

Elgin Street Parent Council Meeting – November 15, 2016

Council attendance: Andre Bernier, Jim Costello (community representative), Malaka Hendela (OCASC), Tara Hogeterp (co-chair), Tijen Karatas, Heather Lindsay (community representative), Angeleen Nayak, Diana Mills, Sacha Singh, Matt Vincelli, Pina Vito

Others: Mark Cruise (Principal), Moya Crangle, Marilee Boles-Wilson (teacher representative), Melanie Twomey

Absent: Erik Husband (treasurer), Natalie Lyle (co-chair), MJ Tremblay (secretary), Eddie Jun, Jerry Ritt

The meeting started at 17h38.

1. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda for tonight's meeting - Motioned by Pina Vito, seconded by Heather Lindsay, vote passed.

2. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes for the October 2016 meeting - Motioned by Sasha Singh, seconded by Angeleen Nayak, vote passed.

During the approval of the minutes it was mentioned that Council would need to obtain the password for the 125 Twitter account.

3. Treasurer's Report

MOTION: To defer the Treasurer's report until the next meeting - Motioned by Tara Hogeterp, seconded by Angeleen Nayak, vote passed.

4. Election of Vacant Position

There were no nominees for the vacant position on Council.

5. Active Transportation Initiative

Tara Hogeterp provided an overview an active transportation tool being supported by the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority called School Travel Planning (STP). STP is designed to encourage families to choose active transportation at least some of the time.

The program is coordinated by Green Communities Canada, and the Program Manager is Wallace Beaton. The program provides a dedicated facilitator and a \$500 honorarium. It requires a minimum two year commitment, a team of champions, a minimum number of meetings, meeting space and photocopying services.

In the following discussion, several questions and points were raised, including:

- What happens when the person responsible for active transportation is sick?
- Are walking school busses only available in the a.m.?
- What if volunteers drop out?
- Who gets the honorarium, the School, Parent Council or some other arrangement?
- What happens when there's bad weather?
- How does liability work?
- What's the ratio of kids to adults?

Tara indicated that bike racks were still on backorder.

MOTION: To invite Wallace Beaton to present at the next meeting - Motioned by Sasha Singh, seconded by Matt Vincelli, vote passed.

ACTION ITEM: Create a Google Doc with questions for Wallace Beaton (Andre Bernier)

Setting up volunteer committees for movie nights and book sale

Piva Vito indicated that she would be willing to take on a coordinating role but would need help, in particular for movie nights and the book sale. In the subsequent discussion, the following points and questions were raised:

- Would there be a way to get representatives from each class? It was noted that this had been tried before without success, and that some other schools have similar challenges.
- Could teachers communicate the need for volunteers direct to the parents? It was suggested that it would be preferable for Council to reach out directly, especially given existing demands on teachers. It was observed that the tone of communications would be a contributor to the success of efforts.
- The possibility of encouraging student volunteers was discussed.
- Many parents do not realize what activities the funds raised by Parent Council support. Principal Cruz agreed to highlight the link between these activities and Council's fundraising in his regular updates.
- Would there be a way to diversify activities, in particular to emphasize community building? One suggestion was "art in the park" (linked to an activity noted below).

The following volunteered to help with follow-up/activities.

- Principal Cruz signaled his willingness to provide some help with movie night and the book sale.
- Tara Hogeterp indicated that she would be willing to help with the book sale.
- Angeleen Nayak indicated that she would be able to help with the silent auction for the

book sale. She also will look into a possible fundraiser that involves transferring kids' art onto t-shirts, hats, ties, etc.

- Andre Bernier indicated that he would be willing to help with move nights.
- Piva Vito will contact Jennifer Simms to inquire about advertising.

7. Website

Matt Vincelli indicated that it would cost about \$20 to have the domain for the Parent Council website transferred, plus costs to host.

MOTION: To allocate up to \$140 for the domain transfer and hosting - Motioned by Andre Bernier, seconded by Matt Vincelli, vote passed.

8. Co-chairs report

Via Tara Hogeterp, Natalie Lyle conveyed her regrets and indicated that she would send an update around on liability insurance.

9. Principal's Report

Principle Cruz provided an overview of measures being implemented in response to the most recent EQAO data, which showed that mathematics was an area requiring attention. The approach outlined involves both the way that math is approached (e.g., evaluating student capabilities in geometry to see where students had strengths/weaknesses, followed by instruction targeting these) as well incorporating math into other subjects. As well, the School is looking at enabling factors to provide a healthy foundation for learning (e.g., ways to reduce anxiety, increase focus, resiliency and perseverance and decrease bullying). He demonstrated some resources that were available to help students.

In the subsequent discussion, the following points and questions were raised:

- Did language of instruction have any impact?
- Could kids be taught computer coding earlier?
- Noting the prevalence of pedagogical tools that use computers or other electronic devices, it was ask whether there were more play-based resources available?
- Were there TV programs that could reinforce the desired traits?

The following additional points and questions were raised:

- Had sexual education for the year begun? Principal Cruz indicated that this typically occurs in the spring.
- The fact that photo day coincided with a day when the grade 1s were swimming, and that the same was true for photo retake day, was seen as a logistical challenge and made it hard for parents to prepare kids properly. Principal Cruz stated in the future that the School would endeavor to avoid this.

- It was noted that many parents did not know that it was possible to have sibling pictures.

10. Volunteer and Fundraising Chairs' Report

The earlier discussion on volunteer committees covered the main points. It was asked whether there would be a winter assembly and Principal Cruz indicated that there were no plans at present.

11. OCASC Representatives' Report

Malaka Hendela reminded Council that OCASC minutes were available on-line, and indicated that she had accepted the role of OCASC co-chair and would be focusing on communication with the OCDSB and schools councils. She indicated that her goal would be to make OCASC better at "cutting through words" and that she would advocate for transparency at the Board.

She indicated that there were two active consultations underway:

- 1) on the complaints policy; and,
- 2) on a framework for governing element schools generally, that would guide all accommodation reviews. OCASC would not take any positions on this, but did note that the consultation plans appeared not to be working since parent councils were not engaged. She indicated that on December 20, 201 a final decision on the framework was expected and that it would be presented to OCASC on November 17. She invited anyone with specific questions to identify these ahead of the meeting.

She noted the upcoming challenges of capacity at Glashen and the downtown high schools.

MOTION: To adjourn the November 15, 2016, meeting - Motioned by Diana Mills, seconded by Angeleen Nayak, vote passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 19h45.