

Notes for minutes of Hudson PAC meeting -- January 12, 2011, in the school library.

The meeting opened at 1840h. The meeting was chaired by PAC chair Robert. Notes for minutes were taken by Alan P. Attendance: 15 parents, Principal Mrs. Browning, Mme. Boyd. A full list of attendees is available from the PAC Chair upon request. For privacy reasons a full list is not posted on the web site.

1. A motion to approve the minutes of the last PAC meeting on December 07, 2010 was moved by Gary W. and seconded by Sheila C. The minutes were approved.
2. Thanks were mentioned to Mahlah H. for overseeing the website and posting the minutes and we are reminded that any questions about or contributions to the website can be directed to her.
3. PAC Chair report – Rob reported
 - i) Traffic and safety update – the construction taking place on York Avenue before Christmas is now complete, and Rob will now move the “drop-off zone” banner from the fence along Cypress to hang alongside its partner on the fence along York. Once the north entrance on Cypress is reopened and the south entrance on Cypress closed, Rob will organize a meet-and-greet during drop-off time to re-educate parents regarding the proper procedures. Parent Chad M. will assist with this and any other volunteers are welcome.
Action item: Rob will arrange for the instructions and diagram regarding the drop-off zones and parking around the school to be posted on the website.
 - ii) Wooden playground equipment update – Hudson is among a number of VSB schools with aging wooden playground structures presenting some potential hazard through deterioration which the school district is planning to remove over the next two years. The affected portion of Hudson’s playground is the wooden apparatus to the east of the school building, on the Cypress Street side. Under current school board policy, the district will remove the old equipment but not fund any replacement; this falls to the PAC. The school would normally be notified by letter of this but there is no record of such a letter having been received; the matter came to the PAC’s attention when Gary spotted an article about aging playgrounds in the Vancouver Sun which named Hudson as an affected school. The PAC executive sent a letter to the VSB advising that we hadn’t heard and thus hadn’t allocated any funds to playground replacement this year, and are planning a Centennial celebration the next year; is it possible to defer the playground removal beyond this? Mrs. Browning reported that she had since received a call from VSB assistant manager for maintenance and construction, who had advised her that we can defer this to late in 2012; she expects details to arrive in a letter in the next week. She advised that she had been part of a similar process at her former school, Garibaldi, where a new playground had cost on the order of \$30,000, supported in part by district funds which are now no longer available – but there are people she can connect with who can help us navigate the process, starting with getting bids from private playground contractors. Discussion followed in which some ideas about funding the demolition of old equipment, ground preparation and selection and installation of new equipment

were brought forward. One included using the Centennial celebration as a fundraiser for the new playground (other schools have attached specific projects to centennial celebrations and asked for alumni to contribute); another included approaching the developers of 1818 Cornwall. Rob will speak with Cindy, the PAC's representative to the community input process for this development, about the most effective way to ask for their support.

- iii) Hudson choir – Rob reported that there was a carryover of approximately \$900 from a larger than anticipated enrolment last term; this has been used to reduce the fee to students for the coming term to \$40 for 8 sessions, to establish a “pay-what-you-can” fund for students to whom the fee is a barrier, and to hire the choir's accompanist for additional time. If funds permit, a drama coach might be hired for the third term to add a “scene” element to the choir's repertoire. Second term choir registration forms have just gone out to parents. Catherine Campolin, the choir director, reported that last year the choir began with 20 members, and was encouraged by the PAC to open enrolment to all interested this year. Fifty students participated in the first term! The choir is open to all, no auditions are required. This term the choir is moving from the music room to the gym for rehearsals. An idea for the future is a chamber choir, a smaller group which would introduce harmonies and accept participants through an audition process. Catherine welcomes ideas and suggestions for material for the choir to perform.
 - iv) School Planning Council – some background to the council, parent members of which are to be elected later at this meeting. The regulations governing PACs mandate that each school's PAC have a School Planning Council, consisting of three elected parent representatives, a school administrator (typically, and at Hudson, the Principal) and, if available, a member of the teaching staff. The SPC meets quarterly and is focussed on forward planning for the school around issues such as enrolment patterns, support for special needs students, literacy, etc. Participation in the SPC involves four meetings, plus time and energy between meetings to carry forward any initiatives that come out of them. One parent currently serving on the SPC, Monica M., is willing to remain on for another term and two new members are needed. One of the two PAC co-secretaries will serve in order to maintain a connection between the SPC and the PAC executive; one additional member is needed. Rob invited those present to consider standing for election later in the meeting.
4. PAC Secretary report – Rob reported for the co-secretaries, Chantal M. and Christine O., neither of whom could be present. The co-secretaries are working on a book drive for this coming term, investigating the possibility of co-ordinating it with the Usborne read-a-thon which was postponed from last term due to illness of the local Usborne Books representative. The school librarian and then the classroom teachers made selections from the books donated during last year's book drive, and the remainder were sold at the school book sale; it is envisaged that this year's book drive would work the same way.
5. PAC Treasurer report – Sheila reported that the PAC is roughly where anticipated in income and expenses for this time in the year. The raffle and the poinsettia sales generated about the same as the previous year; the Entertainment book sales were slightly down. The Winter Fair was a great success in terms of funds raised and participation; the proposal that we hold a Winter Fair again next year was met with rip-snorting approval.

As far as income generated, Sheila reported that the Winter Fair raised slightly less than \$800 for the PAC (after all expenses), about \$240 for the Grade 7 Graduating Class and the Henry Hudson Out of School Care Program made \$445.

There are scheduling issues which preclude holding a Spring Fair this year and the treasurers propose that the next one be at the end of the 2012/2013 school year as the PAC has previously decided to roll the 2011/2012 end of year barbeque and dance into the main Centennial celebration.

The treasurers recommend some caution in expenditures for the rest of the year in order to have approximately \$5000 to carry forward into the 2011/2012 year in order to be able to meet regular budgeted expenses and contribute to the Centennial celebration and East playground replacement, should preferred options for raising funds for these two items not bear fruit. There was a general sense in the group that while this was prudent, we should consider this a "plan B" and make every effort to pursue ways of funding the Centennial and the playground replacement so that the PAC's regular contributions to the school could also continue.

6. Principal's report – Mrs. Browning reported
 - i) The Principals of Franklin and Fleming Elementary schools have sent information regarding the new late French immersion programs for students entering grade 6. These programs are just starting up; if any parents are interested in more details, please contact Mrs. Browning.
 - ii) Information on a course for parents and families on Attention Deficit Disorder is posted on the parent notice board in the main hall and in the January edition of the Hudson Hailer.
 - iii) The Foundation Skills Assessment, a mandated provincial examination for all grade 4 and 7 students will be taking place at Hudson starting on January 17. This is a 4 ½ hour examination in English, used by the provincial Ministry of Education to provide a snapshot across the province of where grade 4 and 7 students are at in January/February, and is not used in preparing the school's end-of-term reports for individual students. Sample FSA exams can be viewed online at the Ministry website. Any parents who wishes to request that their children opt out of participating in the FSA is invited to contact Mrs. Browning.

At this point there was a parent question regarding the grade 7 graduation – what is the planning process, how has it been organized in the past few years, what role can parents play in organizing? Sheila responded that there is money in the PAC budget for the actual graduation ceremony, and that there is also usually a camping trip. Some funds for the latter were raised at the Winter Fair, and more will come from Family Bingo nights this term. Mrs. Browning advised that the grade 7's were at this point close to their fundraising goal, and that she would follow up with Ms. Miladinovic regarding what is needed at this point, and give the PAC an update.

7. Teacher's report – Mme. Boyd advised that Mr. Mures is away on medical leave, healing well but not expected back until at least late in February. Parents are asked to refrain from sending him emails about school matters during his recuperation. While he is away a substitute (who was a student teacher in his class last year and who knows many of the students well) is partnered with Ms. Miladinovic.

Mme. Boyd's report caused the group to reflect with gratitude on the work of the previous School Planning Council and administration in obtaining VSB agreement for two full time teaching positions for this class coming into this school year

8. SPC elections – The following slate was elected by acclamation for the coming year: Monica M. (returning member), Chantal M., Mitch L. (volunteered from the floor). These names were approved unanimously.
9. Members-at-large reports
 - i. Centennial committee – Alan reported that since the December PAC meeting when the June 21, 2012 date was set for the major celebration, little work has been done by the committee other than beginning to sort through archival material available in the school office. A more detailed work plan with tasks, timelines and budget needs will be prepared for the February meeting. Suggestions from the floor included researching any famous alumni and finding ways of actively engaging the current students in planning and participating in events.
Action item – Rob will set up a Facebook page and look into a Twitter account as means of finding and attracting alumni. To prevent issues around privacy and appropriate use, such social media tools will be set up for the Centennial event and geared to alumni only, not to Henry Hudson school in general.
10. New business – Mrs. Browning reported that the group which ran an afterschool computer arts class last year for a student fee of \$100 with a pay as you go option has approached the school with a proposal to offer a three day course for free for students in grades 4 through 7. Mrs. Browning has invited the group to go ahead and advises that more detailed information will be coming soon.
11. Next meeting date – set for Tuesday February 08, 2011 at 1830h in the school library.
12. The meeting was adjourned at 1935h.