

PAC – PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Date: March 4, 2020, 6:30 pm

Location: General Wolfe School, South Hill Elementary School library

Agenda

PAC MEMBERS (in order of sign-in sheet): Katie Stevenson, Robbin Simao, Kristin Rotte, Michael Nedelec, M. McLean, F. Marbella, R.J. McRae, Mae Toor, Adam Rucker, Annie Low-Bier, Freda Robin

PAC Executive:

- Donna Rayner, Co-Chair
- Hope Walker, Co-Chair
- Kemp Edmonds, Vice Chair
- Jaimini Thakore, Treasurer
- Claire Wilson, Secretary

Administration/Teachers: Nancy Bourque, Principal / Ms. Beeman and Ms. Jamal

1. **Welcome and Call to Order** – Donna Rayner

2. **Approval of January 2020 minutes**

Moved Kristin Rotte	Seconded Michael Nedelec	Carried
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3. **Administration / Teacher Report:**

Nancy Bourque, Principal:

- Nancy thanked the organizers of the Friendship Dance, Kate Saunders and Meghan Hunter, and the volunteers who assisted them. The dance was a big hit with the kids.
- Nancy thanked the teachers and staff for organizing the Pink Day assembly, which included a wonderful performance by the pop choir and participation by many intermediate students.
- Teachers are interested in forming part of a committee with the PAC Executive and parents to research outdoor classroom ideas for the Wolfe site post-seismic.

Ms. Jamal, Teacher:

- Project Chef will be in residence at South Hill during April and May. Ms. Jamal's grade 5 class participated last year and found the program to be an amazing experience.
- Each class will spend one week with Project Chef either in the morning or afternoon. Students prepare one recipe per day. They learn about healthy eating and food preparation and hygiene. They also learn about eating etiquette and cleaning up.
- It is helpful to have parent volunteers during the sessions so please consider volunteering with your child's class.

4. Chair Report and update – Donna Rayner & Hope Walker

- The Lunch Box Theatre (Theatrix) put on a fantastic performance of Hercules (a musical) on March 4. The theatre program ran for five weeks beforehand during which time 35 students in grades 2-5 practiced twice per week a lunchtime. Parents are encouraged to sign up their kids next year. Theatrix made a contribution to the PAC of \$350, which was much appreciated.
- Casino Night occurred on January 31, which included General Wolfe and two other elementary schools. Overall, 120 tickets were sold, and 80 people attended. 50% of tickets were purchased by Wolfe people, so Wolfe got 50% of the proceeds (\$250). Although the funds raised were much lower than hoped, it was a really fun community event. The low attendance may have been partly a result of the timing of the event, the new location (Creekside Community Centre as opposed to the Anza Club) and the poor weather that evening.
- The group that put on the hip-hop dance instruction last fall offered to lead a dance-a-thon fundraiser at Wolfe., the cost of which was included in the lesson fee. This seems like a fun event that could occur at Wolfe during the day and include the entire student body (and interested parents). The Chairs asked for input on this idea.
- Colleen von Dehn advised that Growing Smiles offers a spring plant fundraiser. Colleen is willing to take the lead and it seems like a worthwhile fundraiser. Thank you, Colleen!
- Ms. Jamal raised that Wolfe previously offered an earthquake kit fundraiser, which raised significant funds. She will send the details to the Chairs for consideration.

5. 2019 / 2020 Budget and Treasurer's Report – Jaimini Thakore

- PAC revenues are currently short by about \$17,000 to cover next year's programs and expenses at the usual level. The projected budget was \$48,000 and we have raised about \$30,000 so far from the Walkathon (\$20,000), BC Gaming grant (about \$8,000), and from other smaller fundraising initiatives as listed in the Treasurer's Report dated February 23, 2020.
- In past years, the Silent Auction was the second large fundraising event, but as previously discussed, it is not happening this year.
- If funds are not raised by the end of the year, the PAC will need to consider how to scale back support.

6. Fundraising initiatives for 2020/21 expenses

- There was a discussion about how to approach raising funds to make up the \$17,000 deficit. Those in attendance were in favour of holding a dance-a-thon in June as proposed in the Chairs' report. Like the Walk-a-thon, a dance-a-thon would be a fun event held during school hours that would include all students, promoting both fundraising and community spirit. It may also encourage parents to attend to watch the kids.
- With Project Chef running in April and May the idea would be to have it in early June. The Executive will identify a date and contact the dance group to make arrangements. It is expected that the dance-a-thon would run much like the Walkathon with students collecting pledges and pizza parties for the classes who raise the most funds / best costumes etc.
- It was noted that with 366 kids at Wolfe, the cost per child is about \$50 to make up the deficit, which should not be impossible to achieve.

7. Return to Wolfe / post-seismic spending decisions

- Decisions must be made soon as to what the priorities are for post-seismic legacy items and how to fundraise for those items.
- Jaimini noted that the PAC has general funds of \$135,162.58 and that a sizeable portion of that amount had been set aside year over year for post-seismic projects. On his calculations, \$75,000 could be transferred to the reserve account for this purpose. He proposed a motion to accomplish the transfer.

**Motion to transfer \$75,000 from PAC general account to reserve account.
Moved: Katie Stevenson / Seconded: Ryan McRae
The vote was unanimous in favour of the motion – MOTION CARRIED.**

- As noted at the January meeting, the four areas identified for post-seismic spending through past surveys of parents, and current needs identified by teachers / Nancy are:
 - Outdoor classroom and grounds maintenance and enhancement
 - Technology (interactive projectors identified in January)
 - Sport court maintenance and upgrades
 - Playground upgrades (e.g. swings)
- There was a general discussion of the four areas.
- Outdoor classroom / grounds maintenance and enhancement
 - Executive and Michael along with Nancy have been conducting some research on this. Michael and Claire visited four schools that recently put in outdoor learning areas (Carnarvon, Shaughnessy, Van Horne, Moberly). Van Horne and Moberly installed flat, polished granite stones as seats / workspaces. Carnarvon installed metal picnic tables and Shaughnessy installed concrete picnic tables.
 - Nancy and teachers are enthusiastically in favour of having an outdoor learning space – some kind of furniture, either picnic tables or stones. Many teachers already take classes outside sometimes and such a space would certainly be used. Nancy suggested forming a committee with volunteer teachers, parents and PAC Executive member to come up with a plan.
 - It was noted that this should include grounds work, which would require ongoing maintenance. Libby Taylor has been caring for the current garden yearly from June-Sept. This would need to be kept up.
 - Ms. Jamal noted that if picnic tables were chosen, older students may be hard on them and they may not last.
 - Nancy commented that although the stones may appear odd, schools with the stones really liked them as they are versatile and promote creative use of the space. Moberly and Van Horne paid \$550 per stone x 8 stones plus tax and installation by VSB staff. It is hard to estimate installation costs because it is per hour and usually other tasks are also done during that time.
 - Nancy stated that Carnarvon spent \$4,600 for labour and \$4,000 on the picnic tables and boulders (\$16,000 approximately).
 - Nancy mentioned that some schools have installed basic furniture or tables and then build on it from there. It would be ideal to have teachers on a committee with parents to discuss ideas as they would have input about what is most conducive to teaching.
 - Michael previously met with a landscape architect. He surveyed teachers, Spare Time and playground supervisors. The advice was to leave the “forest” in the back intact. The further advice was to ensure the space works for all ages, clean up the forest, investigate tree health, storage for watering, replace / enhance the bench areas, add 3 picnic tables with six sides each around 3 trees, plant new trees.
- Playground enhancements
 - This consist of additions to the existing playground, for example, new swings. Currently there are only two swings and they are well used by the intermediate students.
 - Nancy stated that swings were installed at Hastings recently, costing \$14,000 for a set of six plus the cost of preparation and installation.
 - Thought would need to be given as to where any new playground equipment could be located.
- Technology
 - Nancy raised that there are some technology upgrades to address in the coming few years:
 - VSB is no longer supporting smartboards. The new technology is interactive projectors. VSB will fund three projectors to start. Upon return to Wolfe, some teachers may wish to continue to use smartboards if these are functional at that time. Nancy will need to assess the need to replace these when we return. The projectors cost about \$3,000 each and purchases could be amortized over a few years.
 - Many of the Dell Inspiron laptops purchased by the PAC about 2-3 years ago no longer work and will need to be replaced. The teachers commented that these laptops never worked well. Nancy has ordered 11 laptops, which the PAC will pay for with allotted funds this year. VSB has received a lump sum of \$2 million from the province for obsolete devices and has asked schools to report on how many non-supported devices they have. Nancy has done an inventory and will

provide that number. She expects to receive some funds to replace those, but the amount is currently unknown as the VSB funds must be shared among all the schools in the district.

- The attendees expressed their frustration about the significant funds (\$20-30,000) expended by the PAC to purchase these laptops that operated poorly and failed so quickly. The feelings are exacerbated by the fact that the PAC was required to purchase laptops from a VSB list, and the Dell Inspiron laptops were the ones most highly recommended. There was a comment that VSB should be held responsible to some extent for the poor quality. There was a suggestion that parents should also write to Dell and express their disappointment that the company provided such a poor-quality product.
- Nancy and the teachers expressed that they use these technology items on a daily basis, and they are an important part of the learning environment.
- It was noted by the Executive that the PAC allots a significant sum in the budget to technology on a yearly basis (\$5,000 for 2019/2020) and those amounts will continue to flow. Therefore, if technology is to be a legacy spending priority, further thought should be given to an appropriate amount to allot.
- **Sport Court**
 - Michael reiterated that the sport court could use a lot of work, starting with stabilizing the supporting wall. Upgrades could span from very basic to Cadillac level (\$20-50,000).
- Michael stated that when he was Chair and excess funds raised every year were put aside, the idea was for legacy funds to be put aside for an outdoor classroom space, grounds and incidentals for the school upon return (e.g. microwaves, other items).
- There was a vote taken among those in attendance about the priorities for post-seismic spending. There was a first round where participants voted for their first choice and a second round where participants voted for their second choice. The first-choice votes were given double their value. The results were as follows:

Item	Round One Vote	Round Two Vote	Total
Technology	8 (16)	3	19
Outdoor Classroom	4 (8)	10	18
Playground	3 (6)	3	9
Sport Court	0	1	1

- Goal fundraising amounts were set as follows based on very roughly cost estimates (with much work to be done on costing):
 - Technology: \$50,000
 - Outdoor Classroom: \$50,000
 - Playground enhancements: \$30,000
 - Sport Court and/or incidentals: \$20,000
- The total = \$150,000. With \$75,000 already raised, the fundraising goal over the next year would be \$75,000.
- There was a discussion about how to fundraise for these priorities. It was agreed that a direct drive would be the best route including a letter to parents and requests to potential corporate donors. Parents should be encouraged to approach potential corporate sponsors with whom they have a connection.
- The spending priorities in ranking order and goal amounts should be set out in a letter to parents. A thermometer setting out the goals and achievement to date would be a good visual.
- Once goal spending it hit for the first ranked item, the focus goes to the next priority.
- Obviously, these projects need to be costed out carefully, but it was thought that a direct drive could proceed based on estimates.
- Direct Drive – it was suggested that a letter be sent to parents the first week after spring break.

8. New Business

None.

9. Adjournment

Moved Kemp Edmonds	Seconded Robbin Simao	Carried
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Next PAC Meeting is April 8, 2020 at 6:30 pm.