

## **PAC Meeting minutes 9 Dec 2015**

**Called to Order 6:32pm**

**Minutes of previous meeting: tabled for next time.**

### **Principal's report**

Winter concert: all ticket requests will be filled; tickets going home with youngest child in family. Two performances, next Wednesday.

Staffing update: Mr Hunter staying all year, Ms Hannah the secretary here until Dec 18<sup>th</sup> at least. Ms Mitchell is leaving at end of December for new position at Shaughnessy; new teacher Ms Jane Carasco is coming in January.

Registration for next year: already 38 registered for English kindergarten. Some are applying for French Immersion lottery. Will probably need a lottery for English kindergarten. 8 new students want to come for French immersion grade 1 but there are not 8 spots so there will be a lottery there.

Learning space: anticipate an extra class next year and need somewhere to put it. Space has to be ready for September 2016.

Schools closed two additional days next year; parents to visit VSB website for more details. It is for teacher training for new curriculum. Mr Cannon quite excited about the curriculum changes: inquiry driven and project based.

### **Guest Speaker, District Principal, Chris Atkinson**

Chris Atkinson is here today to talk about seismic upgrading and renovation to add a 17<sup>th</sup> division. We met quite often with last year for seismic upgrading and renovation to add 17<sup>th</sup> division. A lot of work done for feasibility of options was done last year and Chris Atkinson here to speak on this today.

Chris Atkinson:

9 options for a new classroom space. Trustees make the final decision.

1. Take over outbuilding
2. Portable (around \$200,000)
3. Basement either side of kitchen or in front of kitchen
4. Library
5. Teacher staffroom
6. Gym room (changerooms on north side of gym)

Frontrunners being costed now are

- (1) move library to Mr Hunter's room and make library two classrooms;
- (2) move staff room out to change room area of gym, put in kitchen & staff room there and make staff room back into a classroom.

Issues considered are cost, impact on school and learning, and impact on community.

Decision will have to be made in New Year to get work scheduled for the summer.

Questions:

Rob: what will population be with new class in school? Answer: 410 or 420. Rob recalls previous maximum population for this school was supposed to be 385. Concerned that we are not declared full now. Other schools are declared full but still have activity rooms, art rooms, why do we have to take another class? Chris: no maximum for a site. Capacity is defined as working capacity, how many can you get in each room. Has something to do with organization of school. Chris surprised 385 was ever max; staffroom used to be a classroom, so working capacity should be all available space. Probably they didn't consider adding classrooms as we are doing now.

MarinaP: new schools consider maximum usable space; hallways are smaller, staircases are smaller. We have a lot of unusable floor space in this school. Best interest of students first; if we can make space for neighbourhood kids here at this school then we should.

Parent: if adding another division what about bathroom space and gym space? Chris: Bathroom space is according to code, gym space. Has Coal Harbour school been considered? Chris: it's a future site, but VSB doesn't think we need it right now. International village school opening soon with 510 spaces, that will take a lot of excess. Marina P: can we please improve the washrooms, especially for kindergartens and take out pony wall between kindergarten and girl's washroom.

Rob: what about how small our senior years are? Chris: we are coming up with a sustainable cohort size.

Parent: if library moves, what would its size difference be? Chris: library would be significantly smaller if moved.

Parent: Hudson has unique needs in terms of French and English collections.

Parent: checking fire code if we lose an exit? Chris: it's fine there are many exits.

Carly: who has input on decision? Locally school board is where to advocate from PAC, "Committee Two" is where all facilities issues are discussed, and then they make recommendation to the Board. Committee meeting agendas are published on their website. Chris et al gather info and present to school trustees. For seismic, should also advocate to MLA.

Ms. Nikon: losing 50% of library space would be difficult. This space also acts as prep classroom, for prep relief for teachers. Office used for support workers working with children, meetings. IF library moves, enough only for the library prep space and everything else (flex space) is lost – no room for designated space for French and English collections. Shelf space just on outside walls would be reduced by more than half; more than 50% books would be packed away. Really believes it wouldn't work as library space. Whole new curriculum is about accommodating all learners and independent work. This library needs to accommodate over 400 English and French learners.

MarinaP: would teachers prefer staff room to be moved instead of moving library? Mrs Nikon: not preferred, but staff would like library to be maintained at all costs. Moving the Library now and then moving again to accommodate seismic upgrading, then moving again to a newly renovated space means the library would be in upheaval for at least 5 years and would be difficult for students to transition to learning how to use the new space each time

MarinaP: would teachers prefer staff room to be moved instead of moving library? Mrs Nikon: not preferred, but staff would like library to be maintained at all costs.

Mme Cathy: as teacher, we don't want to lose this library. We don't really want staff room in gym, but we would take the staff room in gym over losing library. We would prefer a portable classroom, especially considering we are up for seismic upgrading in a few years.

MarinaP: have design plans been presented? Chris: no they are being drawn and costed right now.

Parent: with 30 more students, also support keeping library. Seems crazy to reduce books in both languages, and the library is where some classes are taken, community events. Affects over 400 students to make library smaller.

Jerry: Has heard of other schools to turn one classroom into a generic classroom and different classes moved through it to use it for some things. Chris: works in secondary school, not for elementary (called efficient scheduling).

MarinaP: there is space in this school in the gym building that is completely unused.

Chris: we will get information before end of 2015, so he can come at Jan 2016. This isn't all done based on cost; community assets are important, so we aren't taking over the outbuilding even though it is very nice.

Rob: to advocate should we advocate for a particular solution? Going in there with an informed,  
Chris: that might be helpful.

Parent: this library space is of great importance to the school. Children and teachers must not suffer just for more and more space.

Pat: thanks for appreciating the "outbuilding". We took it over 6 years ago and upgraded it and it's delightful. About 4 years ago we lost one room in basement for French immersion kindergarten; then another room taken. At that time Pat asked VSB re portables, VSB reported that size of field wasn't adequate for size of school population. Is that weighing into the decision? Chris: never come across a site that has enrollment maximum. International Village site is a tiny pie-shaped thing. You don't want to impinge on field or trees with a portable.

MarinaP: commending Mrs Nikon for being direct with communicating with PAC and working with us to get solutions. Thanks also to all the teachers for coming out tonight. We will have more opportunities to share your input.

Seismic upgrading

Still in waiting period to get to first stage. Was supposed to start Jan 2016 with feasibility.

Feasibility (1 year)

Design (1 year)

Construction (2 years)

Vancouver project office now open. Just hired more project managers. 26 projects underway right now. Steering committee of decision makers (district & ministry) getting constant updates, so hope that will streamline approval processes.

We started a bunch of projects in the fall. Scheduled to start feasibility in the spring 2016. Most but not all schools who were supposed to start in the fall actually did, so good chance we will start.

John: who are the committee we can advocate to? Chris: You can go as delegate to that committee. Contact secretary/treasurer's office.

Feasibility study comes up with 3 costs: Fix building, replace building with a new one, or do it in blocks (e.g., cost school and gym building). Mandate is to do whatever costs the least. Once solution is determined, then we figure out what to do with kids. If replacing school, can build new school while in

old one. If repairing school, need swing space. Two swing sites in city, can't all be done with the swing spaces given how many projects need to be done.

Long term facilities plan is still being deliberated by trustees.

**Treasurer Report:** We've made some money from Winter Fair and it was a smashing success. Thanks to Winter Fair organizers Marina P and Nina, Stella, Carly and dozens of parent and student volunteers. Budget vs actual presentation at January meeting because Rob has produced a database to track it all. Received PST refund for playground after several years. Direct donation money has been submitted to VSB and we are waiting for them to send us back the tax receipts.

**School Planning Committee (SPC):** Marina P and Victoria met with Ian Cannon yesterday; new curriculum is more project-based learning. Skills and process emphasis over specific content. See curriculum handout in library. There will be no new school plan for next year, because next year is for implementing new curriculum. Principal and 3 teachers go to workshop to become the trainers for our own staff. BC is first province to bring in inquiry-based curriculum.

**DPAC:** Alan brought postcards from DPAC. Grassroots parents advocacy group have put together postcard campaign to advocate for budget priorities to the ministry of education, that they should follow recommendation of the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for more public education funding. Should we as a PAC can support this campaign and how to get it out to people, perhaps in the backpacks? Organizers want them collected school by school and send a delegation of parents to Victoria to present bags of them at once. Due date Jan 4<sup>th</sup>. Pat: has there been discussion to get media on board and alerted to this campaign? Alan: yes. MarinaP: concerned about PAC becoming a political advocacy group vs presenting information to parents about advocacy activities underway that they could join. Is putting the postcards in the backpacks going to far? Make an advocacy corner on the PAC website. Instead we will do information circular and tell parents how to get more involved. Committees: Lots of great stuff happening.

**Choir:** Senior choir will be at Xmas train in Stanley Park on Monday Dec 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Winter Concert:** seating for about 300 parents per show. Each class doing something. Choir performing; Band only at the morning performance; choir performance in afternoon is longer. Tickets going out, extras available through Hannah.

Before and after school activities for next term will begin soon.

Babysitting course 2 weeks ago went well; updating roster of Hudson kids available for babysitting will be ready by beginning of next term.

Meeting adjourned 8pm: Chantal/John