

BLACK BUTTE SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 41  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Camp Sherman, Oregon

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**  
**January 9, 2024 APPROVED**

**Board Members Present:**

Bear Brown, Chair; Karen Lajoy, Vice-Chair; Gary Lovegren (via Zoom);  
Siobhan Gray; Pamela Lovegren (via Zoom)

**Staff Members Present:**

Delaney Sharp, Head Teacher;  
Simon Levear, Business Manager (via Zoom); Daniel Petke, Substitute Bus Driver (4:30)

**Consultant/Community/Public Present:**

Amy K. Walker, CPA, of Solutions Certified Public Accountants, PC (via Zoom);  
Steve Earle, HMK Company

**OPENING OF REGULAR SESSION BOARD MEETING**

Board Chair Bear Brown called the Regular Session of the Black Butte School District Board of Directors to order at 3:30 p.m.

**ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA**

- None.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Karen Lajoy: Moved to adopt the proposed agenda. Siobhan Gray: Seconded. All in favor. Agenda adopted.

**COMMUNICATION**

The Board of Directors reserves this time for citizens, parents, or staff to speak to the Board on concerns of the agenda items. After concerns on the agenda items are heard, the Board may hear concerns on non-agenda items. Please note that because of privacy and due process rights, the Board will *not* hear complaints about individual school personnel, nor against any member of the school community. We also will *not* hear compliments about individual staff members. In either case, the Board asks that you first contact the District office about such matters. The Board does not take action on these communications at this meeting. The Board may put concerns and topics related to communication on future agendas for discussion and possible action. We would appreciate you keeping comments to three (3) minutes per individual or five (5) minutes if you are representing a group of patrons.

- None.

**AUDIT PRESENTATION BY ZOOM**

Simon and Bear introduced Amy K. Walker, CPA, of Solutions Certified Public Accountants, PC. The auditor highlighted several points in a PDF presentation emailed before the meeting. Board members and staff offered questions and comments.

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- Simon said that it's been great working with Solutions CPA on the audit process; we've got a good process set up.
- Amy K. Walker, CPA, gave a succinct presentation of the audit results, going over the document item by item. (See Black Butte School District No. 41 Audit Presentation.)
- Solutions CPA didn't make a site visit this year; they got everything via the Infinite Visions read-only method (Infinite Visions is used by many school districts, including BBSD). Traveling conditions from John Day can be difficult.
- Pamela asked about the change in net position (\$69,688) on Page 8. Simon explained that much of that was for the playground, which became an asset.
- Gary asked if we require two signatures on all of the checks. Simon said that we don't. Every time that we do a check run, he emails the list of checks to Bear for approval, questions, etc., before the checks are printed and mailed. Also, Kirstin reviews all of the bank records every month. All of our finances are held in two bank accounts, so anything unusual would be noticed.
- Siobhan referred to Page 7. Looking at 2023 and 2022, why the great increase in Net pension/OPEB liability (from \$185,131 to \$413,349)? Amy explained that this actuarial valuation, performed for all PERS accounts in Oregon, often goes up and down; it is provided by PERS. Simon said that PERS has an assumed rate of return (now 7.2 percent). If there's a year with low interest rates, PERS doesn't earn that level, so a larger share of liability lands on employers. It's generally paid over time as part of employee payroll.
- Bear asked Amy how she decided to become a CPA. Amy replied that she had had a different business-related career and then, one day, she applied for a position (not yet a CPA) at Solutions CPA. At age forty, she passed the CPA exam. She encourages young people to consider this field; there is a need for younger people to assume the responsibilities of the profession.
- Siobhan asked about the difference in the State School Fund from year to year. Simon explained.

## **INFORMATION AND REPORTS**

### **Board Chair and Vice-Chair**

See attached Board Chair and Vice-Chair Report for details.

- Bear said that the attachments included with this report (BBS Board Self-Evaluation Tool and BBSD Board Goals 2023-2024) will be considered at the Board retreat, date and place to be decided later at today's meeting.

### **District Administrator and Head Teacher**

See attached District Administrator and Head Teacher Report for details.

- Delaney said that, with winter break immediately following the December meeting, not a lot has been going on.
- He noted that, later in the meeting, we will talk about the Early Literacy Success School District Grant Application.

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- He said that BBS is now starting some fresh units.
- The big talk is about the Ski & Ride Program; whether or not it's going to snow; and now, how much snow can Hoodoo handle! We'll see if Hoodoo will be ready for us this Friday.
- Gary said that the Lovegrens have gotten two feet within the last twenty-four hours at Blue Lake.

**Child Development Specialist**

See attached Child Development Specialist Report for more details.

- There were no questions or comments.

**Business Manager/District Clerk**

See attached Business Manager/District Clerk Report for more details.

- Simon said that the finances look really good. Some revenues are down a bit, but others are up.

**Family-Community Engagement Coordinator**

See attached Family-Community Engagement Coordinator Report for more details.

- Bear said that we appreciate the blog. Others concurred.

**Special Projects Manager**

There is nothing new to report on the Internet this month.

**Facilities Operations Manager**

See attached Facilities Operations Manager Report for more details.

- There was no written report this month.
- Delaney said that not much has been going on with the break. This week, both Gary and Chris have helped with snow removal.

**Transportation Specialist**

See attached Transportation Specialist Report for more details.

- Bear said that Gary had sent a brief report indicating that there were no activities in various regular categories.
- Delaney said that at this time of year, Gary starts out in the dark, and sometimes the plows haven't arrived. With this week's storm, we'll monitor and make decisions.

**Jefferson County Education Service District**

Bear said that Daniel Petke had informed her that he doesn't have anything specific to report for Black Butte School.

**UPDATE ON CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Bear invited Steve and Simon to give an update on recent developments.

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- Steve said that right now, The Woolsey Company and, separately, Griffin Construction are working on the Schematic Design estimates, due January 15. Simon and Steve have a meeting set with them to review and reconcile the differences.
- He said that HMK Company is also working on a Phasing Plan, which is a plan to do some of the work while school is in session. The plan will show how to do this with special consideration for safety, etc. for the students. Delaney said that we've been talking with the teachers about this, too.
- Delaney said that over the break, key members of the team walked through the school building and got a lot more details.
- Simon said that we will have another community meeting in February. We'll need to plan what we will present at that meeting.
- Simon noted on the financial report that one number has changed since last month, reflecting a payment to HMK Company.

**WREATH FUNDRAISER UPDATE**

Bear asked Delaney to point out some highlights on this report.

- Delaney said that this year's model worked pretty well. As always, driving over to get the wreaths is a big ask (see December minutes concerning Simon's "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride" experience). Selling the wreaths and being at the Holiday Bazaar for pick-up and additional sales are fun experiences.
- Bear asked if we had raised the prices, contributing to the \$1,100 increase. Delaney said that both the supplier and BBS raised prices a little.

**SET DATE AND LOCATION FOR BOARD SELF-EVALUATION RETREAT**

Bear said that this retreat usually takes about three hours. In the past, we've held it at Suttle Lake Camp, which has been very nice. We might also consider holding it at Lake Creek Lodge, especially since Daniel and Jane Petke are currently in transition, having recently retired from being the camp co-directors.

- Pamela offered her home on Blue Lake, with RSVP for community members who might attend (since this is a public meeting).
- In addition to the Board, Kirstin, Delaney, and Simon also usually attend the Board retreats.
- Board and staff members present settled on Tuesday, February 27, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or so, with lunch during that time.
- Pamela will put on a pot of soup. Siobhan will bring bread; Karen, dessert; and Bear, salad.

**DISCUSS STAFF STRUCTURE FOR NEXT YEAR AND BUDGET GOALS**

Bear asked Simon for budgetary insights, including foreseen staff structure, which will help the Board to determine the budget goals and COLA for FY 2024-2025. The attachment in the Board Packet shows budget goals each year since 2011.

- Simon said that in the fiscal year just ended, we spent more money than came in, which we don't want to do regularly. At the same time, there are many things

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that we want to do for our students. He will work with Kirstin and Delaney to put together a proposed budget. He said that we are blessed not to have the annual staff salary negotiations as Portland has recently had. We currently have more kids than we've had, which also helps financially. We will also likely have the Early Literacy Success School District Grant. Simon, Kirstin, and Delaney will also discuss some possible staffing variations. As for COLA, we'll have to kick that around; our 2 percent COLA in several past years seems low, but 10 percent would be hard for us to afford.

- Delaney said that he and Simon haven't gotten too much into this yet. If there are Board priorities, we'd like to know; e.g., staff retention, investment in a certain part of our program, or if we're doing something that we don't need to keep doing. Our starting point is our current set-up, which is working pretty well.
- Karen said that Molly's addition has been valuable, and that it seems like she's been working more hours than originally budgeted.
- Pamela asked if Simon had suggestions on how to balance the budget. Simon responded that currently the Child Development Specialist is working one day a week instead of two, which is a savings although we'll lose some services. Also, when Delaney gets his principal license, he and Kristin will talk about who will do what and the numbers of hours, which could result in savings.
- Delaney asked Simon to explain the process with the legislature and how much money will be coming in. Simon said that today, all school districts in Oregon submitted required information about what they think their local property taxes and enrollment will be in FY 2024-2025. The legislature gets this info from around the state and then goes from there. We often don't find out until June how much money we're getting for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Siobhan asked Delaney how they work to put together the budget based on the Board's Budget Goals. Delaney answered briefly, explaining that the school administration's job is to figure out how to make this work.
- Karen asked Delaney if, as he teaches less, other staff will teach more. Delaney replied that those are some of the things we need to work out.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS REPORT**

Bear invited Simon to give a brief report, to include explaining why this is a regular yearly item on the agenda.

- Simon recalls that there's a date coming up for reporting. He hasn't sent the report yet. His process is to go through the records to verify that all students meet the requirements with appropriate immunizations or waivers. The information will be sent to Jefferson County.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **APPOINT NEW BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Bear explained that all five members of the Board of Directors are automatically included as members of the Budget Committee, and that it is good to have equal

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numbers of community members on the committee. She noted that we currently have three community members: Rachel Gonzalez (appointed in January 2022 to serve for three years); McKenzie Ruckman (appointed in April 2022 to serve for three years); and Hazel Wood (appointed in April 2023 to serve for three years). She asked Delaney if there are any additional community members willing to serve on the Budget Committee.

- Delaney said that Kolie Williams-Anderson is willing to serve.

Karen Lajoy: Moved to appoint Kolie Williams-Anderson to serve on the Budget Committee for three years. Siobhan Gray: Second. All in favor. Kolie Williams-Anderson was appointed.

**ADOPT REVISED 2024-2025 BUDGET CALENDAR**

Bear noted that this calendar was approved last month but needs to be modified. She invited Simon to explain the proposed change.

- Simon said that the Budget Committee training is now scheduled for April 9; he suggested moving it to May 7, the week before the Budget Hearing on May 14. With this timing, the training will be fresh in people's minds on May 14.
- Gary said that he will be away during the first two weeks in May. Bear noted that the Budget Committee will be larger than the Board, so a quorum will be present without Gary. He will be able to vote on the actual budget in June.

Karen Lajoy: Moved to adopt the revised 2024-2025 Budget Calendar. Siobhan Gray: Seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**APPROVE EARLY LITERACY SUCCESS SCHOOL DISTRICT GRANT APPLICATION**

Bear asked Delaney to explain this proposal, including the need for Board approval.

- He went over the PowerPoint presentation (on file). He said that, during the fall, Kirstin had worked extensively with staff to put this together.
- It is a non-competitive grant, targeting Grades K-3.
- We made a plan for the next two school years ~ FY 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025, at \$40,000 each year.
- Pamela said that it sounds like a phenomenal program. She asked about the two available programs: Is the content controversial or pretty middle of the road? Delaney said that he hasn't heard of them being controversial. They are being adopted by larger districts. We are following the lead of the Bend-LaPine SD.
- Bear asked if the paperwork for the proposal is voluminous. Delaney said that it is; fortunately, Jefferson County ESD provided support in completing the proposal.

Siobhan Gray: Moved to approve the Early Literacy Success School District Grant Application as presented. Karen Lajoy: Seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**APPROVE PLAN OF ACTION CONCERNING 2022-2023 AUDIT**

Bear asked Simon to explain this Plan of Action and the need for it.

- Simon said that this is what we've had to do every year. Our internal checks and balances in accounting procedures are minimal. The state and the auditors are

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basically covering themselves by stating that this is a potential problem and making us aware of it.

- Delaney said that this will always be a problem for us, with our small size.

Siobhan Gray: Moved to approve the Plan of Action for Black Butte School District No. 41 as presented. Karen Lajoy: Seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

**MINUTES**

Bear asked for suggested revisions to the Minutes of the December 12, 2023 Regular Session.

- None.

Gary Lovegren: Moved to approve the Minutes of the December 12, 2023 Regular Session. Karen Lajoy: Seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**CALENDAR**

- Next Regular Board Meeting ~ Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 3:30 p.m.
- Community Meeting Bond Update ~ Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 5:00 p.m.
- Board Retreat ~ Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Blue Lake

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Board Chair Bear Brown adjourned the Session at 5:25 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Simon Levear, Recording Secretary

**SIGNED APPROVED MINUTES ARE ON FILE IN THE BBS ADMIN OFFICE.**

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Marie Sheahan "Bear" Brown, Board Chair

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Date approved