**Montana Small School Alliance**

220 North Montana St. – Dillon, MT 59725

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school-house_2.tiff

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**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Montana Small Schools Alliance**

**May 4, 2022, 11:30 A.M.**

**MSSA Office, 220 N. Montana St. (via Zoom)**

**Dillon, MT 59725**

**Members present:** Carolyn Hall, Jayne Downey, Laura Straus, Erin Lipkind, Linda Sunderlin, Janelle Beers

Absent: Charlee Thompson

**11:33 a.m. 1. CALL TO ORDER –** Carolyn called the meeting to order at 11:33 A.M.

**11:35 a.m. Special Recognition:** Janelle shared congratulations to Dr. Jayne Downey on her 2022 Career Achievement Award from the American Educational Research Association’s Rural Education SIG.

Carolyn Hall was also congratulated on her County Superintendent of the Year Award.

**11:45 a.m. 2.CHANGES/ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA (Action)**

Addition to the agenda approval of the February 17, 2022 Special Board meeting minutes. The times on the minutes were wrong. The Board approved based on corrected times and a new copy of the minutes sent to the Board.

Jayne moved and Erin seconded. **Motion carried.**

**11:55 a.m. 3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion & Action items)**

1. Website Update

Janelle shared information on the process to date. Contacted four companies, one did not have time or did not do this kind of work. Two were very expensive, even to start the process. Decided to work with Dean Phillips and his company based on their knowledge of MSSA, their cost, and the close proximity to Dean. The Board expressed concerns on the timeline, ability to connect with Dean consistently, and getting things done for the start of the school year. The Board noted they would like to keep the work in Montana if we can. The importance of the website and its ability to communicate who we are was discussed. Decision to make sure we have a contract with specific markers in time and product completion. Janelle will work with Dean on the contract. The Board did not do a formal vote, but approved pursuing the work with Dean.

1. Montana Rural Teacher of the Year Presentation and Ideas

Carolyn asked for this agenda item to be discussed. Lara Belice is the Montana Rural Teacher of the Year. She gave a presentation at the County Superintendent Conference and did a great job. Carolyn, Jayne, and Erin heard her speak and noted her ability to spark excitement for teachers. Discussion on how to incorporate Lara into our workshops, work with new teachers, featuring her on our website, etc. Discussion went on to talk about how to feature teachers on our site or in our workshops. Look into doing a professional video. Janelle will connect with Lara and research options to teacher features. No formal action on this item.

C. 2022-2023 Workshop Dates, Sites, Topics

The Board received the 2022-2023 workshop flyer in their Board packets. All dates are decided and all but one topic area is confirmed. Janelle is in the process of filling the last date and should have that completed soon. No action needed.

D. Curriculum Updates

Janelle presented information on the curriculum updates for the year. Chateau Christensen will be working on the project to update Career Vocational and to add to our website curriculum in Technology Integration and Computer Science. Math and ELA which were scheduled for the year are not being updated by OPI, so those areas will be on hold for now. No action needed.

**1:00 p.m. 4. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion& Action items)**

1. Counselor Recommendation and Contract

Janelle interviewed two candidates for the MSSA Counseling Specialist position. Her recommendation is to hire Laurie Bartoletti for the position. Laurie has been a counselor in the Sheridan School District for 20 years, and is retiring at the end of this school year. Her references were outstanding. Jayne moved and Erin seconded to hire Laurie Bartoletti as our Counselor Specialist for the 2022-2023 school year. **Motion carried.**

1. 2022-2023 Board Meeting Dates and Locations

The Board reviewed the dates and locations presented. The dates were accepted and the locations were discussed. Discussion on having the September meeting in person, maybe in conjunction with the County Superintendent Conference in Ennis. Erin will work on finalizing those dates and we will revisit at our June meeting. Not vote on this item, but consensus agreement.

C. Executive Director Contract for July 2022-June 2023

Janelle started the discussion with the fact that her current contract ends on June 30, 2022. Her initial contract was only for six months. Carolyn wanted to go on the record that Janelle has more than fulfilled expectations.

Discussion on the presentation at the County Superintendent Conference,

her professionalism, desire to serve, energy, and instilling confidence in our organization. Discussion on flexibility in the job with meetings, school

visits, workshops and other projects. Office hours don’t have to

be confined to four walls. Additional note for contract that there is flexibility in fulfilling the hours of the job. Laura moved and Erin seconded to offer Janelle a contract for July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023. **Motion carried.**

D. Grant Opportunities

Erin and Janelle filled the Board in on a grant opportunity being pursued by

MSSA and WMPLC for expanded counseling services to our schools. There

are two grants, Stop It Solutions and DOE Innovation Grant. WMPLC will

be the LEA and the fiscal agent. MSSA is a partner and will be able to offer

the opportunity to our schools if the grant is funded. Janelle and Erin will

be reaching out to prospective partners and districts for letters of support.

Jayne moved and Laura seconded to allow Janelle to pursue the grants.

**Motion carried.**

**5. MSSA Reports**

Executive Director- Update on Chapter 55 work. Informed the Board on letters of introduction sent to the “powers that be”. Contact has been made with schools who will need to join MTSBA for school policies. Other items in report shared during the meeting.

MSSA Office- Linda- We are in good shape financially. Final budget report after June 30, when all dues are in. Erin moved and Laura second to accept the financial report. **Motion carried.**

MACCS- Erin and Carolyn-Report during the meeting.

MSU- Jayne-Aspire Mentor MT has room for mentee’s. New teachers can join. There is mentor training. Video and handouts available to share with schools.

Western- Laura- The Montana Teacher Demonstration Residency Project is a yearlong grant opportunity. The Montana Rural Teacher Project has room, funding for those interested in becoming a teacher. UMW has started an intent to plan process for Graduate Programs.

MTSBA- Absent- Janelle will contact MTSBA regarding membership and attendance.

**2:05 p.m. 6. ADJOURN:** Erin moved and Jayne seconded adjourning the meeting. **Motion carried.**

**The next Regular Board Meeting will be our Quarterly Meeting on June 22, 2022 at 10:00.**