

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Kootenai Joint School District #274 Board Interviews**  
**May 25, 2022**  
**9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present were Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney R. David Ferguson, BOCC Communications Coordinator Jonathan Gillham and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present were School Board Candidates Tom Hearn and Janelle Bertsch, and Kootenai County Residents Amanda Reinhardt and Summer Bushnell. Commissioner Brooks was present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

**Interview with Candidates for Kootenai Joint School District #274 Board per Idaho Statute §33-504/Tom Hearn, Janelle Bertsch (Discussion)**

Chairman Fillios explained the process that the interview would follow. He stated that the Board position in question would run through December 31, 2023.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan read the relevant portion of Idaho Statute §33-504 into the record.

Chairman Fillios and Commissioner Duncan alternately asked the candidates to respond to the following series of questions. Commissioner Bill Brooks indicated that, since he was joining over the phone, he would prefer not to ask interview questions.

- Give a statement about your background and main reasons for applying for this school board trustee position. What qualifies you as a school board member? What are your top three objectives?
- What do you see as the top assets and successes within School District #274?
- Do you have any specific changes you want to make in school district policies, programs, or the various school curricula being offered? If so, what changes do you want to make and why?
- Given a controversial issue, how would you approach this issue and make your decision? Would you decide differently if you find your position is contrary to that of your constituents?
- Suggest ways in which every student can achieve excellence in education and receive the highest quality of education they deserve.
- Do you support advanced education including AP, IB, and KTEC? How do you think the district can expand these programs and make them more successful?

- Due to their size, School District #274 is faced with challenges to provide the necessary funding. Please describe any ideas you might have for the district to generate revenue.
- How would you help the Board with community outreach, specifically reaching a broad spectrum of constituents throughout the district?

Kootenai County Resident Erin Barnard entered the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

Each candidate having responded to every question, the Commissioners discussed their reactions.

Commissioner Duncan indicated she preferred Janelle Bertsch, because she felt Ms. Bertsch would bring fresh perspective to the School Board. She also pointed out that Ms. Bertsch had lived in the district longer than Mr. Hearn.

Commissioner Brooks commented favorably on the interview process and indicated he preferred Tom Hearn, because he felt Mr. Hearn’s experience on another School Board would be valuable.

Chairman Fillios agreed with Commissioner Brooks’ preference for Mr. Hearn.

**Kootenai Joint School District #274 Board Member Selection (Action)**

Chairman Fillios moved that the Board recommend Tom Hearn for appointment to the Kootenai Joint School District #274 Board, with a term to expire December 31, 2023. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Ginorio called the roll:

Commissioner Brooks:           Aye  
 Commissioner Duncan:        Nay  
 Chairman Fillios:                Aye

The motion carried.

- D. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing.

Kootenai County Resident Tina Ginorio expressed her disappointment that no questions related to Critical Race Theory (CRT) or Social and Emotional Learning were included in the interview.

Kootenai County Resident Amanda Reinhardt asked for clarification regarding the candidates’ residential locations in relation to the zone which the Board position represented.

Commissioner Duncan explained that neither candidate lived in the particular zone, but no applications from that area had been received, so people from elsewhere in the District were permitted to apply.

Ms. Reinhardt urged Ms. Bertsch to attend School Board meetings and participate as an interested member of the public.

Chairman Fillios asked BOCC Communications Coordinator Jonathan Gillham whether there were any online comments offered.

Mr. Gillham stated that Ellie Getchius had offered her thanks to both candidates for their participation. He said Kara Seigley had asked how to garner support for the School District from residents who did not have children.

Kootenai County Resident Erin Barnard said she also felt questions regarding CRT and Social and Emotional Learning should have been included in the interview. She added that she also hoped Ms. Bertsch and others would attend Board meetings as active participants.

**E. Adjournment (Action):** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 9:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk