



**Superintendent**

Rex Wertz  
324-2001

**Business Manager**

Janelle Mickelson  
324-2040

## **Board of Trustees Meeting**

Lincoln Center  
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601  
And on TEAMS

**Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
5:30 p.m.

### **MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE – Present unless otherwise noted.**

Siobhan Hathhorn, Chair  
Kay Satre, Trustee  
Janet Armstrong, Trustee  
Linda Cleatus, Trustee  
Jeff Hindoien, Trustee  
Terry Beaver, Trustee  
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee

Luna Hernandez, Capital High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees  
Willa Bishop, Helena High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees

Rex Wertz, Superintendent  
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director  
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager  
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff  
Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology  
Jane Shawn, HEA President  
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director  
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer  
Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs  
Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Administrator  
Robert Worthy, General Manager Sodexo School Services  
Tim McMahon, Activities Director  
Many guests of the public as well as Helena School District staff

**I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. REVIEW AGENDA**

The Board of Trustees reviewed the agenda and no changes were requested.

**III. OATH OF OFFICE FOR 2023-2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Luna Hernandez was sworn in as the 2023-2024 Board of Trustees Student Representative for Capital High School.

**IV. PRESENTATION**

Robert Worthy, General Manager of Sodexo School Services, gave a presentation to the Board of Trustees. Robert Worthy reviewed the Future Chefs program with the Board of Trustees. Mr. Worthy said they received 46 applications and only the top 12 can compete. The top 12 students were invited to cook their culinary masterpieces in the base kitchen and then present them to the public. Judging was based on originality, healthy, easy preparation, kid friendly, plate presentation, and people's choice award. Three high school culinary students and two diatetic interns volunteered to be team mentors/Sous Chefs and worked directly with each team to help inspire these young students to realize their potential in the culinary arts. Mr. Worthy reviewed some of the challenges experienced during COVID including supply chain shortfalls. Mr. Worthy discussed equipment replacement. During COVID reimbursable meals had a much higher rate and all extra money made from reimbursable meals must go back into the School Meal Program as per the written regulations by the USDA. An initial draft for a three-year replacement/purchase plan has been made to help replace aging equipment and purchase new equipment they have not had. Mr. Worthy mentioned that he has brought on an in-house baker, and reviewed some changes being made at Helena High. They are restructuring the main line to increase speed, all bread for their daily sandwiches will be fresh baked at the base kitchen and delivered daily, they will serve hand made whole grain pizzas, they will complete a new a la cart program to help encourage students to stay on campus, there will be a breakfast and lunch station for reimbursable or non-reimbursable meals out of the lunchroom every day, there will be a new high school pre-order meal program for students and adults, and they are working on a new composting/washable program along with Mrs. Van Alstyne's Green Group. Mr. Worthy moved on to discuss the school food forum. He will be holding the third open forum set to be open to the public hopefully in October or November. The last one was in 2018. There will possibly be two sessions, one in the day and one in the evening. The general purpose is to answer questions about how food service works in our Helena schools and they will have a facilitator to help keep the meeting on task and on time. Mr. Worthy said he will be working with the District Wellness Committee and the Helena Kids Nutrition Coalition. The location is yet to be determined but it will be advertised and open to the public. Mr. Worthy discussed scratch cooking and every week they create three to five main even meals at the base kitchen and reviewed special dietary needs and nurse assistance in the district. Mr. Worthy concluded his presentation by discussing how they are going green at most locations, reviewing the summer program, and culinary teaching that occurs in the schools.

## V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Rex Weltz gave his report to the Board of Trustees. The information presented included:

- Recognition
  - o Thank you to Boeing for their generous donation to Helena Public Schools. This donation will go towards a state-of-the-art machining system at Helena High School, and the grant will help bring interest in trade programs to middle schools around the district.
  - o HEF's integral effort to apply and receive the Boeing Grant
  - o Business Office – Close-Out 2022-23 / Start-Up 2023-24 Budgets
  - o Facilities and Maintenance – Summer Work
  - o Teachers and Staff – Professional Development Investment
  - o Jeremy Bullock Safety Summit
    - o Facilities, Technology, Food Service, Chief of Staff
    - o 20+ Administrators/Directors and School Psychologists
- New Business
  - o School Administrators of Montana Administrators Institute 2023 July 24th-July 26th
  - o Jeremy Bullock Safe Schools Summit
    - o August 8th- August 9th at Central Elementary School
  - o 2023-2024 District Calendar “Year in Review”
  - o HEA / HSD Mediation Update
  - o Summer Professional Development Implementation
  - o Budget Recommendation Consensus Committee
    - o August 21st, 2023
  - o Facilities Master Plan Meetings - SMA
  - o 2023-2024 Planning Process
  - o Reorganize our central office team
  - o All Administration Meetings-August 14th and August 18th
  - o Monday and Tuesday, August 28th / 29th Welcome Back Convocation Tour Across The District
  - o Artspace Study-Affordable Arts Housing & Workspaces in Helena-May Butler Center
- Outreach/Meetings
  - o Cabinet & Leadership
  - o Board Leadership
  - o AA Superintendents
  - o Hometown Helena
  - o Lewis and Clark Board of Health
  - o HEA President/Superintendent Meeting
  - o Rotary Club
  - o Back to School Media Interviews
  - o SMA
  - o Media – TV

That concluded the Superintendent's Report portion of the agenda. The Trustees moved on to hear general public comment.

## **VI. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no general public comment and the Board of Trustees moved on to review the Consent Action Items.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Consent Action Items**

1. Personnel Actions
2. Warrants
3. Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Non-Resident Students Attending HPS)
4. Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Students Attending Other Districts)
5. Resolution to Dispose of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym Furniture
6. 06.26.23 Special Board Meeting Minutes
7. 07.27.23 Full Board Meeting Minutes

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "At this point I would entertain a motion to approve our Consent Action Items."

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoen moved to approve the Consent Action Items as presented. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

That concluded the Consent Action Items. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the Items for Action.

### **B. Items for Action**

1. Consider Approval of Lease Proposals for Ray Bjork Learning Center

Mr. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Consider Approval of Lease Proposals for Ray Bjork Learning Center* to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Verrill reviewed the proposals received for the Ray Bjork Learning Center. The Board of Trustees reviewed proposals received from Rocky Mountain Development Council (Entire School) and St. Peter's Health. At the August 1<sup>st</sup> Facilities and Maintenance Committee meeting, the committee reviewed a total of four proposals, and the Rocky Mountain Development

Council (Entire School) and St. Peter's Health were the final two proposals that the Facilities and Maintenance Committee recommended be brought to the full board for review tonight. Mr. Verrill reviewed the proposed use from each proposal, as well as the occupancy schedule, lease, payment, and improvement information provided. Mr. Verrill explained the evaluation methodology and the decision support matrix that was used to make a recommendation. Mr. Verrill stated that the superintendent and district administration recommends the proposal from St. Peter's Health to lease the Ray Bjork Learning Center. Mr. Verrill stated this proposal offers the best combination of criteria to include an excellent financial proposal, a good alignment with district mission and principals, excellent maintenance of improvements to the facility, and a high impact to the Helena community. The Trustees proceeded with any comments or questions related to this action item.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn asked if there was any public comment regarding this action item.

**Public Comment:** Ms. Peggy Hollow-Phelps gave public comment. Ms. Hollow-Phelps is here tonight to show support for RMDC Head Start to be the next occupant of the Ray Bjork Learning Center. Ms. Hollow-Phelps worked for 25 years in the Special Education preschool program, working side by side with Head Start and saw the value of having those early years of high-quality education for children at risk.

Ms. Jane Shawn, HEA Union president, gave public comment. Ms. Shawn said under the St. Peter's proposal there was discussion that St. Peter's employees' children are not the only ones allowed to use the facility, but she assumes they would get first preference. Ms. Shawn asked under this lease agreement would Helena School District employees get second preference to use the facility for their children in the daycare.

That concluded public comment on this action item.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the superintendent's recommendation that we move forward with St. Peter's Health in starting negotiations over a lease agreement for the Ray Bjork building as presented."

Trustee Jennifer Walsh stated that she would abstain from voting because the Ray Bjork Learning Center is considered an elementary district building, and Trustee Jennifer Walsh is a trustee for the high school district.

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien moved to approve the superintendent's recommendation that we move forward with St. Peter's Health in starting negotiations over a lease agreement for the Ray Bjork building as presented.

Trustee Terry Beaver seconded the motion.

**In Favor:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien, Trustee Terry Beaver, Trustee Linda Cleatus, Trustee Janet Armstrong

**Opposed:** Trustee Kay Satre, Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn

**Abstained From Voting:** Trustee Jennifer Walsh

**Vote:** 4-2 motion passes (*please note that Board Chair Hathhorn stated in error the final vote was 5-1*)

## 2. Consider Approval of Lease Proposals for 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym

Mr. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Request for Proposals for 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym* to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Verrill moved on to review the proposals received for 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym. The Board of Trustees reviewed proposals received from Queen City Football Club (QCFC) and the Helena Community Hub Working Committee (HCHWC). At the August 1st Facilities and Maintenance Committee meeting, the committee reviewed these two proposals, and recommended that they both be brought to the full board for review tonight. Mr. Verrill reviewed the proposed use from each proposal, as well as the occupancy schedule, lease, payment, and improvement information provided. Mr. Verrill explained the evaluation methodology and the decision support matrix that was used to make a recommendation. Mr. Verrill stated that the superintendent and district administration recommend the proposal from Queen City Football Club to lease 7th Avenue Gym. Mr. Verrill stated this proposal offers the best combination of criteria to include a good financial proposal, good alignment with district mission and principals, outstanding maintenance of and improvements to the facility, and high impact to the Helena community. The Trustees proceeded with any comments or questions related to this action item.

Trustee Janet Armstrong stated that she has coached with Queen City Football Club and would like to therefore abstain from voting. Trustee Jennifer Walsh stated she would abstain from voting because 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym is considered an elementary district building, and Trustee Jennifer Walsh is a trustee for the high school district.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. “I would entertain a motion to approve the superintendent’s recommendation that we move forward with Queen City Football Club (QCFC) in starting negotiations over a lease agreement for the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym building as presented.”

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoen moved to approve the approve the superintendent’s recommendation that we move forward with Queen City Football Club (QCFC) in starting negotiations over a lease agreement for the 7th Avenue Gym building as presented. Trustee Linda Cleatus seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** Ms. Bridget Johnston gave public comment. Ms. Johnston is the president of the Queen City Football Club (QCFC) and has had three of her children attend Helena Public Schools. Ms. Johnston stated that they are very excited about the possibility of moving into the gym and that the timing is perfect for their club, and they are excited to bring something that is currently not offered in downtown Helena. Ms. Johnston stated they are a locally operated nonprofit charity organization, and they service youth from all over the town and county. Ms. Johnston stated that they looked at the parking around 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym and it would be good for them as most of their activities are offered after school hours, in the evenings, and on the weekends. Ms. Johnston concluded by stating that they would not use the showers in 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym and would just want to use the locker rooms downstairs.

That concluded public comment on this action item.

**In Favor:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien, Trustee Linda Cleatus, Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn, and Trustee Kay Satre

**Opposed:** Trustee Terry Beaver

**Abstained From Voting:** Trustee Janet Armstrong and Trustee Jennifer Walsh

**Vote:** 4-1 motion passes

3. Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-Elementary Fiscal Year 2022-23

Ms. Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager for Helena Public Schools, presented the action items *Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-Elementary Fiscal Year 2022-23* and *Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-High School Fiscal Year 2022-23* to the Board of Trustees.

Background:

School districts account for the receipt and disbursement of all money belonging to the district in accordance with the methods prescribed by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). The Trustees' Financial Summary (TFS) is the annual financial report prescribed by the OPI.

Considerations:

- Pursuant 20-9-213(6), MCA, the board of trustees transmit the TFS to the county superintendent of schools no later than August 15th and to the OPI no later than September 15th.
- Trustees are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and prompt submission of the TFS.
- Subsequent amendments to the TFS made by the clerk of the district are considered officially made on behalf of the trustees. The Teacher's Retirement System (TRS) has not provided pension information yet. The TFS will need to be updated once the information is released.
- The deadline for amendments is December 10th.

Ms. Mickelson concluded by answering any questions the Trustees had about these action items.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-Elementary Fiscal Year 2022-23* as presented."

**Motion:** Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the action item *Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-Elementary Fiscal Year 2022-23* as presented. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Abstained From Voting:** Trustee Jennifer Walsh abstained from voting because this is an action item for the elementary district and she is a trustee for the high school district.

**Vote:** 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

4. Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-High School Fiscal Year 2022-23

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-High School Fiscal Year 2022-23* as presented."

**Motion:** Trustee Terry Beaver moved to approve the action item *Certify the Trustees' Financial Summary-High School Fiscal Year 2022-23* as presented. Trustee Jeff Hindoien seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

5. Final Budget Adoption-Elementary Fiscal Year 2023-24

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the action items *Final Budget Adoption-Elementary Fiscal Year 2023-24* and *Final Budget Adoption-High School Fiscal Year 2023-24* presented by Business Manager Janelle Mickelson. Ms. Mickelson reviewed and discussed in detail various funds including general, transportation, tuition, retirement, adult education, technology, flexibility, debt service, and building reserve and answered any questions the trustees had about the *Final Budget Adoption-Elementary Fiscal Year 2023-24* and *Final Budget Adoption-High School Fiscal Year 2023-24*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Final Budget Adoption-Elementary Fiscal Year 2023-24* as presented."

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien moved to approve the action item *Final Budget Adoption-Elementary Fiscal Year 2023-24* as presented. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Abstained From Voting:** Trustee Jennifer Walsh abstained from voting because this is an action item for the elementary district and she is a trustee for the high school district.

**Vote:** 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

6. Final Budget Adoption-High School Fiscal Year 2023-24

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Final Budget Adoption-High School Fiscal Year 2023-24* as presented."



**Motion:** Trustee Jennifer Walsh moved to approve the action item *Final Budget Adoption-High School Fiscal Year 2023-24* as presented. Trustee Jeff Hindoien seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

#### 7. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Painters Collective Bargaining Agreement

The Board of Trustees reviewed the action item *Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Painters Collective Bargaining Agreement* presented by Ms. Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director for Helena Public Schools.

Background:

Pursuant MCA 39-31-306, an agreement reached by the public employer and the exclusive representative must be reduced to writing and must be executed by both parties. The Helena School District and the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 82 reached a tentative agreement on July 25, 2023. The Painters (2 members) unanimously ratified the tentative agreement to the contract and notified us on July 25, 2023. The District negotiation team recommends ratification.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. “I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Painters Collective Bargaining Agreement* as presented.”

**Motion:** Trustee Janet Armstrong moved to approve the action item *Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Painters Collective Bargaining Agreement* as presented. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

That concluded the Items for Action, and the Board of Trustees moved on to Reports.

### C. REPORTS

#### 1. Student Representatives Reports

There were no Student Representatives Reports given.

#### 2. Helena Education Association Report

There was no Helena Education Association Report given.

3. Facilities and Maintenance Committee Report  
Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn stated that at the August 1<sup>st</sup> Facilities and Maintenance Committee meeting they reviewed the requests for proposals for Ray Bjork Learning Center and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gym and narrowed down which proposals would be presented before the full board tonight and SMA Architecture gave an update on the Facilities Master Plan.
4. Budget and Finance Committee Report  
Trustee Janet Armstrong stated that the Budget and Finance Committee did not meet in July or August and there was no report given, however, the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee will meet next week.
5. Policy Committee Report  
The Policy Committee did not meet in July or August and there was no report given.
6. Teaching & Learning Committee Report  
The Teaching & Learning Committee did not meet in July or August and there was no report given.
7. Health Benefits Committee Report  
The Health Benefits Committee did not meet in July and there was no report given, however, the Health Benefits Committee will be meeting at the end of August.
8. Wellness Committee Report  
Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn gave the Wellness Committee Report. At the meeting they outlined new goals including a monthly communication about the Health and Wellness programs and information that is pertinent to families which will be distributed to Principals to include in their monthly newsletters. They are also working on a competition that will motivate students to do their own cooking and investigate and explore healthy foods. On October 10<sup>th</sup> there will be a food forum to talk about food in our schools and the location is to be determined.
9. Montana School Boards Association Report  
Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn stated that the Montana School Boards Association had their regional meeting and that was all that she had to report for MTSBA.

That concluded the Reports portion of the agenda. The Board of Trustees moved on to review upcoming meetings.

## **VII. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn reviewed upcoming meetings with the Board of Trustees.

- Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 p.m., Policy Committee Meeting, Lincoln Center
- Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 p.m., Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting, Lincoln Center
- Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 p.m., Facilities and Maintenance Committee Meeting, Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m., Executive Committee Meeting, Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 p.m., Budget and Finance Committee Meeting, Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p.m., Full Board Meeting, Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Board Work Session, Time & Location To Be Determined

## **VIII. BOARD COMMENTS**

There were no further board comments.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

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Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary

Date