Business**

A. Old Business

1) Review/Action: Operational Mill Levy

The negotiations/finance committee has met several times since last summer. The District has not received an operational mill levy from the community in over 16 years. The amount received then is and was proportionately larger than the amount the District is asking for in the May election. Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the adoption of a resolution to impose an increase in local taxes to support the general fund in the amount of \$513,551 per year which is approximately 34.44 mills, for the purpose of addressing the operational needs of the school district due to aging facilities and increased maintenance costs, while retaining and recruiting staff to best serve students and programs. Ballot language was included in the board packet and will be posted to the website. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the operational mill levy request as presented. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the tremendous amount of work for a long period of time that has gone into this decision. This has not been an easy decision but it necessary at this time and is in the best interest of the District. Unanimous.

B. New Business

1) Review/Action: Donation of Winx Brand PlasmaWave Air Cleaners

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the donated air cleaners for the South campus years ago. The District is recommending donating these air cleaners to Climate Smart Missoula, who will refurbish them and donate them to people in need. The District recently received air purifiers that replaced these air cleaners. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the donation of Winx Brand PlasmaWave Air Cleaners as recommended. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding if the original donors were aware of this donation. Climate Smart Missoula was originally involved in the donation to the District. Unanimous.

2) Information/Discussion: Curriculum Review

The Curriculum Committee met earlier this evening and are reviewing materials for the ELA curriculum adoption. There will be professional development for this new curriculum at the end of summer. All novels under review for grades 7 – 12 are available in the Superintendent's office. There are two novels being considered for further review and there are enough copies for board trustees to receive and read the book prior to the next meeting.

3) Review/Action: MOA with Kalispell Schools – HOSA Transportation

- Kalispell schools has requested a MOA agreeing to Kalispell Public Schools providing transportation of the FHS HOSA club to the state convention. Superintendent Les Meyer recommended approval of the MOA. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the MOA with Kalispell Schools for HOSA transportation as recommended. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 4) Review/Action: Hiring Staff
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the following for hire: Student Custodian Hayden Bean, Sub Custodian Thomas Wikum, Non Certified Sub Teacher/Office Shannon Thane, Non Certified Sub Teacher Perrin Stein, Certified Sub Teachers Dave Duhamel and Kenneth Cox, Student Activities Worker Brody Hardy, MS Track Coach Conor Dwyer, Long Term Sub Virginia Tobiason, Classified Sub Kimberly Creighton, HS Head Girls Soccer Coach Michaela Delaney, HS Assistant Volleyball Coach Mariah Harvey, Assistant Transportation Coordinator Elysa Stoker, Custodian Ezra Marceau and Paraprofessional Jessica Horodyski. Jami Wright made a motion to approve the hires as listed. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the HS Soccer Coach position and clarification that this was for girls’ soccer. Conor Dwyer was congratulated for being inducted into the Missoula Mavericks Hall of Fame. Unanimous.
- 5) Review/Action: Hiring Tenured Certified Staff – 2023-2024
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended hiring tenured teachers listed in the board packet. Jami Wright made a motion to approve hiring the tenured teachers as recommended. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the phenomenal list of teachers on the list, and the trustees were very supportive of their hiring. Unanimous.
- 6) Review/Action: Hiring Administration for 2023-2024
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended hiring the following administrators: Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons, Principals Jodi Hall, Riley Devins, Aaron Griffin and Jake Haynes, Assistant Principal Beth Terzo and Activities Director Eli Field. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the administration hires as recommended. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the excellent administration in the District. Unanimous.
- 7) Information/Discussion: Resignations
The resignations of Kitchen Worker Kristine Staton-Santiago, Playground Aide David Fortner, Custodian Jeff Johnson, Bus Driver Todd Klietz, Administrative Payroll Assistant Sarah Niegel, and HS Science Teacher/Assistant Cross Country Coach Madeleine Moore were discussed. Also discussed were retirements of teachers Jeff Westrom and Roberta Chapman. These teachers have been with the District for many years, and will be difficult to replace.
- 8) Review/Action: Termination
Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the termination of Playground Aide Caitlin Switzer. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 9) Review/Action: Approve Purchases
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the following purchases:
Blackfoot Communications - \$56,068.51 for E-Rate Category purchases of Meraki MR36 AP WAPS, licenses, installation and configuration.
Harlow’s Bus Sales, Inc. - \$24,763.95 for a Lochinvar PBL 1501-M9 PWR-FIN Boiler
Systems Northwest, LLC - \$135,677.38 for a 2024 Integrated CE S Bus
Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the purchases as listed. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding clarifying that the bus purchase will be from the Bus Depreciation fund, specifically restricted to route bus purchases, and not from the General Fund. Trustees thanked Mechanic Jon Peterson for his work securing this purchase, saving the District funds and time. Unanimous.
- 10) Review/Action: Notice and Adoption of Non-Voted Levies
Business Manager Shauna Anderson discussed Board Policy 1014FE and Montana Code requiring the Board of Trustees to adopt a notice of intent to impose a change in the dollars and mills in non-voted funds for FY24 budget. Senate Bill 307 was discussed, the reasons for the notice,

transparency considerations and variables regarding these estimates. Discussion was held regarding the proposed notice, the upcoming mill levy request and the changes to the estimates anticipated for the FY24 budget cycle. Additional discussion was held regarding transparency considerations, levy change estimates and how this will change with the passage of the mill levy proposed in May 2023. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the required resolution of intent for funds with non-voted levies as presented. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

11) Review/Action: Set dates for building visits regarding maintenance and custodial and the current upkeep and status of buildings

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the need for a building walk through. Available dates were discussed, and May 11, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. beginning at the South campus was chosen. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve May 11, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. for the facility walk-through. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

X. **Policy Review – none.**

XI. **Approval of Warrants/Approval of Financial Report**

Jami Wright made a motion to approve the warrants and financial reports as presented. Shiloh Lucier seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

XII. **Committee Reports – Updated Committees**

- A. Policy (Shiloh Lucier, Jami Wright, Noah Peters)
- B. Insurance (Bryce Simpson, Amanda Hansen & Jami Wright)
- C. Negotiations/Labor Relations (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Bryce Simpson & Jami Wright)
- D. Transportation (Bryce Simpson & Rainier Batt)
- E. Safety (Bryce Simpson & Rainier Batt)
- F. School Improvement/Goals Committee (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Bryce Simpson & Noah Peters)
- G. Ad Hoc Committees – IT (Jami Romney FitzGerald & Amanda Hansen), Facilities – (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Bryce Simpson & Rainier Batt), Curriculum/Professional Development (Noah Peters & Amanda Hansen), Academic Achievement – (Shiloh Lucier, Noah Peters & Jami Wright), Wellness (Jami Romney FitzGerald & Shiloh Lucier).

Superintendent Les Meyer will be conducting a presentation on Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. regarding the upcoming operational mill levy election in the HS Auditorium. There will be an insurance committee meeting on March 28, 2023 for health insurance providers bid proposals.

XIII. **Adjournment**

ADJOURNED 8:45 p.m.

Approved: April 18, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Jami Romney FitzGerald
Board Chair

/s/ Shauna Anderson
District Clerk