

Van Hise Elementary PTO Board Meeting Minutes April 5, 2016

Present: 8 board members, 5 parents, and Mrs. Keeler.

Principal's update (Peg Keeler): Library: it's almost complete, and the LMC will be moving in on April 15. Dana Prager is looking for help - it's a day the kids are off school. There will be a team of custodians and former librarians to help, too. Peg will be leading professional development session at Shorewood that day, so she won't be present.

Library Funding - The Chrome Book carts have been purchased; the LMC is set for now. The PTO is paying for the Chrome Book cart and the printer. The Chrome Books were part of a big district-wide purchase to take advantage of a discount, but the PTO will pay for it. That cart will live in the library, but the district also gave us a cart that will be for the classrooms, shared between grades in some way (as yet to be determined).

Book room - we will vote later in the meeting, but the PTO had talked about funding the book room at an annual rate, and suggested \$1,500-\$2,000/yr. The PTO is already funding the books in the book room, but on an ad hoc basis rather than an ongoing basis.

Stage - Peg isn't sure of the funding needs yet. We had talked about going in with Hamilton on a sound system; sent an email to Mike Hertting, etc. (district leadership) asking about it all. Afan met with the 4 music teachers at Hamilton/Van Hise. One design they saw was a 2-inch high stage, which wouldn't have been useful; Peg thinks it would actually be more like 8 inches high, and would fold down (sort of like a Murphy bed). The middle school needs the space in the cafeteria. Afan asked them about the possibility of just resurfacing the existing stage and using that for eating space, but the tables are an issue, since they would either have to stay on the stage, getting in the way of its use as a stage, or would have to be moved off it, which would be a burden. Maybe we could have a meeting with both of the Hamilton and VHE PTO's plus the teachers to talk about the shared space.

Budget cut - Peg is expecting about a 10% cut, amounting to about \$4500-\$5000, to the local budget, also called the formula budget. Peg says it's not end of the world, but is a significant chunk. There has been some attrition, as the birth rate fell during the recession; for now the district is trying to keep class sizes reasonable, though we might see the class sizes here rise a little. Peg suggests waiting until budgets come in before deciding what (if anything) the PTO can do; Peg could do a review and we can talk about it when the budget is finalized, in August.

Construction - The district is going to do the transformation of the front of the school this summer, but they want to start on the new classrooms that are going into the old LMC space starting in May. They feel that they can contain the dust; members of the board expressed concerns about the potential disruptions due to distraction and noise, and the potential health concern of allergies. On one hand, it would be nice to get the work done as soon as possible, on the other hand, we have to consider how it's going to impact students. How long will it take? Peg isn't sure, but thinks if they start in May, they'll be done in June. Peg will get more info and get back to us. Peg invites parents to reach out to Rick Hopke and Mike Hertting (COO, of MMSD, retiring after this year). Peg does not mind waiting, as long as we have all the construction done by the start of the new school year.

Planning for next year - This time of year, they are starting to look at instructional design, taking into account existing resources, numbers of kids, etc. The two Fridays with time off in April are professional development for teachers. This is the time that they start looking at team structures. Peg says that right now, it looks like we won't see much change there, there's a nice structure in place right now. Both the K/1 and 4/5 teams want to try looping. It creates continuity for the kids. This means that class placement will be less intense because most of the kids will be looping. We will be down a section - we're at 19 this year, next year we'll have 18 sections. JoAnne Rieke is retiring, so her spot won't be filled. She's a master gardener, we will try to see if she will come back to help with that. It looks like we have about 70 kindergarteners coming, but won't know for sure until enrollment day. Peg has been giving lots of tours to people looking into moving into the district.

Library - the new furniture is being put together this week, move-in starts Friday, April 15, and will probably continue the following Monday and Tuesday.

Peg wants a parent resource space in the library, with computers available and numbers to call for help (food banks, etc.). It won't be a separate room. On April 27, Shelby and Peg will be going to look at options for that (Shelby will cover this in more detail later in the meeting).

Dana McCloskey says Dana Prager gave her a tour of the library, and pointed out that the builders neglected to put a window in the reading intervention room - is there any way to fix that? Peg thinks probably not; she says it's not the end of the world, but not ideal. Peg brought it up to Rick H. and Mike H., and the last she'd heard was that they'll talk to her about it; the construction supervisor said it couldn't be fixed, but now they're talking about putting it in. The cost to fix it was estimated at about \$2500, before it had electricity. Now the wall has electricity, so it would be more expensive. Peg will check in about it.

Peg will teach the mindset class 4/19 with Sherry Nelson.

Outside fundraising (Sherry Nields): We started off the year with Vitense, which raised about \$450. Rock and Jump hasn't paid us yet, or given us a number or

anything; Wendy suggests following up with one of the people in charge. The Barnes and Noble fundraiser brought in about \$670. Sherry Nields gave it to Sherry Nelson, who will use it to purchase the books for the advanced readers. The Serrv/Whoops benefit brought in \$200. The amount raised from the Metcalfe's fundraiser went from an estimated \$105 to \$1,300 - they had messed up the amount. Great Dane night raised about \$350. The entertainment went on for about 2.5 hours, and was mostly by the 4/5 kids. The kids who participated are the ones who want to put things together during their "What I Need (WIN)" time.

Upcoming fundraisers: The Arts and Crafts Fair, Saturday, May 7 - Sherry is not sure which food carts, there will be, but there will be some. The Fit to Go Band from MMSD will be there. Kindergarten round up is that day, too. The food carts will give the school 15% - where should that money go to? Art or PTO? It's up for discussion. The bake sale money goes back into the PTO. Beth Cantwell is good about finding grants. She's also using money from her award and leftover money from the mosaic artist to get new cabinets. It was suggested that we could give the money to all the arts - PE, music, art. Last year we got \$800 from the bake sale, \$700 from vendors, both were almost pure profit. This year could be as much as \$3,000. Dana M. asks what's the advantage to earmarking all the money for the specials vs. asking the teachers to write grants for it. Wendy will meet with Beth to see how to do it. Dana suggests that if there's a need, we should just meet it, and not necessarily worry about how much we get from the Art Fair. Specials are different, since they see all the kids. Peg will ask about needs; Dana suggests just increasing the stipend.

Mallards - Sherry has a date, she thinks it's July 17, but will double check. That is it for this school year. We won't do Vitense on the last day (as we had talked about), since it's a full day, and on a Thursday. We could do it the day after, but Sherry feels like we did enough this year, we don't want to do so much that people get fatigued. Wendy asks to have someone with younger kids who could work with Sherry because her kid will be in 5th grade next year.

Science Night (Afan): Everything is on schedule. There will be 11 outside people coming in to do projects. It is essentially all set up. Geoff Siemering is setting up the students, and Afan shared the map with the custodians, so things will be set up, people just have to be given a map and told where to be. 21 students are signed up. The program pretty much runs itself. Wendy and Kristin will be here for the evening.

Wendy gave the kitchen staff "cool ties" which you soak in water and put around your neck to cool your carotid arteries, and it keeps you cool.

Hamilton PTO updates (Afan): Afan is working with Shelby. He got the current president to sign a form so he can open checks legally. Hamilton recently did a direct appeal. It turns out that it costs \$500 to do a retrofit of the drinking fountains, so that will probably go forward. Afan and Shelby are talking to people who are going to have 6th graders next year to see what they're interested in. Shelby is looking at

what the structure should be. Right now there are 4 people on the board. People come but then don't come back. They are trying to build up the Hamilton PTO and get the structure in place so that they can hit the ground running next year. Afan will be doing more with Hamilton next year, so he probably won't run science night next year.

Playground (Carousel and Kristin): The community meeting was last week. It was not hugely attended, but there were about 20-30 people there. There was a great conversation with those who were there. We have nice materials to show people what the plan will be. Ground covering was the big issue. There was a PowerPoint presentation by Jerrod, who the playground committee has been working with, then a conversation about how the process started and where it has gone. The plan has nature based play, climbing/jumping, shade, a path that connects everything, and water mitigation. It was presented to the K/1/2 teachers, and the conversation with them went well, the feedback has been good. There was no pushback on the "messy materials" section. The next step is a big fundraiser. One idea was that there could be a live auction, where the teachers could give us something they've never done before, a one-time thing, like ice cream with a student, or a day with a student or some other type of extra time spent with a student. Teachers have already offered some things. Ms. McGuire and Ms. Drinkwine will come to your house and babysit 8 kids, feed them, etc. Mrs. Savage offered to do some stuff, too. We are not sure when the auction will happen. There was a good conversation with the guy from Oliver's. He's trying to figure out if he can put together a night where we could use the space for free. Someone asked about the timeline for this fundraiser. Carousel is thinking sometime towards the end of May, and is thinking it would be about \$100/couple. Her goal would be to get 100 couples, but she thinks 50 couples is probably more realistic. How about a timeline for choosing the stuff that goes into the playground? Carousel thinks the reconfiguration, making the nature based stuff, will have to go first. We are not getting rid of the blacktop; that's not on the map with the playground plan. The playground committee did talk to the teachers about taking away some of the blacktop, and the teachers are ok with that. Trina (a parent who does playground duty) notices lots of kids who walk and read; a path would allow those kids to walk around without bumping into things. The people at the playground meeting had some really good ideas, a lot to say.

Shelby asks the playground people to send out an email with information for parents who were not at the playground meeting. Someone brought up a point - even though we've been talking to Oliver's, is it worth trying to find a different location in order to have it on a Friday or Saturday night? Someone pointed out that room rental runs \$2,000-\$3,000 per night. What about Odana Golf Course? Would that be a possibility? There's a tiny clubhouse. The Oliver's guy talked about giving us appetizers, and maybe a signature drink that would be discounted (not free). It would be a cash bar. Could we access his suppliers, would they cut us a deal? Then it's cheaper, but it's not coming from Oliver's. Someone suggested a tent at Hilldale? For example, outside of Cafe Hollander. It would be a short turnaround; if we can get

a free location and some free food (or a discount), we should take it. Dana M. suggests that the next fundraiser be on the night of the K/1 babysitting night. Afan asks, is there a timeline for breaking ground on the playground? The goal was to do some this summer - we will discuss at the June meeting how much we want to spend to start out.

Will water mitigation be a problem after trees are planted? Lots of arborists want to give trees and planting.

We'll need additional money approved to pay ZDA, assuming they're our general contractor. When we asked for a phased plan, they started with the area by the garden; we want to be careful how much we do near the Segoe entrance, because even though they say there aren't plans to do anything with that driveway, we are turning the Segoe door into the main entrance, so it is possible we will have to do something in the next 3-5 years.

Parent Resource Room Meeting (Shelby): There will be a meeting at the end of April to learn about parent resource rooms. Hamilton and VHE will have an initial discussion because we share space. Wendy will collect names from here, and Shelby will bring it up at the next School Based Leadership Team meeting, to get teachers involved. Wendy suggests getting the nurse involved, too. Shelby has a flier, and could send it out to everyone at VHE to see who's interested. One example of a resource room is the food pantry at East High. It has lots of different supplies, and is run by students, with a couple staff in charge. That will look different at every level, and part of the discussion will be who is in charge. Wendy will send out information. Shelby needs to know how many people are going to come by April 21. The meeting will be on April 27, 6:00-8:00 pm, at the Doyle Administration Building [NOTE: the meeting was moved to East High School]. Tell Wendy if you're interested, she is trying to get a count of how many people will be on our team. Discussions will happen this year, and hopefully it will be in place next year. Hamilton participation won't be huge at first, but hopefully will grow.

Treasurer report (Dana McCloskey): We budgeted to make \$25,000 from the after school classes, and have already made \$27k. The spring carnival brought in \$12,000, including \$800 that we got this year from sponsorships. Community events also brought in more than expected so far, or look like they will. We got 2 donations for social justice grocery cards (used for sending food home on weekends for families that need it). Ongoing donations were a little less, because the fall fund drive was a little less than expected.

Grants, Hokki stools - some teachers don't like them, while some really like them, and some kids get a benefit from them. We still have an outstanding question of whether to fund two more of them.

For the carnival, we spent \$2,000. For community events, we've spent \$2,500. After school class expenses are significant, but the goal of the classes has always been to keep about half of the money that comes in.

We have about \$40,000 in funds to bring into next year. We still have to talk about book room money.

Funding for items for the new library has changed significantly. In the end we paid for half of a Chrome book cart, \$6,500, and a printer, \$1,000. Dana Prager asked for a bin for \$75. But now it looks like the district is not buying new furniture for the new classrooms.

The water fountain work order is in, and the total will be \$1000, not \$6000, because we have the main part of the equipment already, it just needs to be retrofitted. There will be one right by the cafeteria, then one down by the K/1 wing.

Wendy has a couple of possibilities to fill the treasurer position for next year. She will be at Kindergarten round up to recruit possible new board members. Shelby asked for a stand alone email asking for board participants. Beth Gunshor is looking for someone to take over the newsletter.

There followed some discussion about funding \$2,000 annually for the book room, plus a one-time \$5,000 expenditure to fill in the 10% budget gap the school is facing. VOTE: Wendy moved that we fund both of those items. Afan seconded. The board voted, and the motion passed unanimously.

The grant for the two additional Hokki stools, at \$200, is approved.

By-Laws (Wendy): There is a copy of the by-laws in the office that require board members' signatures. Currently, we have too many people on the board, according to the by-laws. Wendy would like to change it so that there are more people on the board, but they are more flexible in their roles (at-large members). For example, Midvale/Lincoln has 5 board members. They vote on a slate of people, then meet in June to hash out who is going to fill what position. Someone asked, why put any limit on number of board members, or why not choose a really high number, like 200? We've always had meetings of just executive board members, to expedite decisions, for example, the teacher grant process generally happens just among the executive board members.

The executive board does work in between meetings, while the final decisions happen in the actual meeting. In other words, the executive board creates the final product that is eventually voted on.

One question to consider is, what would constitute a quorum? If there are too many board members, it is too hard to get a quorum.

Afan suggested putting the changes on a shared document. He will put up the document, and Wendy will edit it.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, May 10.