

Parent Council of River Heights Elementary School
Meeting Minutes
(Virtual Meeting - Google Meets)
April 8, 2020

Attendance: Taneill Selinger, Katie Albers, Megan Loran, Tara Betts, Wes King-Hunter, Laura Gale, Kirsta McDowall, Juanita Whalen, Karla Tweten, Debbie Dunn, Vanessa Bonneville, Kim McDowall, Carolyn Freeman, Erin Rathgeber

1. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm. The group was welcomed and the ground rules for this virtual meeting, that were previously submitted on the Parent Council Facebook page, were introduced. All present were reminded that the parent council meetings are a group of parents, teachers and administrators who work together to support and enhance student learning at the school.

2. Adopt Minutes: Tara Betts asked if there was anyone present who had read and was able to adopt the minutes from the Parent Council meeting on March 4, 2020. Correction required - section 5.d should read Dr. Ken Sauer in place of Roy Wilson. Subject to the change, the minutes were adopted by Kim McDowall and seconded by Wes King-Hunter.

3. Reports from school and council:
 - a. School Administration Team - Wes King-Hunter and Laura Gale
 - i. The administration team extended a huge thank you to the parent community for their patience and understanding as they work to find ways to support children/families through this unique educational experience. The staff and administration are tapping into the River Heights roots to be their most innovative and courageous. Learning will look different for each student, family and teacher as teaching methods and delivery platforms are tweaked. Teachers have been working very hard to maintain communication with their students. The face to face provided by video calling has been a highlight and is helping to bring everyone together. Going forward, it will not be easy as everyone tries to balance learning/life, but we need to stick together. Overall, the feedback from parents has been positive. Everyone is trying to have some fun and find humor in the situation. The effort of students/parents is truly appreciated. To help create a sense of normalcy, a spirit day will be introduced before the Easter break.

 - b. Report from Co-Chairs - Katie Albers and Taneill Selinger
 - i. The co-chairs felt it was important to connect parents with school administration despite classes being moved online. It is also important to remind everyone of the River Heights School mission statement and parent council motto, located on the school's website, and how they apply to the current situation. The efforts of our phenomenal staff of

teachers, educational assistants and administration staff through the first stages of the pandemic have highlighted and illustrated how perfect these statements are. Everyone has pulled together, strategized and put into motion online education for our children. Technology has become the vehicle to teach, while continuing to allow our core values to be upheld. Parent council and the school team have been in close communication to ensure student needs are being met. We are all learning and growing together.

- c. Report from Treasurer - Megan Loran - See Attached Financial Report
 - i. The hot lunch numbers for March are in the negative, however, there are deposits forthcoming.
 - ii. Skateathon cheques have been issued as required. Tara reported that the donation cheque she had written was not deposited/missing. Wes indicated he would look into the same.
 - iii. Stipend to School - Taneill - these funds have been given to the school to be used as deemed necessary.
 - iv. Unspent Budget Amounts - Taneill - the budget will be reviewed in September. The income/expenses are close for the 2019-2020 school year. It is hopeful that the unused budget amounts will cover any shortfalls. However, remaining surpluses can be used to bring the budget in balance if required.
 - v. Cash Float - Taneill - Since our current policies require deposits in tandem, which is not possible in our current situation, the outstanding \$200 cash float will remain in the school safe until further notice.
 - vi. Casino Funds - Taneill - the current use of proceeds, currently designated to field trips for the 2019-2020 school year, will be amended to "equipment/program related". This will allow the funds to be redirected towards fixing/replacing iPads/Chromebooks and/or athletic equipment and musical instruments.

4. Report from committees and council representatives:
 - a. Hot Lunch - Karla Tweten
 - i. Update - Overall the hot lunch program has been going well, with a lot of positive feedback from changes made. Bailey has put through reimbursements to everyone for outstanding hot lunches. Thank you to Karla for all of her hard work this year!
 - b. ASCA (Council of School Councils - Taneill Selinger
 - i. Mini-Conference Update (March 6 & 7) - Karla, Katie and Taneill and Carolyn attended the conference held at the school board office. Sessions discussed: purpose of parent councils/associations, managing the meetings, how to better engage families and improve communication. The conference also highlighted the need to redo the association bylaws

and better separate the same from parent council. It also gave the attendees the opportunity to proudly share the many creative things that are already being done that make our school and council unique. More will be shared at future meetings.

- ii. ASCA (Council of School Councils) - Taneill - A virtual meeting with the Honorable Adriana LaGrange, Alberta's Education Minister, on April 3. She reached out to share information and answer questions:
 - All students will receive a final grade;
 - Alberta is leading the way the way on managing student education;
 - The Alberta government will be providing additional \$3 million in funding for nutrition programs for lower income families;
 - The temporary adjustment to educational funding was addressed and assurance given that funding will be restored when classes resume; and
 - The four principles guiding their efforts were discussed - safety of students/staff is the first priority, student learning will continue, provincial funding is still flowing to schools and our school division has flexibility to do what is best for our school community.

Citing the final of the four guiding principles, the MHPSD has shown exceptional creativity in meeting the expectations of the province to redirect educational funding. They put people first and were able to ensure teaching and support staff positions were not affected by the changes, no jobs have been lost to date! Gratitude was extended to Carolyn and the MHPSD, by all present, for their efforts. Carolyn was asked to pass on our sentiments to the school board team.

Katie asked Carolyn if there was any update regarding the budget survey completed earlier in the year. Carolyn indicated the team has been working around the clock on the same and will be meeting the week after Easter. Carolyn also expressed gratitude for the work of the division in preserving jobs and showing that people matter. Crisis provides opportunity. We have been able to explore what teaching means, how to deliver education and ways to communicate. We are all working together to make this work. Carolyn also extended her thanks to the parent community!

- c. Fundraising - Taneill Selinger
 - i. Update on Cancellations - The Growing Smiles fundraiser has been postponed for this school year and will be revisited in the fall.
- d. Future Planned Events - Katie Albers

All events scheduled through the end of the 2019-2020 school year have been cancelled. The DJ had already been booked for the Spring Dance. In hopes of preserving the \$100 deposit, Katie will see if the DJ is open to rebooking. Vanessa had offered a wonderful idea for Muffins for Mom/Donuts for Dad. Pictures of the students with their parents could be posted to Facebook with a prize given to the top two photos. Vanessa offered to donate the prizes, thank you!!! Laura offered to share the same on the River Heights website. Wes expressed his appreciation to the parent council for coming up with such ideas to help generate community spirit! It was suggested that families could get creative if they don't have muffins/donuts and submit a funny picture.

e. Lost & Found - Kim McDowall

The lost and found items were displayed at the time of the school closure. Wes indicated there was a minimal amount remaining that he would ask Gary to mark as spring collection for storage in the shed. Kim indicated that all of the prior year lost and found items had been disposed of and only those from the 2019-2020 school year remained. Wes extended a huge thank you to the Educational Assistants who organized all student items, from the classrooms, for pick up!!

5. Old Business

a. Recycling Update - Taneill Selinger

Parent council has been covering charges for recycling services at the school. In the past, amounts were reasonable. The company providing the services indicated a letter had been sent last August, announcing a price increase. The letter was not received and the cost for services rose significantly. After investigation, Wes indicated the charges are for the services requested and that historically, the school has not paid for the same. With the school closure, recycling is currently on hold. Both the parent council and school will look into other service alternatives and revisit this issue when school resumes. Going forward, the parent council/school will also need to decide on the payment arrangement, i.e. paid by parent council, paid by school or shared cost.

6. New Business

a. AGM - Katie Albers

The AGM will be held, in virtual format, on May 6th at 7:30 pm using the same code as this meeting. The code will be resent prior to the meeting and an SD76 account is not needed to join. Event committee heads will be asked to submit a report prior to the meeting. Wes and Laura are asked to look after the report for Guest Presentations.

b. Retirement Gifts - Katie Albers

Both Paul Savard and Gary Getz will be retiring by the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Currently, the parent council budget for gifts is \$200, with each gent receiving \$50. Please forward gift ideas to Katie/Taneill. .

- c. Open Positions 2020-2021 School Year - Taneill Selinger
Tara (Secretary), Taneill (Co-Chair) and Megan (Treasurer) will be staying on in their current positions. Kim has agreed to continue with Lost and Found/Casino Chair and Dave Chow for Staff Appreciation. We will need to confirm with committee chairs/coordinators for Skate-a-thon, Bulletin Board, Movie Night, Donuts for Dad/Muffins for Mom and Spring Fling. We are also looking for a fundraising coordinator and volunteer coordinator. The fundraising coordinator would organize one or two events per year, working with a team to run, set up and follow through. The volunteer coordinator position could be done remotely, taking in volunteer forms and organizing the same. If no one puts forward their name for volunteer coordinator, Kim offered that she would continue to help with Winter Village volunteer coordination. Katie will be stepping back as Co-chair. Karla will be putting forward her name for the position. We will also be looking for more team members for the hot lunch program. Please forward any nominations to Katie/Taneill. The vote will be held during the AGM on May 6.
- d. Question period - no questions. Thank you for coming!! Wes also thanked everyone for taking the time to attend tonight!!
- e. The next virtual meeting has been scheduled for May 6th at 7:30 pm.

7. Meeting Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Note: We encourage every family to participate in our online QSP renewal program. All funds raised will support our school. Shop at www.qsp.ca. This year we have opted out of the magazine fundraising campaign, but if you were to reorder, place a new order or shop, the profits will still come to the school. OUR GROUP ONLINE ID ISL 36966036