

Bath School Board Meeting Minutes for August 17, 2026

Board Members Present: Sara Lang, Cori Elliott; **Absent:** Matt Smith

Administration Present: SAU 23 Superintendent Dolores Fox, Principal Megan Jones, Business Administrator Taryn Noonan-Johnson,

Staff Present: None

Public Present: Shelby Lackie, Steve Rood

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Sara called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.
2. **Sign Manifest:** Done
3. **Agenda Review/Adjustments:** Agenda item #4.5 added to address funding for paving.
4. **Approval of Minutes of JUNE 15 & JULY 15, 2026:** Motion by Cori, second by Sara to approve both sets of the minutes. All present Board members were in favor.
- 4.5. **Steve Emerson report and funding for paving discussion:** Steve Emerson reported that a bid of \$29,399.80 was submitted to replace the drain and pave the road in the bus loop. Board discussed options to fund that and to fund replacing counter tops (\$2,400) and cabinets (\$5,000) in the classrooms. Motion by Sara, second by Cori to approve the quote of \$29,399.80 to install a drain in the bus loop, to pave around the bus loop and to pave the drain that was repaired. All present Board members were in favor.

Steve Emerson also reported that the pre-K-K bathroom installation, washer and dryer installation, and sidewalk repair will be done before start of school.

Steve Emerson complimented Mr. Avery on his hard work on behalf of the school. The School Board also thanked Steve for his hard work and diligence.

5. **Public Input:** Shelby Lackie and Steve Rood both asked about pre-K status and numbers; Megan responded that we have 13-14 students enrolled in pre-K and K. Sara reported that the Blue School has donated some of its pre-K and K materials to BVS.

Steve Rood also asked about the status and location of the High School tuition policy (JFB). Dolores and Cori responded that it is on the policy page of the SAU 23 website.

Steve Rood asked about the July workshop – was it open to the public? Sara responded that the meeting opened in public session and then the Board moved to go into non- public session.

6. **Administrator Reports: All Submitted**
James Marshall - Technology Director: No questions from the Board.

Steve Emerson, Facilities Maintenance Manager: See agenda item #4.5.

Kerri Reilly, SPED Director: No questions from the Board. The Special Education Office has a new administrative assistant.

Megan Jones, Principal: Megan reported that BVS is fully staffed for the 2026-27 school year, including an in-person speech therapist. The big initiative this year will be literacy pilot programs for EL, Arts & Letters, and UFLI. Bath is ahead of other SAU schools in this effort. Staff is excited to continue to connect with the Bath community.

Taryn Noonan-Johnson, Business Administrator: Taryn presented the Financial Summary Report for General Fund Revenues and Expenditures as of June 30, 2026, including items over and under budget. Once balances are applied, the ending fund balance will be \$118,180 if the maximum fund balance is retained. This amount will go to reduce next year's tax burden if no other expenses are deemed necessary before year end.

Taryn is settling into the job as Business Administrator.

Dolores Fox, Superintendent: See agenda item #9.

7. **Resignations, New Hires, and Open Positions:** None
8. **Lunch Balances:** Negative balances from last year were reviewed. Board decided to let families start the new school year with no balances and decided to work on a better system to remind families when money is due. Motion by Sara, second by Cori to zero out the negative accounts of last year's lunch balance. All present Board members were in favor.
9. **Legislative Updates:** Dolores reported that this legislative session was very busy, she reported on the three HB's below.
 - a) HB 1300 adds a ballot during the November general election for 2026 and 2028 which has a question about adopting a tax rate cap (which Dolores explained is really an appropriations cap) and to cap the SAU administrative costs at 6% of the combined SAU towns. A "yes" vote of 60% is required to pass.

This is really 2 questions in 1. If Bath voters pass this warrant, then there is a tax cap but that does not automatically mean that the SAU cap would pass; SAU 23 cap would be determined by adding all "yes" votes across all 5 districts.

Administrative costs of the SAU include services such as superintendent services, business administration, human resources, finance, payroll, purchasing, legal services. These caps can be overridden locally by a 3/5 vote at a district meeting.

- b) HB 564 changes the mechanism for approving SAU budgets; the SAU budget will appear as a separate warrant at the annual district meeting. If the voters do not pass the SAU budget by a simple majority, then the FY27 is the default budget. The number of votes cast at each annual meeting are counted together to see if the SAU budget passes. This budget decision has to wait for the last annual meeting to tally the final votes.

- c) HB 1817 allows students participating in the Education Freedom Accounts (EFA) program to participate in school activities and courses under the same rules as home-school students. The EFA students may not exceed 50% of courses at a public school to maintain their EFA status (Riverbend students do exceed this). Previously, districts could charge EFA students for their participation. Home school parents do not have to tell anyone if they home school, EFA funded students must inform the SAU.

The Board recognizes that all of this legislation is confusing, the ballot language is not clear, and the public can have difficulty understanding the complexities of the budget process. Dolores and Taryn will be attending a webinar on this legislation. The SAU is currently developing educational materials on these HB's and the September Board meeting will discuss how best to get this educational material out to the public, mailing seems to be very effective.

- 10. **Calendar of Meetings:** Proposed School Board meeting dates were reviewed – times are at 6 pm.

- 11. **Public Input:** Steve Rood had questions about student enrollment; Megan answered it is difficult to provide final numbers until the first days of school. The current estimate will be around 50 students for pre-K – 6th grades. Steve commented that the pre-K numbers and tuition students from Landaff is a positive thing. He also asked about the decrease in funding from the state; Dolores answered that the decrease every other year is in the Hold Harmless grant, which was put in place to allow districts time to adjust to the decrease in state funding. For the Adequacy Aid funding amount, Dolores explained that the state tax line in the property tax bills never leaves the town but the state uses that amount collected by the town to determine its final amount to pay for adequacy aid (whatever amount the town collects, the state subtracts that from the amount that the state has to pay). He also asked what percentage of the BVS budget is for the SAU; Dolores said she would have to research that figure.

- 12. **Business for Next Meeting:** Development of educational materials for the legislation, policies.

- 13. **Next Meeting Date: September 21, 2026, @ 6:00 pm.**

- 14. **Non-Public Session per RSA 91.A:3 (as needed):** Motion by Sara, second by Cori to enter into Non-Public session at 7:35 pm. All present Board members were in favor.

Public session reconvened at 7:45 PM

15. **Adjournment:** Motion by S Lang, second by C Elliott, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm.
All present Board members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Tumosa, Secretary, Bath School Board