

**SCHOOL DISTRICT 52
ENNIS, MADISON COUNTY, MONTANA
JANUARY 19, 2022**

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING 6:00 P.M.

Karen Ketchu	Chairperson – via zoom
Andrew Henrich	Vice-Chair
Halley Perry	Trustee
Dino Fanelli	Trustee
Kyle Stone	Trustee
Melissa Newman	Principal – via zoom
Brian Hilton	Principal
Casey Klasna	Superintendent
Ginger Martello	District Clerk

Vice-Chair Henrich called the meeting to order. The pledge to the flag was recited.

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Shawn Buller
Justin Gatewood
Amy Kelley
Abbi Thomas

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration to Approve Contract with Town of Virginia City

Superintendent Klasna informed the board Justin Gatewood has a proposal responding to the concerns the attorney and insurance company addressed in the prior contract. This proposal will only be in effect for the remainder of this school year.

Justin Gatewood thanked everyone. He said they pivoted after the district's advisors concerns with the contract, but he feels this is a workable proposal.

Discussion included, this is a proposal and not a contract, the drivers would be employees of the district, two regular drivers and one substitute driver, they would only drive the Virginia City route, no driving for activities, how to handle ensuring VC route would be the last cancelled in the future, pay at \$25 per hour is much higher than the district's highest paid driver, how to make it right with the district's current drivers, being fair to other staff, creating a snowball effect, not wanting disgruntled staff, looking at increasing pay next year for drivers, the cost to make right with two drivers for this year would be \$3,554 each, concerns with promising not to close the VC route and not being able to fulfill the promise,

need to have solutions before next fall, transportation fund covers drivers, only have so much money to work with for other staff, can't just raise more money, justify drivers pay-as only part-time employees and split shift with big responsibilities, pay stipend to adjust current drivers and not increase hourly wage this year, no one wants to cancel route, hardship on parents, all routes should have been looked at to close and maybe generate more interest, bond has nothing to do with wages its's capital improvements, keeping an open dialog, utilize the lessons learned, etc.

Public comment was heard from Amy and Scott Kelley, Abbi and Andy Thomas, Jessica Allen and Kate and Donny Steeley, their comments included, owning businesses they have had to raise wages to get and retain help, raising wages has to happen, need to get kids to and from school safely, only way some students get to school, kids need education, routine and friendship, no one else but Virginia City stepped up to help with a solution, some don't feel the district has done the best they can, they pay taxes and should be treated equally, keep the route running, transportation shouldn't be a privilege but a right, etc.

Trustee Stone made a motion to hire Robert Erdall, Greg Smart, and Eli Thompson as bus drivers for the Virginia City route and no activities for \$25 per hour for the remainder of the year, pending favorable background checks and proper certifications, and storing the bus in Bob Nevin's facility at \$250 per month. Trustee Perry seconded the motion. Mr. Gatewood was concerned the motion did not address moving the Virginia City route to the back of the line for closure. The trustees said this would not be in the motion, but they would make a good faith effort to honor that request. There are too many factors to set it in stone. Mr. Gatewood said he trusted the Superintendent and Board that this would be a condition to uphold to the best of their abilities. Vice-Chair Henrich called for the vote. All trustee present were in favor.

The board will discuss compensation for the current drivers at a duly noticed meeting.

As there was no other business for the attention of the board, the special meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

ATTEST

Ginger Martello, District Clerk

Karen Ketchu, Chairperson

Date Approved