

SOUTH BORDER CO-OP MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 24, 2025  
ASHLEY SCHOOL CONFERENCE ROOM

The South Border co-op board met on Monday, March 24, 2025 at 6:00pm in the Ashley school conference room. Present: Lyle Fey, Ros Litsey, Jordan Jenner, Amy Schlepp, Corey Ulmer (Ashley school board), Curt Meidinger, Rocky Brown, Neil Horner, Dani Goebel, Trina Schilling (Wishek school board), Chuck Brandner, Chris Doane, Jason Schmidt, Shawn Kuntz, Teresa Dockter, Chad Berger (Napoleon AD), Richard Bjerklie (Napoleon Supt.), Taylor Grunefelder, Derrick Leier (Napoleon board members), Mark Berg (Gackle Supt/AD), Lindy Heflich (Gackle board member), Tucker Meidinger, Jeremy St. Aubin, Angela Bertsch.

Motion by Rocky Brown to approve the agenda with two additions. Second by Corey Ulmer, motion carried unanimously.

Napoleon and Gackle representatives were present to discuss a baseball co-op with South Border. Rich Bjerklie said Napoleon would possibly have 3-5 interested and Gackle 2-5 any given year. Tucker Meidinger stated South Border currently has 18 participants (Gr 7-12) and 3 of those are from Kulm. Chuck Brandner said the number of 9-12 students required to move up a class is 325, so there's plenty of room between all the schools to stay under that number. Neither Napoleon nor Gackle schools expect to have a seat on the co-op board, they would just like to be invited to the meetings. Discussion on transportation, cost sharing, coaches, addition of N-G letters to end of South Border at NDHSAA level. Current agreement with Kulm: they travel to practices at South Border schools; co-op name remains South Border; Kulm will be billed on a per participant basis, with practice mileage excluded; billing follows how the SB wrestling co-op is in regard to how Zeeland is billed. Motion by Rocky Brown to approve adding both Napoleon and Gackle schools to the South Border baseball program co-op. Second by Dani Goebel. Rocky Brown amended his motion to state that the new co-op with Napoleon and Gackle will follow the guidelines we currently have in place with Kulm for baseball. Second to amendment by Neil Horner. Roll call vote on amendment: Trina Schilling-yes, Amy Schlepp-yes, Dani Goebel-yes, Corey Ulmer-yes, Curt Meidinger-yes, Lyle Fey-yes, Neil Horner-yes, Rocky Brown-yes, Jordan Jenner-yes, Ross Litsey-yes; amendment carried. Roll call vote on motion: Ross Litsey-yes, Jordan Jenner-yes, Rocky Brown-yes, Neil Horner-yes, Lyle Fey-yes, Curt Meidinger-yes, Corey Ulmer-yes, Dani Goebel-yes, Amy Schlepp-yes, Trina Schilling-yes; motion carried. Chad Berger, Rich Bjerklie, Taylor Grunefelder, Derrick Leier, Mark Berg and Lindy Heflich left the meeting at 6:38pm.

There was a request to discuss starting a SB cross country track program, possibly 9 students interested—points of discussion: could run unattached as a SB athlete with another school (requires a co-op); could co-op with another school and see how it goes; already a lot of sports going on in the fall—could run into other seasons; continue to add programs which continues to add costs. Board members agreed they are not interested in starting a cross country track program.

President Fey referred board members to the written parent complaint they received. The athletic directors were directed to look into the matter and bring recommendations back to the co-op board at their next meeting.

Chuck Brandner said we're 1 of 3 schools in the area that do not have a 'pay to play' system. He outlined expected upcoming expenses for sports—VB system \$4,500, WR mat-\$12,000, Discus cage-\$2,000, as well as ongoing costs for uniforms, equipment, etc.

Propose a \$20 fee per student per activity with a family cap of \$160. Angela Bertsch left the meeting at 7:42pm. Motion by Trina Schilling to charge \$10 per athlete per sport for those in grades 7-12—each school collects from their athletes and the revenue is applied to its respective sport. Second by Curt Meidinger. Roll call vote: Ross Litsey-no, Jordan Jenner-yes, Rocky Brown-yes, Neil Horner-yes, Lyle Fey-yes, Curt Meidinger-no, Corey Ulmer-no, Dani Goebel-yes, Amy Schlepp-yes, Trina Schilling-yes. Motion carried 7-3.

Recess from 7:59-8:03pm.

Busdriver pay has not been increased in over 10 years—currently \$15/hr for CDL plus \$350 bonus, \$10/hr for non-CDL—hard to find drivers. Recommend increase to \$25/hr drive time for CDL/\$15/hr sit time (if not coaching) plus \$500 bonus and \$15/hr non-CDL drive & sit time. Motion by Trina Schilling to increase pay as recommended, second by Rocky Brown. Roll call vote: Trina Schilling-yes, Amy Schlepp-yes, Dani Goebel-yes, Corey Ulmer-yes, Curt Meidinger-yes, Lyle Fey-yes, Neil Horner-yes, Rocky Brown-yes, Jordan Jenner-yes, Ross Litsey-yes; motion carried. Increase will go into effect next school year.

Report on HUDL streaming service: gross revenue of \$2,134.80. Cost with stat programs for all sports is \$14,000 (one more year on contract). Still pay for Mat Boss for wrestling because Hudl program doesn't work well for that.

Per diem for student meals when attending state tournaments is currently \$6 per meal—doesn't cover much. Don't include money for breakfast if the hotel provides that. Motion by Trina Schilling to pay \$25 per day for meals. Motion died for lack of a second. Following further discussion, motion by Trina Schilling to match the state rates for meals (currently \$9/\$14/\$22). Second by Rocky Brown. Roll call vote: Ross Litsey-yes, Jordan Jenner-yes, Rocky Brown-yes, Neil Horner-yes, Lyle Fey-yes, Curt Meidinger-yes, Corey Ulmer-yes, Dani Goebel-yes, Amy Schlepp-yes, Trina Schilling-yes; motion carried. New rates will go into effect for next school year.

Some complaints that not all coaches are attending all practices. ADs are not notified when a coach is not going to be at practice. All agreed there needs to be better communication and all absences should be reported to the ADs. Head coaches should address at beginning of season.

Elementary football—reviewed 10-year cost projection for the program. Will need about \$6,000 for equipment before next season, also costs about \$2,500 every other year for reconditioning helmets. Received \$2,500 from football club and requested \$1,500 from Tri County Fair board. Ashley administrator will make a request to Ashley sports club as well.

Discussion on the number of coaches for sports—co-op guidelines say there will be a head, assistant and junior high coach for each sport and if more than 12 participants, another coach can be requested. May not be a need for that many coaches in all sports.

Motion by Neil Horner to adjourn, second by Jordan Jenner. Motion carried unanimously, meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

-----  
Lyle Fey, President (ASB)

-----  
Curt Meidinger, President (WSB)

-----  
Teresa Dockter, Business Manager (Ashley School District)

