



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

January 14, 2013

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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 7:00 PM by leading all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those trustees present were: Jeff Hahn, Gary Long, Victoria Richardson and Jim Wrobel. Tim Johnson, principal and Jill Thornton, clerk, were also in attendance.

Public Input (for issues not on the agenda) PEA submitted a letter of intent to commence negotiations of the Professional Agreement between the PEA and Potomac SD11.

Minutes

Jim moved to approve the minutes of December 11, 2012. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Consent Agenda

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$14,606.91, Total Payroll = \$54,497.12

Business Cards – Included in Total Claims noted.

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

Extracurricular (Student Accounts) – Beginning Balance \$14,256.73, Ending Balance \$14,270.73.

Jeff moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Gary seconded the motion.

Jim asked about two items in the warrants. The first concerned busses for Boys Basketball, and the second concerned costs for the Potomac Athletic Field. He asked if any of these costs were coming out of the General fund. Jill said they were not.

Bob asked for a vote on the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. **Passed 5-0**

Principals Report

Community

- PAC meeting: State of Potomac Presentation January 31st
- Community Center Winter Fest December 21st – Good first winterfest, will be a community Christmas party next year.
- Centennial Calendar
- PTC provided staff with pre-Holiday program dinner at Cully’s. THANK YOU PTC!

School

- Holiday Memories program Wednesday December 19th, 6:30; highlighting interviews and photos of long time Potomac residents interviewed by students – There were many positive comments on the interviews and the connections to the community. The vocal solo’s also received rave reviews.

- H.I.T. (High Impact Trip) preliminary parent meeting positive. At its core, H.I.T. is meant to be very challenging. It provides both physical and mental challenges on a ship with the World Ocean School Organization.
- Fencing: Ms Wells coordinated with Missoula Fencing K-2 fencing for January (note compliment posted on homepage from Missoula Fencing Coordinator Laura Lee)
- Dec 17th Chimes Performances in Missoula w/ Mrs. Schmill; Rest of gr 5-8 were at U of M with Mrs. Davis for a science presentation or Home Resource with Mrs. Linnell for additional activities.
- Testing during Jan (MAP and AIMSweb) will be completed prior to conferences in the first week of February.

Activities

- Robotics: Missoula first held a local practice competition and then the students will go to Bozeman on February 1st.
- Girl's Volleyball scheduling meeting and first practice begins Feb 7th

Grant Writer update

Grant Awards

- Burback Foundation
 - Met with Charles and Margaret Burback at the school on November . Provided information, answered questions and requested support for Explorer's Program and School Equipment (computer server and tech support).
 - Received notice of award for full funding request of \$8,000 for Equipment. Received communication identifying continued interest in Explorer's Program support.
 - Mailed a 2013 School calendar in appreciation of their ongoing funding support.
- Jane S Heman Foundation
 - Received request for proposal for year-end funding awards. Participated in several internal discussions, made recommendations, and crafted detailed funding request of \$8,000 that was approved by the Administrator and submitted to the Foundation on December 7, 2012.
 - Received notice of award in excess of full funding request: \$10,257
 - Mailed a 2013 School calendar in appreciation of their ongoing funding support.
 - *This is the first grant/donation received by the School that is providing direct support to staff (professional development: \$2K) and is helping offset general expenses (facility rental for PGCC: \$3K). Additionally, this funding is providing critical support for the School's participation in the AmeriCorps VISTA program (\$2K)and is infusing dollars into the School Centennial Celebration budget (\$1K) to ensure a successful venture on June 29, 2013.*
- Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative, sponsorship
- Received approval for and wrote a letter of request from the Potomac Greenough Community Center for \$500 in financial support of the Pioneer Festival / Centennial Celebration which was awarded January 12, 2013.

Grant Writing

Initiated work on several grant applications due in January. See list below.
 Fuel up to Play 60
 Registered for, shared, and am participating in a *Got Milk Breakfast Blitz* grant program.

Potomac Explorers

Met with Program Director, Tim Johnson and Program Coordinator, Melissa McAuley to discuss gain and needs for program in its first several months of planning and implementation. Drafted programmatic budget for review and use in grant proposals.

Pioneer Festival

Established and maintained a new facebook account for PGCC to help in sharing community info, including the Pioneer Festival. Met with Yalanda Hinkle on January 11th to train her in its use and to discuss needs for the PGCC website under construction.

Submitted request to NorthWestern Energy for charitable support of our Centennial Celebration. Scheduled the first planning meeting of the year and drafted an agenda and budget for review and approval.

AmeriCorps VISTA

Participated in all aspects of project design, applicant review, interviews and final selection. Communicated with invited member, Hannah Still, in preparation for her school service, and assisted in identifying potential housing opportunities. Provided recommendations and review of documents to Administrator regarding school's participation in program.

Other

Submitted Letter to the Editor thanking staff, volunteers and donors for their support of Potomac School and identifying upcoming Centennial Celebration that ran in the Missoulian December 4th.

January Work Plan

- Continue researching relevant grant opportunities and foundations.
- Initiate sponsorship requests for Pioneer Festival / Centennial Celebration from area businesses.
- Help mentor and support training of AmeriCorps VISTA member, Hannah Still, upon her arrival.
- Submit grants for the following deadlines:
- PPL Community Fund: January 31, 2013 (awards in mid-May)
- PGCC: HUB development
- School: Explorer's Program
- NW Farm Credit Rural Grant: February 1, 2013
- Resident and credit service member, Jody Wills, has offered to submit a required letter of support for the funding application for the HUB.
- Plum Creek Foundation: January 31, 2013 (awards in mid-April)
- Missoula Electric Coop: sponsorship request for Pioneer Festival
- Northwest Energy sponsorship request for Pioneer Festival

Future Grant Opps/Deadlines:

- Charlotte Martin Foundation for Explorer's: April 30, 2013 (awards June 15)
- Missoula County Parks and Rec for Phase II development HUB: April 15, 2013
- Montana Great Classroom Awards, PCTC for Explorer's Program or Webinar Development: June 1/Dec 1 2013
- Washington Foundation for Innovative Learning Support: rolling application deadline
- Town Pump Charitable Foundation: rolling application deadline
- *PGCC Facility Upgrades
- School Centennial

Upcoming Meetings: January 18th Pioneer Festival planning meeting

Ideas and suggestions for consideration by the School if development activities are to continue in 2013 and beyond:

- Create a *Case Statement* and *Fundraising Plan* to mature the School's emerging development program.
- Develop *Abstracts* on innovative programming at the School for use in fundraising and professional development opportunities (speaking engagements).
- Improve the provision of information through E-Marketing program that can track "performance" of newsletter and topical links (i.e; Vertical Response)

- Establish a non-profit rate, *online pay account* (PayPal, Network for Good etc) to receive charitable donations and gifts. Create Donate Today buttons for the website that reflect programmatic needs (athletic program, volunteers, etc)
- Advertise the ability of the school to receive *Planned Gifts* (i.e; bequests) and discuss a mechanism for receipt including Missoula Community Development Foundation
- Further diversify the school's funding portfolio by researching the creation of *Earned Income* opportunities, including educational webinars that professionally package and showcase the school's implementation of innovative educational programming (Integrated Math, Integrated Gifted and Talented, Explorer's, Lexia and more).
- Continue to increase communication and collaboration between local clubs and non-profit organizations to serve the good of the community. The maturing relationship between the School and PGCC proved highly effective with fundraising in 2012.

Vision Impact

- Corvallis Public Schools use of Math realignment; Conversation with G/T students gr 5-12 in Polson support the philosophy of what we are doing here

School Board – Professional Development

Victoria has been involved with Robotics, negotiations, and is signing up for the March 13 Budget symposium presented by the MTSBA.

Jeff worked with Cully's to get the sign up, and it is now functional! He also attended the Holiday Program, and is signing up for the February 4th Labor Law conference presented by the MTSBA.

Gary has been active with Robotics and attended both the Winter Fest and Holiday Program.

Jim is also signing up for the March 13 budget symposium. Plus he has continued work with Victoria and the unions on negotiations. They started May 12th last year with a plan to revise contracts to reflect the needs of the 4 day school week, and to discuss compensation for the 12-13 school year. Last week a preliminary agreement was reached with the PEA on compensation, which includes freezing the matrix. Next discussions will take a look at Performance Pay.

PACE discussions covered the entire contract, since theirs expired in June 2012. A tentative agreement was reached on their contract also, and they will be part of the discussions on Performance Pay.

Bob asked if Jim and Victoria were at the point where a committee should be formed to work out Performance Pay possibilities and strategies. Jim said it was time, and he would like to be on that committee. Gary also volunteered, with Victoria volunteering as the alternate. Tim will talk to PACE to see who would like to volunteer and Nancy Linnell will get names of volunteers from PEA.

Bob said he has been attending school events with his camera and taking pictures for posting on our page. These have been posted and he invites everyone to take a look.

Strategic Planning

Bob said the Strategic Planning Committee members have been working through Potomac's school goals and creating the strategic plan for their implementation. About half of the strategic plan timelines for achieving the goals have been set. The rest of the timelines will be set at the next meeting on January 28th along with listing stakeholders. The Strategic Plan could be complete for board review at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Pioneer Field

No input at this time.

Levy

In Octobers board meeting Bob started the discussion on a levy 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.

In a meeting on the 5th of December, Jeff, Tim and Bob discussed ways to increase the schools funding. The three methods listed were;

- 1. Increased enrollment
- 2. Grants, and
- 3. Levy

We have already been working on increased enrollment and grants. A levy is the next area of investigation.

Tim said previously 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.

Jeff, Bob and Tim met again to work out an outline for a levy request. Bob said they are working towards having an informational town hall meeting at the State of Potomac address on January 31st at 6:30pm.

Collection Management System

Victoria said at the November meeting that the PTC is researching a computer system that will tie Potomac’s library into the Missoula County System. The first step in this process is to approve a Collection Management Policy.

At this time, the Collection Management Policy is still needed, but the State Library has decided they cannot allow schools to participate in the Montana Shared Library Catalogue system. Their staffing is insufficient to make it work, and their approach to OPI to negotiate more manpower to get the system to schools has been denied. Victoria asked for letters to be written to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to show them the support the State Library has from the schools, Potomac SD11 in particular. Bob and Tim have volunteered to write letters.

Jim moved to approve the third reading of the Collection Management Policy. Victoria seconded the motion.

Passed 5-0

Explorers

Jim moved to approve our extra-curricular Explorers Program. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Personnel

Tim recommended approving Wendy McDaniel and Grace Leacock as the Volley Ball Coaches. Jim moved to approve Wendy McDaniel and Grace Leacock as the Volley Ball Coaches. Victoria seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Tim recommended approving Melissa McAuley part time as an Explorers teacher. Victoria moved to approve Melissa McAuley on a part time contract provided payment for Explorers time has no negative impact on the General Fund, and pending a completed background check. Jim seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Potomac Centennial

Bob has been asked to represent the board on a planning committee for the Potomac Centennial. He asked the board if there would be any objection. There was none. Then he asked if anyone else would like to volunteer on the planning committee. Currently Tim is representing the school. Jim volunteered to work along with Bob on the Potomac Centennial planning committee.

Contingency Fund

Jim would like to have designated funds separated within the General Fund for contingency use. He feels these funds should be restricted to pre approval by the board for whatever the board would like them spent on. Uses could be changed by board action for any unforeseen emergencies.

Jill has called MTSBA to review options for this type of restricted use. She will let the board members know when information is received so a special board meeting can be set up to designate or separate funds within the General Fund.

Advanced Studies Integration

Tim has been reviewing material that describes how to incorporate curricula that gives all students access to advanced studies in areas of their interest and/or talent. While reading this material, he said the way our math and reading programs are run already do this, as do Explorers and our 9th period of independent study. He asked the board if they are interested in seeing this approach extend to other areas of the curriculum. This would provide challenges to all students at Potomac allowing them to excel in ways the standard age/grade method does not promote.

The board would like to see more information on this.

Adjourn

Chair O'Boyle adjourned the Board meeting at 11:08 pm.

Robert O'Boyle, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date