

BILLINGS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
Minutes of Regular Meeting
May 9, 2023
UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
(Subject to review and revision by the board)

The regular meeting of the Billings County School Board was called to order by President Joey Kessel at 4:06 p.m. MT, Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at Prairie Elementary School in Fairfield, ND. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll call with board members Eric Bock, Jessie Evoniuk, Joey Kessel, Kwirt Johnson, and Kinley Slauter present. Also present for all or part of the meeting were Superintendent Shae Peplinski, Assistant Superintendent Danielle O'Brien, Business Manager Tammy Simnioniw, Maintenance Supervisor Bob Hushka, and Jada Maher.

The group toured the Prairie Elementary facilities.

The meeting convened in the Prairie library at approximately 4:45 p.m.

Bock moved, Johnson seconded, to approve the consent agenda, which included Minutes from the April 10 regular meeting and review of the Facilities Committee April 25 meeting Minutes, the payments list, the financial reports, and the addition of four agenda items. All in favor.

Preliminary drawings of proposed DeMores school expansion were reviewed and discussed. Johnson and Slauter will attend the June 6 county commission meeting along with Peplinski and Simnioniw to present the preliminary plans and request financial assistance. Evoniuk will be an alternate for the meeting.

Hushka gave a written and verbal maintenance report to the board. An excess property list was provided with suggestions for disposal. It was the consensus of the board to dispose of the property as proposed. They also asked that the activity bus be advertised for sale.

Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent contracts were tabled in light of new information regarding insurance rates. Negotiations will continue.

Peplinski reported that DeMores has a lock box with a key in it, but emergency personnel were unable to silence the fire alarm once entering the building with the lock box key. Training will be scheduled with emergency personnel to instruct on the fire alarm system.

O'Brien informed the board that the renewal contract with SMART Computers remained the same as the current contract with no increase in contract fees. Evoniuk moved, Bock seconded, to approve renewal of a two-year contract with SMART Computers for \$3,100 per month for Managed IT services. Roll call vote with all in favor.

O'Brien presented the 2023-24 technology budget and asked that it be given approval now so ordering could ensue. Bock moved, Evoniuk seconded, to approve the technology budget as presented. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Peplinski reported that she and Simnioniw had met with Danielle Kappel, the new Dickinson Public Library director, to discuss the 2023-24 library contract. Kappel will have the new proposed contract ready for the June meeting.

The board considered the Special Education Coordinator position. Slauter moved, Johnson seconded, to approve the addendum to the Superintendent contract in the amount of \$3,500 for Special Education Coordinator duties. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Peplinski asked the board to establish the starting wage for the Billy Jo Toso, DeMores para-professional, who will begin employment at the onset of the 2023-24 school year. Johnson moved, Bock seconded, to set the starting wage at \$16.00 per hour for this position. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Peplinski reported that Jada Maher would move from para position to preschool teacher position. Evoniuk moved, Bock seconded, to give Jada Maher a \$2.00 per hour raise for moving from para-professional position to preschool teacher position. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Classified staff wages were discussed. The financial committee consisting of Bock and Kessel recommended a \$1.00 per hour increase for all current hourly staff. Johnson moved, Slauter seconded, to approve the \$1.00 per hour increase. Roll call vote with all in favor.

The board then revisited the previous action of increasing Jada Maher's wages. With the \$1.00 increase, she would not then receive the full \$2.00 increase above current wage for moving to a more responsible position. Evoniuk moved, Bock seconded, to rescind the previous motion increasing Maher's wages by \$2.00 and made the motion to increase her wages to \$19.25 per hour, giving her a \$2.50 increase over current wages. Roll call vote with all in favor.

O'Brien informed the board that there was interest for 21 students to participate in summer tutoring and there were enough staff willing to provide this service. Johnson moved, Evoniuk seconded, to approve providing summer tutoring services paying each tutor \$25 per hour. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Peplinski and O'Brien reported on upcoming events including planned field trips, Kindergarten programs, and graduation on Wednesday, May 17 at 6:00 p.m. They also reported that Pete Odermann would like to meet with the transportation committee regarding his contract.

O'Brien reported that she submitted a Homeland Security Grant application for bullet proof film for windows and glass doors at both elementary schools. She will know by May 31 if it has been accepted to be moved to the next level of funding consideration.

The board considered the new contract terms for Dickie Jo Kubas who is filling the one day per week guidance counselor position. This is a hard to fill position and it was asked whether the board was in favor of bringing in all eleven years of prior teaching experience payable at \$550 per year of experience added to salary schedule. Evoniuk moved, Slauter seconded, to allow all eleven years of experience to be compensated for. Roll call vote with all in favor.

O'Brien reported that Jackie Wolf will do summer custodial work and is asking for additional staff to assist for an additional 60 hours over the summer. This was tabled.

Simnioniw reported that dental and vision insurance premium rates will remain the same for new plan year. Health insurance premiums will increase by 15% for the next biennium.

Simnioniw provided the board with a report on the \$6,306.66 rebate obtained for credit card usage through JP Morgan. NDPERS retirement rates may go up by 1% on the employer side beginning January 1, 2024. Also reported, seventy percent of any new money through state foundation aid must go for wages and compensation for non-administrative staff.

Peplinski gave the RESP report stating that a date in August was being finalized. The professional development day will be a one-day session. Salary negotiations were also ongoing.

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Kessel, Bock, and O'Brien gave the sports co-op report. The committee met with Belfield Public School committee members. The sports co-op committee proposed 2023-24 co-op fees based on expected participation as follows: South Heart co-op \$2,000; Belfield co-op \$8,000. Slauter moved, Johnson seconded, to approve the committee's recommendations. Roll call vote with all in favor.

The next meeting was originally scheduled for Tuesday, June 13. But after the meeting, it was realized there was a conflict so it is rescheduled for Monday, June 12 at DeMores School in Medora beginning at 4:00 p.m with tour of facilities.

Slauter moved, Bock seconded, to adjourn. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Joey Kessel, President

Tammy Simnioniw, Business Manager