



Potomac Elementary School

School Board Minutes

for

March 9, 2015

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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 Cliff Vann called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 both in attendance.

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

Consent Agenda

Warrant Lists – Total Claims = \$26,993.92, Total Payroll = \$65,009.76

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 Jan 31, 2015 - \$22,376.01; End Balance Feb 28, 2015 - \$25,448.34

Jason moved to approve the consent agenda. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Teacher Presentations

Melissa McAuley presented Explorers activities.

- The first one involved the students constructing bridges from wood craft sticks and elmers glue. The bridges were then tested to see how much weight they could hold. The winning bridge used 32 of the craft sticks, and their bridge held 300 lbs!
- The second activity involved building a telescope to scale. This used math skills to reduce the scale model down.
- The third activity was the students went skiing.
- Fourth, they worked with a CSI forensic scientist and mock crime scene to study.
- And a fifth activity coming up is the younger students are building pinewood derby cars, and the older students are building a go cart!

Kelsy asked how many students attend Friday explorers and how many need a place to go on Fridays. Melissa said the average number of students attending is 15 to 20, and about a third to half of those need to be there.

Terri Klein brought the School Board to her 1st grade classroom for her presentation.

- First she showed how she is using a book titled Filling Your Bucket A to Z to learn words about positive behaviors and using ‘Respect’ as the focus. An example is that A stands for ‘Ask someone to play.’ This is ‘filling their bucket’ and she discusses how that helps others and makes them feel good about themselves.
- Second she showed how she works with the students on writing. Though writing is difficult at this level, they learn about writing reports. The one she showed was ‘Penguin Reports.’ To begin with the students choose a specific penguin species card to read. Then they write a report containing the information they learned about what that penguin looks like, eats, enemies, and other cool facts about that species.
- For Presidents’ Day the students learned about George Washington and wrote facts about him using complete sentences. The students then put those facts together in paragraph form.
- Terri also has the students watching an eagle nest in Decorah, Iowa. The students learn about the eagles and will keep a journal documenting what they learn and see as the eggs incubate and hatch. Terri also

locates where the eagles are on a map of the United States the students are provided through a 'Maps for Kids' program. Watching the eagles coincides with a school wide assembly by Kate Davis, the Raptor Lady!

- The Iditarod continues teaching the students map skills as they follow the route of the Iditarod with daily updates about the race. They are keeping track of mushers in the top ten places and watching to see how long it will take all of those entered to finish the 1000+ mile race.

Administrative Report

- Robotics Club (4th-8th after school program) had a BattleBots competition Feb. 12th at the end of the day for the student body to watch- Kristina/Melissa organized
- Student Council had a 5th-8th dance Feb. 12th- Melissa/Sarah chaperoned
- MathCounts competition at UM with Kristina Davis' 8th grade/geometry math students (Feb. 25th)
- County Spelling Bee participant- Hannah B. (Feb. 26th)
- Kate Davis was here Feb. 26th for a whole school assembly- Kristina organized
- Dr. Seuss Day (March 2nd): older student was paired with younger student, each read to each other then cake- Justine organized
- Girls basketball: 6 girls participating in the 5th through 8th grades, 3-2-1 so far
- Rachel Fife, who taught in the military, is teaching 6 days of Arabic to the foreign language class starting on Wednesday, March 11th
- MontCas (Science only) testing for 4th and 8th grade will be weeks of March 9 & 16
- BINGO Saturday, March 14th!!
- UM Spectrum here Wednesday, March 18th and will be having brain workshops for all the classes- Terri organized. They will also present a Family Science night from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.
- End of 3rd Quarter March 19th, report cards home on the 26th
- Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman field trip March 24th: 2 coach busses (leave 8:15, return 6:30) - Melissa organized
- Track scheduling meeting will be March 25th from 12-1:30, myself or Rachel Fife (possible coach) will attend
- Title I Night March 25th, 6:30pm- Krystal organizing (there will be 3 total per policy)
- Bike-a-thon will be in Fall 2015
- Spring Break March 27-April 5
- K-3 robotics started last week, with Kristina and Melissa teaching.
- Animal Wonders is teaching in the school now, combining Biology and Life Sciences.

Clerks Report

Jill presented an adjusted budget to the board detailing some of the changes required this year and how those changes affected our contingency amounts. Our current contingency amount is now \$12,749.

Board Professional Development Reports

- The entire board attended training by MTSBA on labor issues.
- Kelsy attended a staff meeting, the Raptors of the Rockies presentation, Battle Bots with robotics, and 2 ski trips.
- Craig also attended the Raptors of the Rockies, and has been researching sex offender policies. He will continue his research.
- Cliff met with Sarah Schmill after our principal was placed on administrative leave and worked on the current transition. He has also been talking to superintendents as a result of this transition to achieve a smooth continuation of the business of the school. MTSBA is heading the investigation into the complaint received by the school district concerning our principal. Cliff has been the liaison with MTSBA for this issue.

Technology Budgeting/Levy Discussion

The School Board feels the Technology Plan and Levy needs a more concrete plan with priorities. Until then –Craig moved to table the Technology Levy. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Policy Revision Committee

With the number of issues necessary to attend to at this time, the policy revision committee report will be held until later.

Personnel

The staff worked together to list what needed to be accomplished for the end of this year while our principal is on administrative leave. Sarah Schmill has volunteered to be a supervising teacher, and the staff has worked out a way to give her more time in the office while still teaching her classes. Cliff said there were two important parts to this. The first is the students, and by keeping Sarah in the classroom most of the time, the students will be best served. The second is Sarah’s success. With that in mind, Cliff talked to superintendents to discuss this situation, and their recommendation was to consider a mentor for Sarah. Recommendations he received were; Chris Stout, Seeley Lake Elementary Superintendent, and Billy Jo Juneau, Principal of Babb School.

Kelsy asked Sarah what she thought, and Sarah said not having experience, it’s difficult to know what you don’t know. Having a mentor with experience would assure we do not let the school down.

Jason said he would be the spokesperson and contact Chris Stout to set up a meeting and see the best way to proceed.

Gary moved to appoint Sarah Schmill interim supervising teacher. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

MOU – Staff Evaluations

Evaluations for staff have not been completed for the 2014-2015 school year. The staff feels if evaluations could be completed at the least for the newer teachers without tenure, they could let the experienced teacher evaluations go for this year. The contract the board has with the teachers lists more than that for required evaluations, so the teachers presented an MOU to adjust that contract to only evaluate the non-tenured teachers. The last paragraph of the MOU listed Lisa Blank as the person to bring in to do the evaluations. The person to do the evaluations is not finalized though, so the last paragraph was removed.

Jason moved to approve the MOU without the last paragraph. Kelsy seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

School Calendar

The staff presented a preliminary calendar for the 2015-2016 school year that added 15 minutes to the 3rd through 8th grade lunch period. This added 5 days to the calendar, maintaining the same length of day. Questions arose concerning how well our calendar fits with the MCPS calendar. The calendar will be reviewed and revised if necessary for the next meeting with this in mind.

Knife River Corporation Grant

Gary moved to approve the Knife River Corporation Grant. Jason seconded the motion. **Passed 4 – 1 abstaining**

Community Center Lease

Jason moved to approve the Lease Agreement with the Potomac-Greenough Community Center starting September 1, 2014 and continuing until August 31, 2017. Kelsy seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

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FY 2013-2014 Audit

Jason moved to accept the Potomac School audit ending June 30, 2014. Craig seconded the motion. **Passed 4 – 1 abstaining**

FY 2014-2015 Audit Contract

Jason moved to sign the Audit Contract for the year ending June 30, 2015. Gary seconded the motion. **Passed 5-0**

Negotiation Committees

Cliff and Gary volunteered to be on the negotiation committees. Jason volunteered as alternate.

Adjourn

Board Chair Vann adjourned the Board meeting at 10:50 pm.

Cliff Vann, Chair

date

Jill M Thornton, Clerk

date