



# Potomac Elementary School

## School Board Minutes

for

October 9, 2012

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

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### Call to Order

Board Vice-Chair Jim Wrobel called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Jeff Hahn and Victoria Richardson. Tim Johnson, principal and Jill Thornton, clerk, were also in attendance.

**Public Input** (for issues not on the agenda) None.

### Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included:

1. Minutes for September 10 and 21, 2012
2. Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$16,491.82, Total Payroll = \$55,914.27
3. Business Cards – Included in Total Claims noted.
4. Petty Cash – Supplemental to monthly warrants used between Board Meetings – Reimbursed thru Claims.
5. Extracurricular (Student Accounts) – Beginning Balance \$15,242.63, Ending Balance \$14,826.69

Jeff moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 3-0.**

### Principals Report

#### Community

- Family Night at McKenzie River Pizza (more to come!)
- Title 1 Planning night - one parent attended. The focus was on cursive, handwriting & typing.
- PAC meeting- none attended

#### School

- Explorers Program : 22 Students covering ALL grades. Great start
- MAP testing almost complete
- Teachers Terri Klein and Abby Stitt have attended MACC (Missoula Area Curriculum Consortium) meetings regarding Montana Common Core Standards.
- Ropes Course sponsored by PTC HUGE success!
- Two science field trips (Mining; Fishing with FWP), one 4th grade history field trip at Fort Missoula. The Mining field trip was new this year and integrates well with what our science teacher, Kristina Davis, is teaching.
- Athletic Field:
  - Water! 250 feet with approx 35gpm
  - Final well electrical and piping set for this week.
  - Possible that this weekend we could lay piping for irrigation lines in field.

#### Activities

- Flag Football won first game of the season at Clinton!
- Girls Basketball having mixed success of wins and losses but learning more each game.

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- Head Boys Basketball coaches are tentatively Brad Hall, Ryan Hall, Principal; without more games scheduled with Pioneer League teams (Drummond and Lincoln are full), we may have to play in Copper League

*Grant Writer update*

- Meeting as a team this Thursday evening
- VISTA interviews in process. We have a really good candidate amidst others we are interviewing. Offer could be tomorrow for a start in January 2013.

*Vision Impact*

- University of Montana has commented on the energy that Potomac has generated with interest by college education students (we placed 6, 200block students!).

**Report on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Initiatives Workshop**

Nick Salmon, an educational facility planner and member of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), attended our board meeting last February to respond to questions he was asked on how to make the school library a better place to be. At that time, when he found out the library was in the basement, he asked if that was where the school wanted to leave it or if there was any plan to relocate it. During the discussion, he explained about workshops he participates in to help communities plan for future facilities. The all day workshop is led by volunteers from the Montana Chapter of CEFPI. During these sessions, they help coordinate discussions on existing ideas, as well as showing other ideas that have been used in similar situations. The topics of the workshop are tailored to the specific challenges and opportunities of the community, but typically include the following small and whole group exercises:

- *Local Facts & Figures*
- *21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Places*
- *Any Century Skills*
- *Project Based Learning*
- *School Transformation and Development Map Assessment tool*
- *Facility Implications*

Potomac participated in such a workshop last April 27<sup>th</sup> (the written summary of the workshop is appended to these minutes), and Nick attended this board meeting to present a summary of findings the workshop produced.

- First, he said the beginning of the workshop clarified what exists (pg. 2 in appendix) .... What challenges does Potomac face, and how does the transition to high school work for our graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade?
- Second, the workshop discussed the skills students needed to thrive in today's world. (pg. 3 in appendix) Within this, project based learning and how to incorporate more of it into Potomac was looked at. Project based learning is a more engaged way to interact (i.e. hands on, field trips), thereby integrating the community into the students lives. (pg 4 & 5 in appendix)
- Third, the use of time in student learning. (pg 6 in appendix)
- Fourth, the school building, grounds, kindergarten building and community center facilities were discussed. Questions asked concerned the challenges faced by the school in addressing the needs of the students and staff with the existing facilities. Some of the specific challenges were accessibility, and the restrictions in using a leased building for the school. How do these challenges affect the planning of needed upgrades in the facilities? (pg 7 in appendix)

Nick then discussed planning grants offered through the Department of Commerce. Those planning grants would allow Potomac to plan the projects needed for the school and community. From there, the next grants to apply for would be project grants through State Lands.

If a requirement came up where Potomac needed a project completed sooner, another method of funding could be going to the community for a bond, and paying off a loan from the State Board of Investments with the bond income.

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**Clerks Report**

Jill presented an updated detailed budget. This budget analysis removed the costs that were included last time as informational only. The end result of last month's detail budget was a shortfall in our funding of \$5,855. One of the changes included this time is a reduction by half of an aide in payroll. The portion removed can be paid from our REAP funding; since those payments and the work the aide performs can be structured to follow the Title guidelines required by REAP.

Jill also presented a spreadsheet that compares the percentage changes in payroll and General fund income from fiscal year 06-07 through fiscal year 11-12. Over those years, payroll has increased an average of 5.82%, whereas the General fund budget has only increased an average of 2.63%. With payroll such a major portion of our General Fund, the discrepancy between payments out and revenue in has caused us to lose two teachers, and is unsupportable in the long run.

**School Board – Professional Development**

Jeff has been talking to Joe at the Potomac Store about progress on the sign along Hwy 200. He said an electrician will be there this week. He also went to Cully's customer appreciation dinner and heard positive comments about the school, along with one comment that the 4 day week was great.

Victoria went with students on 3 separate field trips as a volunteer. One was to Mike Horse Dam, the second was through 'Wild Montana' where the students investigated a 100 year old blacksmith shop, and the last was to Fort Missoula which was sponsored by the Natural History Museum. She has also continued working with Jim on negotiations with the unions.

Jim has focused on the negotiations with the PEA and PACE. They last met on September 28<sup>th</sup>. At this time the negotiations are at an impasse when it comes to salaries. The next meeting is planned with the PACE representatives on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Strategic Planning**

The Strategic Planning Committee has been formed, and is composed of two board members Bob O'Boyle and Jim Wrobel; two teachers Abby Stitt and Terri Klein; two community members Amy Vann and Julie Duff; and our principal Tim Johnson.

The first meeting was held on September 26<sup>th</sup>. The committee started with looking at what other schools have in place. Bozeman is currently the only school in Montana with a strategic plan. The other plan reviewed is from River Falls, Wisconsin.

Then the committee focused on how to accomplish Potomac's list of goals. Bob said there is no shortage of ideas, and many of the ideas address a particular goal, or multiple goals, as can be seen in the table below.

*We started a table of the BIG ideas, ideas that have been talked about in various forms followed by a need for coordination (strategic plan).*

Ideas to integrate into strategic plan:

District Goal #	Strategic plan	Timeline
1, 5,15, 13?	Library location/adult ed classes(funding through Adult ed)/ tech update	
5	Grant writing, levies, bond, enrollment, contracts	Board committee (fall) for levy(spring);

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District Goal #	Strategic plan	Timeline
15	Advertising school's strengths,	
12, 13, 14,	4-day week	
6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14	Staff development and integration of practice to align, integrate and practice Common Core	
15, 10, 11	Surveys, data collection of community (VISTA)	<b>Fall Conferences (school climate, math survey)</b>
3, 4, 15	Pioneer Festival, PTC, Boosters, grants that leverage our history?	
15	Signage for Potomac Valley location, Monument for school (more than a bear)	
15	Teachers presenting at more conferences, U of M?	
12	Independent Study, Integrated G/T program, individualized education structure	
12, 2	Student Council and "My Voice Survey"(gr 6,7,8)	<b>Nov 1, 2012</b>
<b>2 Bullying</b>	Team building (Brandee, and in PE, Structured Recess, with debrief time); School wide acronym or theme for expectations	
16 Fine Arts	Explorers is a plus; Showcase student work (Comm Center?); Local artists (Jason/Penelope); Grad students U of M (music units); release time for IS project related to art/music	

Discussions brought up some points. First, the committee will go through all district goals to determine possible strategies to complete those goals. Second, they will revisit the vision statement to determine how each strategy supports the Vision of the district. Third, they will determine the stakeholders necessary to complete the tasks, and divide them into groups within the committee to make contacts. Fourth, how involved the committee should be in creating detailed instructions within the Strategic Plan?

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Also, it was noted that revisiting the plan should be ongoing to allow flexibility as funding changes, and the plan should be on a 3 year review cycle. At the next meeting, they will also look at our Technology plan, and go further into Bozeman’s long range plan.

The next meeting is tentatively set for October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Pioneer Field**

Jim started the discussion by referencing the original motion to move forward with development of Pioneer Field. In that motion, Gary’s proposal was that we move forward with the plan as long as the cost to our General Fund was net zero – no cost to the school. Since that motion, Tim has made a valid point that the field benefits the school as well as the community.

Jim said to consider the benefit to the school, and allow some school funding to go towards the field, the original motion needs to be rescinded. The language on this issue also states that if work is being done based on the motion, it cannot be rescinded. This will be researched more, and Jim asked that the original motion be brought to the next board meeting.

Bob O’Boyle joined the meeting through SKYPE.

**School Policy Manual 2<sup>nd</sup> Readings**

Jill contacted MTSBA to see if the changes to Policy 2100 were necessary. MTSBA said they are not required, so those changes will not be added.

Victoria moved to approve the following school policies with the changes discussed:

- |          |                              |           |  |
|----------|------------------------------|-----------|--|
| 1. 1400  | Board Meetings               | 11. 3310  | Student Discipline                           |
| 2. 1420  | School Board Mtg Procedure   | 12. 3416  | Administering Medicines to Students          |
| 3. 1610  | Annual goals and Objectives  | 13. 3612P | Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks        |
| 4. 2100  | School Year Calendar and Day | 14. 4330P | Community Use of School Facilities Procedure |
| 5. 2170  | Digital Academy Classes      | 15. 5328R | Family Medical Leave                         |
| 6. 2170P | Digital Academy Procedure    | 16. 5510F | HIPAA  |
| 7. 2312  | Copyright                    | 17. 7515  | GASB 54                                      |
| 8. 2312P | Copyright Compliance         | 18. 8425  | Service Animals                              |
| 9. 2510  | School Wellness              |           |  |
| 10. 3120 | Compulsory Attendance        |           |  |

Jeff seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0.**

**Personnel**

Tim recommended approving Tammy Dry and Jen Norberg as volunteers, Angela Johnson, Toni Lathum, Allyson Nelson and Amy Vann as substitutes, and Brad and Ryan Hall as coaches. Jeff moved to approve the list pending completed background checks. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0.**

**Charges for Breakfast Program**

The charges for our Lunch program are set to the Federal Reimbursement Rate. Jim moved to have the charge for our Breakfast program also set to the Federal Reimbursement Rate. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0.**

Tim thought the costs could go over that rate, and suggested the board amend the motion to add the word ‘minimum’ to the charges.

Jim amended the motion to say he moved to have the *minimum* charge for our Breakfast program set to the Federal Reimbursement Rate. Bob seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0.**

Bob asked Jill to review the lunch and breakfast costs vs reimbursement after the New Year. At minimum, have it for the February board meeting, but preferably for Tim's 'State of Potomac' address. Jill will do that.

**Levy**

Bob started the discussion with the fact that school funding based on enrollment only does not consider the problems associated with maintaining our school curriculum, buildings and grounds. With our declining enrollment, we have lost over \$41,800 in our General Fund over the past two years. Next year, our budget will be decreased again. We have already reduced staff and as many expenses as we can while maintaining our goals for our students. There is no other choice but to look for additional funding.

Jim asked if Bob would like to put together a committee to research our options for funds. Bob said he did, and whoever was on the committee would work with Tim and Jill.

Tim said the suggestion of a maintenance levy as a way to cover the costs of our existing buildings is a good choice. With the schools 100 year anniversary coming up, and our new Pioneer festival of celebration, the community has a direct benefit from maintaining the facilities.

Bob said whether it is a Maintenance Levy, or one for the General fund or Technology, the committee can work on presentations and bring them to the board.

Bob appointed Jeff and Bob to work with Tim and Jill on the committee.

**Adjourn**

Chair O'Boyle adjourned the Board meeting at 9:19 pm.

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Robert O'Boyle, Chair date

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Jill M Thornton, Clerk date