



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

December 9, 2013

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 Robert O’Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Gary Long and Jim Wrobel. Cliff Vann attended through Skype. Tim Johnson, principal and Jill Thornton, clerk, were also in attendance.

Public Input (for issues not on the agenda)

None

Consent Agenda

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$31,638.16, Total Payroll = \$56,883.56

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 October 16 - \$19,934.02; End Balance November 30 - \$20,977.33

Jim moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Student Council

Bob and Cliff will attend a student council meeting Monday the 16th at noon.

Principals Report

Community

- Centennial Circle: push to sell more bricks upcoming: Holiday program, Community Center Christmas Celebration

School

- 105 Students
- Holiday program scheduled for Dec 18th, 6:30 pm
- Mrs. Schmill and Ms. Stitt attended SS curriculum meeting; Mrs. Davis attended science standards. These are new standards coming up for Common Core curriculum.
- Technology:
 - iPad Minis purchased for staff (REAP Federal funding for rural education) and kindergarten purchased a class set (10 – using one time kindergarten funds)
 - Training to be coordinated through Tech Committee
 - PTC purchasing additional iPad 2’s to complete 3rd and 4th grade set (20)
- PCRC update
 - Sample track material tested for Health Department; final test was good with conditions of using material and not using heavy equipment to install
 - Army Corps of Engineers affirmed that the borrow pit is not a wetland
- Media and History Center open to the public hours: Tues 4 – 6pm, Wed and Thurs 4:30 – 6 pm. Open House December 10th.

- Explorers:
 - Trips to: Jocko River trout hatchery
 - Professional Photographer Brian Johnson was guest speaker December 6th
 - Robotics team continues practices
 - Science Olympiad – placed 23 out of 42 schools. That is a growth in our overall ranking with our continued experience

.Activities

- Boys Basketball (Nov-Dec)

Vision Impact

- Race to Nowhere focus group is formed and planning a screening in Missoula. U of M Education Dept is interested

Clerks Report

The current budget proposed during the August and September meetings has maintenance funds set aside. Jill will discuss these under the new business agenda item 'Maintenance Funds'.

School Board – Professional Development

Cliff attended the science Olympiad. He felt it was a great experience, exposing the students to a college, its campus, and competition. He also attended the Chili cook-off.

Bob met with the Clearwater Communications Tower group. They were interested in what they could do to help the school. The impetus came from a condition of their permit for their local tower installation.

After learning about the grant the school received from the Montana Historical Society, they worked out uses for matching funds of \$3,000. They would like to have a screen purchased for the Media and History Center that can show digitized historic photos in a slide show. To go with the screen, the matching grant will also cover a blu-ray player and sound system.

Jim and Gary attended two negotiation meetings with the PEA.

MTSBA Personnel Maintenance Contract

In our October meeting, the following motion was put forth:

Jim moved to approve the MTSBA Personnel Maintenance Contract. Jeff seconded the motion.

Our current contract with MTSBA continues through this year, so it was not a necessary item on the October agenda. Therefore, since the motion was not required, Jim moved to rescind the motion. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Performance Pay Procedure

In the October meeting, it was agreed that a detailed performance pay plan needed to be set up before the beginning of a school year. Such a plan was not developed in time for this current year. The committee consisting of Jim and Gary then presented the following listed guidelines to be used in the current year's performance pay:

1. A final decision on available funds and disbursement will be made by June 15 of the fiscal year.
2. All staff may participate.
3. Proportions of Performance pay will be determined per group, as was done last year.
4. An MOU that states 'same salary' is necessary to state there is no guarantee of amount.
5. Performance Pay will not be any part of a contractual agreement.

Board of Trustees..... 3

- 6. No recipients have control over how funds are expended. A mechanism will be used that will neither degrade nor increase the funds available.

During discussions in the November meeting, Gary asked for a procedure to be set up to achieve this year’s plan.

Today, Tim brought the form that was developed last year to present to the board for this year’s performance pay.

Gary feels this form is not the procedure he requested. He would like to see a procedure outline guidelines with goals that can be measured. He would like to make sure that it is both individual and specific in future years when it can be set up ahead of time. For this year, he is fine with agreeing to the limited guidelines listed as a procedure.

Tim said he will add the guidelines listed above to the form narrative.

Negotiations Update

Jim said the negotiation teams have met three times to date. The first meeting set up ground rules, the second meeting listed items to be negotiated, and the third meeting finalized that list. At the third meeting an initial salary offer was made by the district to the PEA. There was no immediate response. The next meeting will be held December 16th at 5pm.

Policy 6110P

The first reading of Policy 6110P changed page 2, first row to read:

The Board will: directly negotiate with bargaining units and approve collective bargaining agreements.
The Principal will: be present at negotiations, provide information as needed/requested, make recommendations as needed/requested, and act in the role of a facilitator.

The board agreed nothing is lost if the last sentence in the Principal duties is removed.

The last sentence will be removed, and the word ‘and’ will be placed before ‘make recommendations...’

Cliff moved to approve Policy 6110P with the above changes. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Healthy Food Vending Machine

Alex and Sarah Baer came to speak to the board about their company, Healthy Vending by h.u.m.a.n.

They said their goal is to provide vending machines that follow the USDA guidelines for school lunches. The machines offer snacks that give the option for students to choose whole grain snacks, nuts, and snacks with protein.

With the size of our school, there would not be enough traffic to support the cost of the program. Currently Bonner School, with 350 students, is the smallest school possible.

Furnace and Energy Efficiency Report

The school has not received another bid yet for heating options.

Personnel

Tim recommends Tad Downes as an assistant Boys Basketball Coach. Jim moved to approve Tad Downes as an assistant Boys Basketball Coach. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Tim recommends Season Cole as a substitute for Friday Explorers. Jim moved to approve Season Cole as a substitute for Friday Explorers. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Gifted and Talented/Open Enrollment

Tim wanted to discuss open enrollment with the board.

For accreditation, there are thresholds for each class. Once those thresholds are reached, another class needs to be formed and a new teacher hired. Based on practice, students who have been enrolled at our school from out of district for a couple of years could sue if they were denied enrollment because there was no more room in a classroom.

He would like to hear what the board feels is a good number to use to make sure the school is not caught in such a situation.

Bob asked if Tim had a recommendation.

Tim said he feels we would be safe if we close enrollment once a class reaches 4 less than the maximum allowed by accreditation. The board agreed.

Maintenance Funds

Jill requested that the board set expectations for General Fund money that would be put aside each year to start more consistent maintenance of our buildings. The board agreed that \$20,000 would be a reasonable amount to set aside this year for building maintenance.

Trust Building

Bob said he would like a committee formed to investigate how to promote relationships, communications and teamwork. He feels we need to actively pursue a remedy for the trust issues he hears from staff.

Cliff and Bob volunteer for the committee.

8th Grade Trip

Bob asked what the 8th grade is requesting from the board concerning their trip.

The 8th grade said they would like approval of:

1. The ability to travel during the school year
2. The approval to travel out of state
3. Teachers to go with – current request would be Mr. Johnson and Ms McAuley
4. Funds from the school to help with the trip in the amount of \$5000

Board discussion concluded the trip would be feasible during the school year as it is loaded with educational content.

Traveling during the school year does not require board approval, only traveling out of state. Jim moved to allow the 8th grad trip to travel to Utah. Cliff seconded the motion. **Passed 4-0**

Funding and teacher costs will need to be reviewed.

Tim recommends the trip use solid transportation. Busses are the safest.

403B Administration and Plan Agreement

Jill explained that we currently administer our 403B funds. The IRS has been making changes in the requirements for 403B plans, and with those ongoing changes in IRS requirements, an administrative group to oversee the funds would assure we keep in compliance.

Hiring an administrative group has become common practice with the other schools as a result of the IRS changes. When Jill contacted some of the schools and administrative groups, she discovered the school does not bear the cost of the administration. It has become a standard cost of the 403B companies like Horace Mann. She did not receive information back from administrative groups she has contacted yet, but will bring them to the board when they arrive.

Adjourn

Board Chair O'Boyle adjourned the Board meeting at 11:18 pm.

Robert O'Boyle, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date