



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

May 11, 2015

Phone (406) 244-5581

Fax (406) 244-5840

www.potomacschoolmontana.us

*“Potomac School equips each student for his/her future
within a culture of excellence that values the small community experience.”*

Call to Order

Board Chair Cliff Vann called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Gary Long, Craig Nelson, Jason Nordberg and Kelsy Ployhar. Jill Thornton, clerk, and Sarah Schmill, Supervising Teacher were also in attendance.

Public Input (for issues not on the agenda)

None

Minutes

Kelsy moved to approve the minutes from March 9 & 23 plus April 13 & 27, 2015. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Board Reorganization

1. Select Officers:

Gary nominated Cliff Vann to serve as Board Chair. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Gary nominated Kelsy Ployhar to serve as Vice Chair. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

2. Appoint Business Manager/Clerk

Jason moved to appoint Jill Thornton as Business Manager/Clerk of the District. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Consent Agenda

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$21,503.92. Total Payroll = \$67,147.48

Business Cards – Included in Total Claims noted.

Petty Cash – Supplemental to monthly warrants used between Board Meetings – Reimbursed thru Claims.

Extracurricular (Student Accounts) – Beg. Balance Apr 1, 2015 - \$26,812.72; End Balance Apr 30, 2015 - \$26,042.70

Kelsy moved to approve the consent agenda. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Teacher Presentations

Abby Stitt:

Abby Stitt shared what she, Sarah and Terri are learning about 'Standards Based Grading'. It is a method that focuses on 1) learning goals, 2) assessment and 3) feedback. The research says it improves student learning. Sarah and Terri are taking classes on standards based grading, and the entire staff now has a book they are studying and discussing. This research started with the Curriculum Consortium as they wanted to understand this method of grading. It is only in the research process, and not necessarily being implemented.

Gary asked how this method works with statewide testing. Abby said the tests are based on the state accepted standards, so they are aligned.

Kelsy thanked the teachers for investigating this method.

Sarah said it will take time to see if this method is going to be implemented, and before that they are looking for more information for the staff, as well as for educating the community.

Jason appreciates this kind of progressive thinking.

Gary asked if we could add the subject of our teacher presentations on the agenda, so anyone interested can come to listen. That will be done from now on.

Kelsy said she has had questions on Common Core from parents. She thought there could be a parent night to explain it. Terri said there are some reports on it in math, and Kristy said it is also in the 2nd grade report cards. A parent night is a good idea though.

Kristina Davis:

Kristina Davis showed our MAP testing charts. These tests are not timed. This information can be understood by the students, so it helps them challenge themselves. It also helps the teachers in assessing the students.

Gary asked if the school is researching ability based reading. Abby said that is done within the class by moving students to work with others at their level. Terri said that reading groups need to be smaller than is possible in our ability based math, so the ratio of adults to students is higher. Cliff asked if that needs more parent involvement. Sarah said the school looks for all community involvement.

Cliff asked if we use the library system we share with the Missoula County Library. The teachers said absolutely.

Cliff then asked his usual question, "What can the board do to help?"

Kristy said iPads provide a great resource, and more would help. Kristina said the school received a grant for more Apple TV's which just need to have some speaker issues fixed, so tech maintenance. Sarah said more professional development like Kathleen Dent. Abby added to that by commenting on how professional development opportunities create networks of learning with other teachers.

Administrative Report

- April 14th: Body awareness 4-8th presented by MSU Nursing students
- Smarter Balanced (SBAC) testing problems from their side, MT Superintendent of Schools notified schools that they had the option of opting out of testing. We opted out.
- April 16th: Kindergarten round up, 7 students registered so far
- April 20th/May 1/May 5/May 11/May 28: track meets at BSHS/Frenchtown
- April 22nd-23rd: WLFF
- April 25th: 6-8th grade girls STEM workshop at UM, 7 of 9 participated
- AIMSweb and MAP testing
- April 29-30th: Donna Love (Native American workshops/PE)
- April 29th: 8th grader visits to Hellgate/Sentinel
- 8th graders are finalizing their HIT trip
- May 11th: MT Shakes presentation/workshops
- May 11th: HHS football coach talked to 8th graders during lunch
- May 13th: Title Night (reading-students) internet safety for parents presented by Detective Merrifield from MCSO
- May 14th: internet safety K-3, 4-6, 7-8 presented by Detective Merrifield from MCSO
- May 15-20th: 8th grade HIT trip
- May 19th-21st: 7th grade Outdoor School
- May 21st: 5th grade Leave No Weeds field trip
- May 22nd: all staff CPR/First Aid training paid for through 21st Century
- May 26th: 2nd grade Community Walk Fundraiser (Cancer Society, Wild Skies Raptor)
- Last day of school- Graduation!!

Clerks Report

Last month, Jill presented an e-mail received from Steve Hamel who works in the Office of Public Instruction. He reviews school audits, and sent some beneficial information for 'best practices' small schools can use to provide the necessary checks and balances in the financial system. This e-mail was used to create a checklist for the board to work with when individual board members meet with Jill to complete reviews. Both the answers to Steve's e-mail, and then the checklist is below.

1. *Have the Board review monthly computer generated lists of warrants for payroll and claims. Question any gaps in check sequence within any month and especially between months. Question payments to any unknown vendors. Check sequences are now included in Board Packet.*
2. *Insist that the clerk/business manager reconcile the books with the county treasurer's report monthly, and have second person review the reconciliation and sign/initial. Have someone other than the clerk review the list of income and disbursements shown on the treasurer's report each month. In attached checklist for Board Member to use for review.*
3. *Review monthly budget to actual reports at each board meeting. In Board Packet.*
4. *Have someone periodically review invoices and/or timesheets to be paid. In attached checklist for Board Member to use for periodic review.*
5. *Have bank statements mailed to a person other than the clerk/business manager to review before giving it to the clerk/business manager. At a minimum, periodically review any bank accounts not controlled by the county treasurer. In attached checklist for Board Member to use for review.*
6. *Periodically review cash handling procedures. Require cash to be deposited timely (preferably daily); require composition of cash and checks to be listed on each deposit ticket. Require that a receipt be immediately issued for each payment received; a duplicate of the receipt or electronic record of the receipt should be retained in the records. Cash handling procedures will be reviewed once annually. Cash, change and checks are listed separately and receipts are issued.*
7. *Do not allow hand-drawn checks; only issue checks through the computerized system; if hand-drawn checks are issued, have a second person create and post the related journal entry. Do not allow the signing of blank checks. Signed vendor checks should not be returned to those who authorized the payment; mail checks directly to vendors. All Petty Cash and Extracurricular handwritten checks require two signatures. Blank checks are not signed. This is also in attached list for Board Member to review purchase orders, receipts and deposits in these two accounts.*
8. *Where possible, segregate who (1) authorizes transactions, (2) records transactions, (3) reconciles records, and (4) has custody of assets; when segregation of duties is not possible, require documented second-person review and/or surprise audits/reviews. Authorization is segregated from records, transactions and reconciliations. This is also in the attached checklist for Board Member review and surprise audit/review.*

CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL BOARD REVIEW OF ACCOUNTING

- D Checked last County Treasurer Monthly Report with Potomac's accounts. Included lists of income and disbursements in the review. Initialed County Treasurer Report and Potomac Report. (# 2 in Steps that Boards and Administrators should take)
- D Reviewed Purchase Orders/Invoices for School Fund Accounts. (# 4 in Steps that Boards and Administrators should take)
- D Reviewed Timesheets and Paystubs. (# 4 in Steps that Boards and Administrators should take)
- D Reviewed Purchase Orders/Invoices and Bank Statements/Reconciliations for Petty Cash and Extracurricular. (# 5 & 7 in Steps that Boards and Administrators should take)
- D Surprise Review? (# 8 in Steps that Boards and Administrators should take)

Kelsy has offered to go first to review procedures in the office. Cliff would also like the entire board to respond to Steve's e-mail.

Board Professional Development Reports

- Gary has been working on the Athletic field project, as well as negotiations with the teachers union.
- Kelsy attended interviews with prospective principals, as well as additional meetings.
- The whole board participated in principal interviews.
- Cliff also negotiated along with Gary.

Negotiation Committee Report

Meetings with the PEA have set what is to be negotiated, and today nine tentative agreements on language corrections have been agreed upon.

Policy Revision Committee

Jill said our policy on Student Attendance has been reviewed with the Superintendent to make sure Potomac is covered for any issues. We are up to date with that policy.

Athletic Complex Update

Gary said the scope of the project is almost ready to give to bidders. Cliff said the scope of work can be reviewed/approved by the board when it is completed. Gary also said Dale Hinkle's liability is something there are questions about, and those questions will be asked of Kris Goss at the MTSBA.

Gary asked if Jill could also get what has been spent to date to him. Jill said she can.

Kelsy asked if Gary could also ask Kris Goss about any liability issues with the ice rink.

2015-2016 School Calendar

MCPS' school calendar changed due to a change with the University of Montana's schedule. Since our calendar was scheduled to work with the MCPS calendar, that necessitated changing our calendar also. So the new calendar is what is presented to be reviewed and approved. Kelsy moved to approve the updated 2015-2016 School Calendar. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Personnel

1. New Principal Angie Williams: Gary moved to approve hiring Angie Williams as principal for the 2015-2016 school year. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**
2. Resignations: Kelsy moved to accept the resignation of Justine Luebke. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**
Kelsy moved to accept the resignation of Krystal Keroack. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**
3. Intent to Rehire: Sarah recommended the board rehire Nancy Linnell, Terri Klein, Kristy Pohlman, Abby Stitt, Sarah Schmill, Kristina Davis and Melissa McAuley for the 2015-2016 school year. Jason moved to accept Sarah's recommendation. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**
4. Staffing Levels: Cliff would like the board and staff to consider the fact that our beginning pay for teachers is not comparable with other small rural schools. It's a serious situation that he feels calls for a close look at our budget. Also this year, we needed all the contingency funds we has set aside. He thinks a discussion to consider a decrease in staffing levels is necessary to make sure we can pay our beginning teachers better while still being able to maintain contingency funding. He continued with the information that our new principal, Angie Williams, is certified in Special Education. Could we then cut the Special Ed position? The board thought that sounded

possible, but had questions concerning case load and if reducing staff is doable. The teachers said even though we have fewer students in Special Ed, that teacher also did math, title pull out, 2 physical education classes, and music. And the aides we currently employ are full time already. Jason feels the board needs more teacher input.

Student Attendance Agreements

Craig moved to accept 3 students from other districts at our school. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Election Contract with Missoula County

Jason moved to approve the election contract with Missoula County. Kelsy seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Bus Routes

Kelsy moved to approve the bus routes for 2015-2016. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Adjourn

Board Chair Vann adjourned the Board meeting at 9:26 pm.

Cliff Vann, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date