



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

November 13, 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.”*

Call to Order

Board Chair Bob O’Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:28 PM by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Victoria Richardson and Jim Wrobel. 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 October 9, 2012
2. Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$51,179.12, Total Payroll = \$57,267.65
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 \$14,826.69, Ending Balance \$14,778.16.

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

Principals Report

Community

- Title 1 parent U night: Nov 15th M&M’s!!
- PAC meeting: no one in attendance
- Community Center Winter Fest December 21st

School

- Montana Repertory Theater visited Oct 29th
- Explorers Program: Outdoor Survival/Overnight (KPAX story upcoming)
- Electives: Science Olympiad (Davis), Chimes (Schmill), Art (Linnell) intro of art concepts, replicas of seven wonders of the ancient world on display at MC Library
- Independent Study begins Quarter 2. Nov 16th staff meeting will outline and put into action the I.S. concept. This is an important part of a Gifted/Talented program.
- Janelle Wells received high praise for the Art field trip hosted by U of M. They are considering using the power point Janelle made for future tours at the U of M.
- Conferences Nov 10-20
- Science Olympiad competition Tuesday Nov 20th.
- Math grading has added components tying MT Common Core strands. We are building stronger ties to Common Core in assessments that are recorded. We are moving more toward a growth model rather than the current summative letter grade (grades 3-8).

Activities

- Girls Basketball
- Boys Basketball - Brad Hall

Grant Writer update

- VISTA candidate, Hannah Still, has accepted our offer. Formal training through AmeriCorps begins January 23. Upon completion formally promoting her to VISTA member expected on January 26th.

Vision Impact

- MTSBA Award; Missoulian article (11-09-12)

Clerks Report

Jill met with Brenda Harrold, Terri Klein and Nancy Linnell to discuss our school budget. We reviewed the expenditures for the General Fund as well as the current balances in the Miscellaneous Fund, discussing them in detail to get a clear understanding of the costs involved.

We also discussed setting up a protocol to review priorities for end of year fund expenditures.

School Board – Professional Development

Jim has continued to focus on the negotiations with the PEA and PACE. The meeting with Jill, Terri, Nancy and Brenda to create a better understanding of our current budget was part of the process.

Bob has been working with the Strategic Planning committee. He feels we will have a good roadmap when the Strategic Plan is completed.

Bob also worked with the 6th grade on flint knapping. He found the extra 10 minutes of a class period that was achieved by the 4 day week allowed more students to get involved this time.

He also wrote letters publicizing Tim’s award. He feels we all need to be advocates for the school by speaking out about the good things that are happening here. This would have a positive impact on the school, our community and our future funding.

Tim commented that based on the National Report Card, which is generated by random testing of the 4th and 8th grades, Montana placed 2nd in the United States. Only Massachusetts had better scores than us.

Bob said highlighting some of these things helps us with funding. There are only a few ways we can bring in more funding to support our school. The more positive information we provide the more students we can see coming to Potomac.

Strategic Planning

Bob said the Strategic Planning Committee members have made a solid start with the staff on working on how to achieve our goals.

Bozeman is the only other school in Montana that has a Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan will give direction for our grant writers, staff, and the board.

Tim said he has been contacted by the Burback foundation again. They donated \$7500 last year for iPads. They approached us again as they are excited by the direction the school is going. When asked what the school could use, Tim said this year we could use more technical supplies, a school server, or funds for our explorer program. In talking to Tim, they said what is going on at our school is what their children are getting in private school. They are so pleased with the positive things they see they might pick two things out of the list. And this could be an

ongoing funding opportunity. This highlights how generating positive awareness of our school’s activities and curriculum benefits us.

Pioneer Field

Jim referenced 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 he now has some ideas on how to move forward on this issue to be consistent with how the board would like to proceed while considering the benefits to the school. But he would like to wait for Gary to be in attendance before the discussion as he proposed the original motion.

Levy

Bob had started the discussion on a levy at the last meeting 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.

Tim said at that meeting that 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.

At this point, Bob would like to see a survey asking the community for input. Then we could continue with sending information to the community so they are knowledgeable about the school and community center needs.

He said it would be good to complete this part before our ‘State of Potomac’ address at the end of January.

Personnel

Tim recommended approving Tad Downs as assistant coach for the boy’s basketball. Jim moved to approve Tad Downs as assistant coach for the boy’s basketball pending a completed background check. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 3-0.**

Collection Management System

Victoria said the PTC is researching a computer system that will tie Potomac’s library into the Missoula County System. The first step in this is to approve a Collection Management Policy. The proposed policy is attached. This policy will then be included in the submittal for a grant from the State for the computer system.

The PTC will fund membership in the online county library catalogue. Another requirement is a static internet connection.

The Collection Management Policy describes how the Potomac Library would function.

We will need to have this approved by the December board meeting in order to apply for the grant.

PEA Grievance

The PEA filed a grievance in September stating that they felt the district violated the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) when it allowed a staff member to opt out of the District health insurance program. They referred to the Agreement wording which states "... the District shall pay, for each teacher, \$520 for single coverage of the current plan."

This grievance was presented to Tim Johnson for a response. He contacted the legal department at the MTSBA, and responded that "... Article 8, section 13.1, subsection A, describes the district's contribution of \$520 per teacher. There is no language in the CBA requiring participation by each teacher. Without such explicit language, the district maintains that each teacher has the option of participating within the PEA designated plan."

The next step the PEA followed was to ask for the grievance to move to Level Two, which is a referral to the Board for review.

Dave Severson attended the meeting as a representative of the teachers union, the MEA-MFT.

Jim moved that the District deny the grievance. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 3-0.**

Adjourn

Chair O'Boyle adjourned the Board meeting at 9:48 pm.

Robert O'Boyle, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date