

## Van Hise Elementary PTO Board Meeting Minutes March 1, 2016

Present: 7 board members, 2 parents. Mrs. Keeler was absent.

**Updates (Wendy Crabb):** The school district budget process is happening right now. The big takeaway is, they are likely to cut local formula budgets by 8-10% for every MMSD school. Shelby Connell mentioned that the art budget has been decreased for next year and reports that PE and music may not have a budget next year. There's no new revenue coming in, so the district wants to fund the things they've started, like the personal responsibility behavior plan, and they would also like to move forward with the tech plan, etc.

Conferences are next week, including 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Everyone should have received a questionnaire from the teacher. The questionnaire not standard across the district, but the district would like to make it standard.

**Library (Wendy):** Construction is continuing to move forward, and should be done in early April. We had asked specifically what's going to change with the front of the school (the Segoe side), and the district reports that they are not planning to make any changes. Mike Herttig from MMSD - head of operations or similar - is the one who would approve changes to the Segoe entrance. Money is the biggest challenge.

The playground group met the grounds guy, outdoor classroom, etc. Emmerson elementary is ahead of us on the playground; got some support from MMSD, with refurbishing equipment, etc. The grounds guy suggested putting in the work orders.

Jeff Maxted asked what the 10% cut is in dollars, suggesting that maybe the PTO can help plug some part of that gap. The PTO can help Mrs. Keeler plan and be strategic about how to cut. Principals are allowed to carry over some money, so Peg is trying to conserve money from this year for next. Target's money program and labels for education are both ending.

**Activity fair (Jeff Maxted):** Jeff reports that the vendor fair went well. About 80 families came through. Jeff did an informal poll and found that people from VHE, Shorewood, and Franklin attended. There was an ad in the Isthmus. Jeff noticed lots of K/1 families, and some vendors weren't matched well for that particular audience. People across the board said they want to come back. \$50 seems to be the going rate. Also, the activity fair at the Arboretum put on by WPT and others was cancelled because of budget cuts. February is a good time to do it. We made about \$700. Wendy thinks we might have to pay to have Gary (custodian) here on a weekend - Shelby says that has never happened before. One of the vendors suggested rotating schools every year, so it's the West Side activity fair. The schools could then also share the revenue. It was suggested that someone from the next

school could follow Jeff next year, then they can take over. Next year, we will bring coffee. Demos: the martial arts organizations were the ones wanting to do demos. There were 3 of them, and each was given a corner where they could just do their own demo, no waiting. Jeff will put notes into the Google doc about how to do the vendor fair.

**Playground update (Wendy for Kristin Ruedi-Krause):** The playground group met with Peg this morning, and found out we can do pretty much what we want for the playground, but if it's over \$15,000, even if it's funded by the PTO, it has to go through the school board. If it's not a state-approved vendor, and is over \$15,000, you have to get 3 bids. Wendy thinks ZDA is aware of the list of state-approved vendors. There will be a community meeting on March 30 here with ZDA. We will have a flyer that goes home for parents. We should invite Hamilton, too - maybe through their weekly newsletter.

ZDA's plan is a phased plan, and they have addressed the water issues and designed a natural playground, and got some info from Gerber about rehabbing much of what's already there. Two pieces are not up to code and can't be kept for their original use: the fire engine, and dome monkey bars. There is a proposal to repurpose the fire engine in the garden area into a vine growing piece that kids could still play on. These are only ideas, we will wait for feedback/input before making decisions. The hill by the Kindergarten end will be terraced with boulders and things.

The plans include trees. People are trying to donate trees to the school district - and planting. We want good-sized trees, not saplings.

Phase 1 will be dealing with water. Would it also deal with the lake? We have asked if we could get some money from district to help with that. We'll put it in as a work order. Also the rusty railing on the ADA ramp will be addressed. Hopefully we can get something done this summer, to show parents we're really doing something.

How hard is it to get board approval? Generally, it's a pretty simple process if the money is already there. Emmerson has a very detailed planning document that we will try to see.

**Science night (Afan Ottenheimer):** Science night is Friday, April 8. We have 6 places signed up. So far one student has signed up. Afan checked to see if there's anything going on in the gym that would require cleanup before the event.

**Treasurer report (Dana McCloskey):** We have \$74,000 in the bank. We still expect about \$11,000 this year from upcoming events/fundraisers, and we still have \$26,000 in projected expenses. That's \$51,000 at end of the year that's unspent. MMSD is providing a Chrome book cart for the library, so we don't have to pay for that. The cost of the water bottle filling stations is unclear. Wendy will follow up with Ann Jesse-Schwabe about whether that work order has gone through.

Stage and sound system: we never put any money in that slot; not sure what is happening with that. The couch has been ordered, and the promethean board may be coming from the district. We could upgrade the sound system now or later. Afan will contact the architect about the sound system.

Dana suggests changing the reserve to \$10,000 instead of \$5,000, just to be sure we can always cover the bills, even if the fall fund drive doesn't come through. MOVED. SECONDED. VOTE: passes unanimously.

Will there be another Gus's Graphix fundraiser (Hedgie gear) this year? Jen Roth's dad (owner of Gus's Graphix) is thinking about just paying the \$50 to the art fair, so he can bring in his trailer, then make stuff to order on the spot. He's hoping to just set the trailer up outside. So, we're not sure if there will be a second Hedgie gear fundraiser this year. Dana will assume that there won't be another fundraiser from him this year when planning the budget.

There is a Hokki Stool issue. There were 2 stools from Ms. Jimenez, then a whole bunch that came through the cross categorical team. We did approve the 2 adult ones in the grant process, but Dana didn't see a bill for them - Wendy thinks they may have gotten rolled into the main order. Dana suggests a reassessment of the Hokki Stools before we order more, as the ones in her child's class weren't being used today at all. Wendy will confirm with Breah Lieberman whether the stools are really being used.

After School classes have already raised \$25,000, the carnival made \$12,000 of which about \$10,000 was income. Sherry Niede asked Dana to ask everyone about Metcalfe's, because they said there were only 35 scans for our January fundraiser with them. Dana asked everyone in the room if they'd used it, and the majority of those present used the barcode multiple times.

Dana also asked about boxtop money for specials. Apparently they haven't gotten it yet. The money comes through 2x per year. This year, the full amount didn't come in this fall, so we decided to wait until April to pay out the rest.

Reminder: Great Dane night is 2 weeks from yesterday, on 3/14. There was a discussion about how to remind everyone, etc. Sherry should do a constant comment, backpack mail, and teacher's newsletters. Jolynne Roorda has last year's flyer, which can be updated.

Multicultural night is this coming Friday, 3/4.

Wendy clarifies that even if we pay out all the requested grants, we'll still have the \$74,000 that Dana mentioned left at the end of the year.

**Grants (Wendy):** There was one grant that came in on time, but wasn't on the list. Ms. Gunderson (4<sup>th</sup> grade) is asking for a portable pa system for inside the classroom and for the outdoor classroom, for \$190. That's what it cost to rent the sound system for the carnival. If they have it, Peg says it will get used all over the school. Dana and Shelby remember buying one a few years ago for someone else.

Grant requests, including the one above are up to about 8K. Shelby will look through the grants from the last few years to see who requested the PA system in the past.

Beth Cantwell's printer. It would be in the classroom, and she would monitor it closely. The first grade team also asked for a color printer, but color ink is super expensive. There are 2 color printers in the school right now, one in the special ed room, and one in the office. The library is also getting a color printer. We probably need to consider the policy for color printers; we will ask the first grade team to use one of the ones already in the building.

What to do with advanced readers? It used to be that people used the book room. We're using the Mondo curriculum now, and need books to supplement. A few years ago, the PTO got a matching grant from a Hill Farms neighbor and spent \$15,000 on books for book room - but they're paperbacks, and are falling apart.

There are so many grant proposals for books, maybe we should look at a more coordinated approach. Dana suggestes setting aside some amount (for example, \$2,000) for books every year, so we always know that money will be there for the books, and don't have to come back all the time to ask for more. Shelby suggests having one person in charge of the money, for example, the Instructional Resource Teacher (currently Sherry Nelson), so it's not a request by individual teachers. The 4/5 team has books in the classroom. Whatever amount, the exact way it's used can be flexible, whether for teachers classrooms or the book room. Jeff suggests the IRT could make a proposal, then get approval from Mrs. Keeler; someone else suggested the School Based Leadership Team would be more appropriate, so there's more staff interaction. Wendy will follow up with Sherry on this idea. So, there are 2 questions. First, how much money should be allocated this year (the 5<sup>th</sup> grade is requesting \$250, the first grade is requesting \$2,000, and their books would go to the book room, so they'd be readily accessible to other grades, too). The second question is, how much money should be allocated each year going forward? Wendy will ask Sherry to come to us with a number for an annual book budget amount to replace the books that are in the worst shape on an ongoing basis.

The Kindergarten team's request for 3 iPads: Mrs. Keeler checked with someone at the district about where they are going with their tech plan - touch screen Chrome Books are a possibility. Afan mentioned that Hamilton says their Chrome Books aren't powerful enough. We'll put a hold on this one for now. What are the iPads used for? Are they replacing other skill-building tools?

The next meeting will be on April 12, and will be a presentation by Mrs. Keeler on the growth mindset [Note from 4/4: the date of this presentation was changed to 4/19]. Wendy suggested holding the board meeting on April 5, separate from the presentation.