

Elgin Street Parent Council Meeting – December 20th, 2016

- Council attendance: Erik Husband (treasurer), Tara Hogeterp (co-chair), Pina Vito, Tijen Karatas, Marilee Boles-Wilson (teacher representative), MJ Tremblay (secretary), Matt Vincelli, Heather Lindsay (community representative), Sacha Singh, Natalie Lyle (co-chair), Eddie Jun, Diana Mills, André Bernier, Michael Cameron, Angeleen Nayak
- Others: Mark Cruise (principal), Victoria Cole, Tijen Karatas, France Pagé (teacher representative)
- Special guest(s): Wallace Beaton (Green Communities Canada), Kathleen Joy (Ottawa Public Health)
- Absent: Malaka Hendela (OCASC), Jerry Ritt, Doris Zastre, Chris Wilson, Oleksandr Kytsyshyn, Jim Costello (community representative)

The meeting started at 17h36.

1) Presentation and discussion on Active Transportation

Wallace spoke about the organization Green Communities Canada (who has already worked with Corpus Christi in the Glebe, Queen Elizabeth, and Viscount Alexander, the latter of which had a remarkable and unusual 24% increase in those walking/biking to school). The primary focuses of the organization are four Es: Encouragement, Education, Engineering, and Evaluation.

The commitments from the school would be as follows: a) a two-year agreement with the organization, signed by the parent council and the principal (with an option for a third year); b) a champion from the school's administration (principal or vice-principal), two champions from the school's teachers, and a minimum of two from the school's parents (and although not mandatory, some student participation, perhaps in conjunction with an existing eco club); and, c) Board-approved surveys that would need to be done, with a possible need for meeting space, photocopies, etc. The school would have access to a school transportation facilitator (Jessica) to assist with helping to raise/solve issues with other stakeholders, best practices (eg. dealing with construction, like the LRT),

This is a limited enrolment program – only works with 12 schools at a time (three openings left at this time).

When asked specifically about the ‘walking school bus’, he stated that there is a formal (but very limited) program run by the Ottawa School Transportation Authority (OSTA) where the leaders are paid (and it only runs in the mornings, not in the afternoons for the return home). A less formal version would have parent volunteers deciding to form groups of students to walk to/from school under their care. This can be accessed when working with Green Communities Canada. Another avenue could be working with Ottawa Public Health on a more informal system.

He was also asked what the time commitment would be from all of those involved in the formal program with them; the first year would be more time-intensive, with the surveys to do (like the walkability assessment), so perhaps around six meetings and a few additional hours more than that. He estimates approximately about a one hour commitment per week during the first year, and that would lessen in the second year. The one requirement of the program (by the funders) is the in-school survey (done once in the first year and once in the second year, and once in the optional third year), for about 5 minutes per day for five days each time (The question: How did you get to school today? School bus, walking, car, biking, public transportation, etc). The parent surveys look more at why that mode of transportation is used (possible barriers, etc), and can be done by paper or online or a combination of both. By doing the surveys, the school would receive funding of \$250.00 per year, which can be used for anything related to implementing the action plan (new bike rack, hot chocolate for the walkers, etc). The only data shared with the school board, city planners, etc, is aggregate data; the information specific to the school remains the property of the school, and is to be used for the action plan. There is no monetary cost or expense to join the program. The organization has been funded by the city for the last seven years, and also by OSTA for the last four years.

Turnover in the school’s administration can be very disruptive to the process, depending on the willingness of the outgoing and incoming principals, and the handover in-between. (Mark Cruise is currently an acting principal, until further notice).

Kathleen mentioned how as a nurse with the school, she can provide support to the school (like being part of the committee meetings, educating students, etc). She also provided a ParticipAction Canada poster regarding children’s lack of activity overall in the country. Active transportation ties right into several school issues, like safety, ecological, and student well-being (physical and mental), which is a significant issue currently with the Board.

ACTION ITEM: Tara to resend the “active school bus” information via email.

2) Approval of agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda for tonight’s meeting - Motioned by Sacha Singh, seconded by Pina Vito, vote passed.

1) Approval of minutes

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the meeting of November 15th, 2016 – Motioned by Heather Lindsay, seconded by Diana Mills, vote passed (with the name corrections for Pina Vito and Mark Cruise, as mentioned verbally by the minute taker of the Nov 2016 meeting).

4) Treasurer's Report

Erik went through the December 2016 financial report that was distributed via email before the meeting – the total cash available to allocate as of December 20th, 2016 was \$755.13. There was some good discussion regarding the annual Christmas fund, due to the current cash available (but with the future funds coming in from the movie nights and Book Sale). Because the pizza money is now going directly to the school, the council funds are lower than usual. Sacha asked Mark if he would be open to using pizza funds for the Arts Programming if the Council cannot pay for a certain part of it due to the timing; transparency is key, and Mark confirmed that the school's budget comes to a hear in May/June 2016.

MOTION: To approve \$500.00 for the Christmas fund (with the understanding that the funds can be used throughout the rest of the school year, and not just for Christmas, if need be) - Motioned by Sacha Singh, seconded by Heather Lindsay, vote passed.

MOTION: To approve the November 2016 financial reports (as previously distributed in November by Erik Husband) – Motioned by Sacha Singh, seconded by Heather Lindsay, vote passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the December 2016 financial reports (as presented by Erik Husband) – Motioned by Pina Vito, seconded by Angeleen Nayak, vote passed unanimously.

5) Volunteer Committee

Sacha confirmed that the next movie night is under control (thanks to Pina and Randy!), and that he has distributed a “how to” document on the particulars of running the movie nights, which was greatly appreciated. Mark confirmed that the laptop used for the movie nights has been fixed and now works, but recommends that a backup laptop be brought just in case; Pina will come into the school at some point beforehand to test it out, check the connections, and do a ‘dry run’.

The subject of kids art printed on items (Angeleen Nayak) will be deferred to the January 2017 meeting, as a possible fund-raiser for Council.

ACTION ITEM: Put the subject of kids art printed on items on the agenda for the January 2017 meeting.

6) Website

A big thank you to Matt for his efforts on the website; however, more content is required for it! He has a list of all of the passwords necessary for the various levels of access to the website; a document reserved for the Council executive will be created to hold that information safely.

7) Co-chairs Report

Following the guidelines of the Constitution, we have done the necessary due diligence, and the position on Council will remain empty at this time (unless someone puts forward an interest in it).

8) Principal's Report

Mark thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, in particular Marilee and France, and a Happy Holidays to all. The school is currently at 256 students (which is two over capacity), but due to various reasons that number will be going down to about 240 students. Borden Ball tournament went well; the boys placed second, and the girls place fourth. There is an informal sing-along at the school tomorrow morning from 9:00am to 10:00am. Chess club will continue next year, but the grade range will be reduced. Robotics club was so popular that another one will be held.

On January 12th, 2017, a Grade 4 and Grade 6 class will be going to City Hall to skate on the Rink of Dreams with the Ottawa Senators in conjunction with the 2021 Canada Summer Games bid. Kindergarten registration is coming up in January 2017.

Mark mentioned that there could be a donation coming to the Council; the co-chairs stated that there was no reason not to accept it, but that he should see if they need a tax receipt or not as Council cannot give a tax receipt (but the school/school board can).

France let everyone know that the Choir's performance at the Jack Purcell holiday event was wonderful, and that the children really enjoyed doing it.

9) Volunteer Chair

Already discussed under the Volunteer Committee item (#5).

10) OCASC Rep

Malaka was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting, but she did provide her update via email beforehand:

From: Malaka Hendela <malakahendela@gmail.com>

Date: December 20, 2016 at 09:57:12 EST

To: elgin-council-board@googlegroups.com

Subject: Re: Agenda

Reply-To: elgin-council-board@googlegroups.com

Sorry I won't be able to attend tonight. A School Board COW was added tonight and I have to participate on behalf of OCASC.

In terms of OCASC update:

The issue of Board consultations was a large point of discussion at the last meeting. Concerns have been raised that the Board staff is assuming that consultations just have to be achieved by a) superintendents asking principals to mention materials and b) presenting information at OCASC meetings.

The OCASC executive and the School Council reps at the meeting did not feel this was effective means of consultation. As well, issues regarding the accessibility of materials (both finding the materials on the website and more generally understanding the implications of the report contents) were also raised. In particular the Elementary Framework (currently out for consultation) was discussed as an example where the overall content did not indicate how it would likely result in single track versus dual track school decisions.

OCASC reiterated that it will not take a position on any issues, but rather will continue to increase its advocacy to ensure information is available to parents, that the decisions of the board are based on clear information, and that parents need to be consulted with in a meaningful manner. OCASC will make best efforts support all parent councils regarding questions they may have and support ability to participate in the Board consultation and decision making processes.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks

Malaka

The next regular Council meeting is now scheduled for Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 at 5:30pm.

MOTION: To adjourn the December 20th, 2016, meeting - Motioned by Pina Vito, seconded by Heather Lindsay, vote passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 19h28.

ACTION ITEMS from the September 20th, 2016 meeting

ACTION ITEM: Consult Catherine Pacella to clarify what funds might be owed to her for the pizza driver tips (unassigned).

ACTION ITEMS from the October 18th, 2016 meeting

ACTION ITEM: Diana will check to see who originally created the Elgin125 Twitter account, so that it can be deactivated.

ACTION ITEM: Put out an email looking for a chair of the committee for the Savouring Centretown fundraising event. (co-chairs)

ACTION ITEM: Clarify the Arts liaison role with Catherine Pacella (co-chairs).

ACTION ITEM: Mark to check the Grade 6 students' scores from when they did the EQAO back in Grade 3.

ACTION ITEMS from the November 15th, 2016 meeting

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

Action items from the December 20th, 2016 meeting

ACTION ITEM: Tara to resend the "active school bus" information via email.

ACTION ITEM: Put the subject of kids art printed on items on the agenda for the January 2017 meeting (Angeleen Nayak)

MOTIONS from the December 20th, 2016 meeting

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