



The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.

Board of Trustees – Executive Committee Meeting

May Butler Center | 55 S. Rodney Ave

Tuesday August 13, 2019 – 11:00 a.m.

MINUTES - APPROVED

I. ATTENDANCE

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair John McEwen, Trustee (not on committee)
Terry Beaver, Board Vice Chair Tyler Ream, Superintendent
Sarah Sullivan, Past Board Chair

II. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 11:10am by Chair, Luke Muszkiewicz.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

None present

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Muszkiewicz requested a change to paragraph three on page three, which stated “Mr. Muszkiewicz clarified that the process is to enter a closed session with the parents with whatever they provide as background information, then enter an open session with the administrative recommendation in which the board can either vote in favor of or against the waiver.” He requested the sentence be changed to reflect that Board of Trustees will enter a closed session if trustees would like to enter a discussion regarding specific students.

V. REVIEW OF 8.13.19 BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Mr. Muszkiewicz listed the educator awards and asked who will be attending. Dr. Ream answered that Jacob Warner will be unable to attend, but Mary McMahan and Linda Paull will both be in attendance. Helena High School Principal, Steve Thennis, will be there to present their awards.

Mr. Muszkiewicz clarified that minutes have been moved from Items for Action to Consent Items.

Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees

Luke Muszkiewicz
Board Chair

Terry Beaver
Vice Chair

Sarah Sullivan
Trustee

Jeff Hindoién
Trustee

Jennifer Walsh
Trustee

Libby Goldes
Trustee

John E McEwen
Trustee

Siobhan Hathhorn
Trustee

Mr. Muszkiewicz continued reviewing the agenda and referenced Action Items 1-4 as the budgets broken down by elementary school and high school. Dr. Ream added that it will make the most sense if Ms. Janelle Mickelson addresses the budget as a whole.

Dr. Ream stated that the Water Main Bid Award will be removed from Consent Items, adding that bids have been received but additional information has been requested. Mr. Muszkiewicz asked if it could be added to the next work session agenda, and Dr. Ream responded that there is no work session in August, so it will have to be moved to September. Mr. Beaver asked where specifically the water main break occurred, and Dr. Ream answered that there were actually two breaks, both of which occurred on the Helena High side of Montana Ave. Mr. Beaver inquired into whether the specs say they want the line deeper and whether all of the sidewalk clearing this winter expedited the break. Dr. Ream answered that the workers stated it was only a matter of time before the main broke; it was not due to conditions.

Mr. Muszkiewicz asked if questions could be asked about the water main break bid during the Facilities & Maintenance Report portion of the board meeting. Dr. Ream answered that he would have Kali Kind address the bid at this time.

Mr. Muszkiewicz asked if there were any questions regarding Action Items 1-4. Mr. McEwen asked, with regards to the Financial Summary Report, what he should be concerned about. Mr. Muszkiewicz answered that Janelle Mickelson will be able to answer any questions. Dr. Ream added that Ms. Mickelson will walk through each column of the reports and the next steps to be taken by the district. Ms. Sullivan recommended Mr. McEwen schedule a meeting with Ms. Mickelson to address any questions. Dr. Ream confirmed that it would be a good strategy. Mr. Muszkiewicz stated that the question comes down to whether this [the budget report] is an accurate document, adding that it is important to ask questions in board meetings that community members may want to know. Mr. McEwen referenced the budget and asked for clarification that there would be no new initiatives. Dr. Ream affirmed, adding that if so, they would be tucked into other line items like curriculum. Dr. Ream said that the biggest shift is in the high school budget and reminded the committee that this is the first year of declining admissions. He added that with shifting of costs at the elementary level and anticipated high school retirees, he hopes to stay solvent with the high school budget. Mr. Muszkiewicz said that the biggest question [that may be asked] with the budget may be “what’s the increase?” He asked if it was calculated in a different way than Bozeman as it was published in the Bozeman paper this morning. He stated a general fund increase of just .72%. Mr. McEwen asked what the budget process was at each school – whether each building administrator looked at their own budget and asked if any item on their wish list was dismissed. Dr. Ream answered that nothing was just tossed, just reduced or limited in some cases. He added that while most principals did a good job reducing budgets, the district works with a multi-million dollar budget.

Mr. Muszkiewicz continued down the agenda, stating that the Policy Committee is bringing forth six policies for first reading. He then asked if there were any questions on the fourteen consent items. Mr. Beaver questioned the Resolution to Dispose of Personal Property – Athletic Uniforms. Dr. Ream answered that he would confirm with Tim McMahon, but he believes the Activities Department has been storing these uniforms for decades, but rather than just disposing of them,

Tim McMahon felt it would be more transparent to allow individuals or groups to purchase them first. Mr. Beaver expressed concern that if whomever purchases/receives the uniform acts badly while wearing it, it could reflect poorly on the school and district. Dr. Ream requested clarification that wearing the uniforms would be perceived as different from wearing – for instance – a Bengals t-shirt. Mr. Beaver answered “yes,” and added that there are private schools who would buy and use them – they would just need uniforms of the same color. Dr. Ream asked if Mr. Beaver would like Mr. McMahon to call him regarding the issue. Mr. Beaver responded that it might be better to have Good Samaritan recycle the uniforms. Ms. Sullivan added that uniforms would have to be destroyed to be recycled, and she wasn’t sure if someone could request donations be destroyed or if it was at the discretion of Good Samaritan. Mr. Muszkiewicz added that old uniforms might have been sold at the Carnival Classic last year.

Mr. McEwen expressed concerns regarding quotes in minutes, stating that [quotes] are not well recorded. Dr. Ream mentioned that he has received public comments that more information provided in minutes is better, though he knows legal advice would err towards fewer specifics. Mr. Muszkiewicz suggested attempting to find a middle ground, adding that the standard should be that the public can know what happened during a meeting as long as it pertains to the actions taken at the meeting. Dr. Ream added that it won’t be too long before the board will have to host a live streaming of the meetings and provide a digital recording. In that case, people would be able to look at specific comments anyway. Mr. Muszkiewicz requested approved minutes be added to the website.

Mr. Muszkiewicz listed the committee reports that will/will not happen. Mr. Beaver added that though there will not be a Facilities & Maintenance Committee report, he will schedule a meeting. Ms. Sullivan said she will plan on announcing the first Teaching & Learning Committee meeting during that report. Dr. Ream added that Jane Shawn will not give a Helena Education Association report as she is currently out of town. During the Superintendent’s Report, Dr. Ream will provide an update on 7th Avenue, a Back to School update, and detail the change to convocation this year.

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Beaver questioned a perceived 28 retirees and 53 new hires. Dr. Ream clarified that the new hires were for positions from resignations and leaves, too. Mr. Beaver asked for the net increase, and Dr. Ream answered that he will confirm it is two at the elementary level.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 12:12pm by Mr. Muszkiewicz. The next Executive Committee Meeting will be 9.10.19.