

Minnewasta School PAC
September 11, 2018

Present: April Harms, Carl Klassen, Robyn Loutchan, Carla Olusola, Geoff Sutton, Tricia Theissen, Rhonda Thomson, Shayne Thomson, Laura Thwaites, Kyle Turnbull, Krista Walters

1. Call meeting to order: 7:01pm
2. PAC President welcome to new principal – Mr. Geoff Sutton

Shayne welcomes Geoff to Minnewasta on behalf of the PAC and school parents.

3. Additions to the Agenda

Presentation by Laura and Kyle re: Innovative Fund Proposal: Transverse Rock Climbing Wall in the gymnasium; moving towards unconventional programming, working towards physical literacy, and asking PAC to back their proposal. \$6000 for the one they want, which has attached foldable /locking mats so only accessible during classes. Would be ensuring in classes it's in use regularly and adaptable for everyone, inclusive for children not usually engaging with the outdoor equipment, and gaining courage and strength through having a positive space for safe risk-taking under supervision. Chosen a smooth surface over rough for safety. Effort to encourage physical activity for everybody, and can be integrated into Health curriculum and OT or other therapy/treatments of students as well. Various integrated obstacle courses that can be put up or taken down (word wall, upright twister, fine motor skill search and find, and so on).

The total amount available to all applicants combined is about \$7500. Geoff is very supportive of the initiative. PAC support at this time would be in name, not financial; however, we could revisit it in the future.

Shayne suggests we would be open to supporting this project, and speaks about the survey we circulated at year end regarding fundraising hopes for staff. In our goal of making Minnewasta better, this is something we would certainly look at. Shayne wonders what it would look like if they do get this grant, re installation. Kyle reports they've already had someone talk about installation, and it's not cheap but closest comparable was Thompson.

April asks if installation is included in the \$6000: No, it's including product and shipping costs from Winnipeg company, where rock wall itself is from Minnesota. Hoping, though, to stay with a Canadian company if cost is about the same.

What do they need from PAC? Just a little report that they presented to PAC and we support them moving forward with the proposal. Geoff notes that there will be a new Board this year, so might be reviewed by the current board but possibly the new board.

4. Reading and acceptance of June minutes
Motion to accept: Krista
Second: April
5. Treasurer's Report

\$2,025.02 Non-Profit Chequing Account
\$9,000 Savings

\$5,183.35 GIC Non-Redeemable

April notes that term for GIC matures April 16, 2019. April proposes we will then transfer these funds to the Savings Account. Seconded by Krista.

April will get ledger from Dena.

Robyn reports that in past years, the treasurer used to present a more formal report, and that would be useful maybe not every month, but maybe at the end of each term or mid-year? **April** will submit a monthly statement to Shayne for attachment to the meeting agendas. **April and Shayne** will review a format that works for a financial report.

Shayne and April will get signing authority this Friday at ACU.

6. Teacher/Principal Report

Transition Days went smoothly. Administrator meeting discussion re: parents finding value in transition days and whether or not PAC could/should be more involved. Previously had an informal presence in the June Kindergarten playdates. Incoming PAC discussed trying to have coffee and a PAC member on site for transition days, but nobody was able to be here for a chunk of time.

Discussion of value of transition days. Rhonda says there's value in the move-up days and transition days, and though transition days are a bit much to manage, they're good to build relationships with parents. School starting with smaller groups of kids and parents seems a good way for transitioning. Geoff reports he's received no negative feedback from parents on it being inconvenient. Carla, April, and Krista all agree that it's inconvenient but very valuable. Not all schools do it the same. Suggestions based on other schools that perhaps there could be parent meetings in evenings for those who work or can't attend. Having an evening session for parents allows for PAC to have more of a presence.

Total enrollment is 295, which was about the same as year-end last June, but won't stay there (anticipating at least 300 by end of December).

According to Stephen Ross, earliest we'll see a new school announcement is two plus years, and five years minimum before a new school is built. We've lost the twenty per classroom student count and are moving towards 30 projected over time. Positive letters to government are helpful, but Stephen feels letters of negativity aren't helping. Send positive letters is the advice PAC can share with parents.

Religious exercises petition was approved so religious exercises will start as soon as they can. Received 64 signatures, 60 required.

Connecting with parents online, teachers are continuing to use Homeroom and similar apps to keep lines of communication open.

PD second WSD Diversity Mini-Options day coming up Wednesday, October 3.

Safe School Committee and Crisis Response Plan needs a parent rep for review and approval this year. **Tricia** will volunteer.

Terry Fox September 27 and Orange Shirt Day on September 28.

New school board elections coming soon, and not clear how this will impact Board Priorities Plan. Shayne asks if there's any word on anyone running again. Geoff says Stephen is tight-lipped, and not sure if he even knows.

7. Staff survey results (Review data from June survey)

Outdoor Classroom, Bottle filling dispenser ranked highly in numbers, but rock-climbing wall was highest with comments followed by random sports equipment. April has a break down if anyone wants to review it. Shayne reports on how we are trying to continue to make Minnewasta better with a clear plan, whether over 3 or 5 years, we want to start building towards that now. This includes some short-term projects for this school year, as well as some longer-term projects to start now and build. What do Geoff and other parents think we can do as a committee to improve things?

Cost of another bottle filling station is about \$2500-\$3000. Most students have water bottles.

Based on previous years, the Innovation Grant will likely not be in full support of the proposed climbing wall. Remains unclear when this will be reviewed or approved, etc. Should we consider starting fundraising for this project regardless? Geoff worries that, if it's found out we're starting to fundraise for the wall, they could be declined. Rhonda feels the rock wall benefits all children but only two teachers, whereas an outdoor classroom would benefit all. April refers to Andrew's suggestion at year-end about having an outdoor classroom, and Carl notes Marcie and Tina are working on planning one now and are on the 'Triple A'. Concern is that other schools spent money on outdoor classrooms but they're not being used: why? Shayne suggests that because we did the survey, we just don't want to move forward and seem like we're totally ignoring it. **Geoff will invite Tina and Marcie to the next PAC meeting** after they've had a chance to work on their plan, and will **speak with Mike Keith about outdoor space**, and well as staff here regarding the survey. Carl talks about considering natural play structures and outdoor classrooms combined, as some other schools have done.

Geoff talks about a goal for PAC that's not just about fundraising and money. Carla reports we've started developing a goal and guiding principle/mission statement of sorts that we're working on.

8. Establishing a PAC goal/vision/beliefs for the year

Shayne's idea for a goal: Develop a plan to increase parent involvement within the PAC committee. Hope is to change the vision for the PAC to make it more inviting to parents and families, and decide with this or another goal where the PAC needs to go.

Some parents have expressed concern over being forced into volunteering and meetings being too long. Issue of childcare also came up. Geoff reports that MLS had parent info evenings at their school separate from PAC. Ended up feeling like a lot, but info nights were well-attended. Tricia suggests we keep it focused on the direction coming from the parents. Carla might have a contact at the high school to help arrange students who volunteer for credit perhaps doing child-minding during PAC meetings. Taking small steps to make things more inviting hopefully will encourage more parents to come to meetings. Concern that opening meetings with recap of exec responsibilities is daunting, but perhaps we can have a short exec meeting fifteen minutes before the open meeting starts then not have to go through the formalities with all parents and families.

April suggests we set up a committee. The entire PAC exec is volunteering so perhaps we can meet before October meeting? Yes: exec will arrange to meet in a week or so by text.

9. Volunteer Forms

Not very many turned it yet, but more will be coming in tomorrow. April will pick them up Friday. We can discuss them again if needed when the exec meets before October.

10. Fall family kick off

Everything went really well last year with the family movie night, but we need more popcorn, so get a second popcorn machine. Robyn advises that Co-op and Green Valley both have machines, and GV lets us use everything, but Co-op we need to buy some supplies (kernels). Very minor detail, but have to buy Orville's kernels NOT Co-op. Also, don't forget to assign clean-up volunteers - **April** will look into this.

Shayne proposes we do a movie night again, with same student voting arrangement as last year. April seconds. **Friday November 9.**

Should we maybe sell extras as a mini-fundraiser, ie chocolate bars, or maybe a bake sale? Canteen items for extra charge? We will discuss details further at next meeting.

11. Fundraisers for the year / Setting budget for the year

NOTE: We are NOT a non-profit. We will have to look into this. **Shayne** will contact Carl Pederson to see what we can do.

Robyn reports that last year we didn't have any extra budget items that weren't anticipated, but suggests we might add a budget line with a set amount for if staff come to us with a proposal for support. Shayne wants to defer decision to next meeting when we've had our ledger to review. All agree.

12. Hot lunch

Monday September 17. **April, Carla, Shayne,** and Kim are running this first lunch. **Robyn** will come walk them through it. For pizza, in past years minimum of 4 volunteers required. Carla is hoping to do it differently this year to have less need for so many volunteers. We usually pay delivery person by cheque, but can use cash if we need to. Don't forget to have a \$20 tip for the delivery people.

For September hot lunch, **Geoff** will tally total number of lunches order to figure out how many didn't order. This will give us an idea how many kids are unable to order. Thinking ahead: tickets to pass out for children to cash in for a hot lunch, option on order form for families to buy AND donate a hot meal. Potentially make more free hot lunches: at least one a year.

13. Picture day volunteers confirmed for Friday. **Shayne** to pass info to Jenelle.

14. Next meeting (confirming meetings for the year): October 9.

Second Tuesday of each month.

15. Adjournment

8:57pm