

# MINUTES

## Castor Valley elementary school council Meeting

### Thursday January 21, 2016, 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Meeting began at 6:35pm  
Meeting was chaired by Cynara Corbin.  
Minutes taken by Lesley Parker, supported by Elli Kapsalis.

#### **Attendance:**

#### **Voting Members (reached quorum):**

Alka Moorjani, Cynara Corbin, Deanna Morris, Elli Kapsalis, Jenni Bell, Kiera Lennox, Lesley Chen, Lesley Parker, Leslie Segal, Lisa Multari, Maria Armas, Melanie Ritchie, Nicole Eisnor, Sarah Slater, Tara Starzomski, Trish Bezaire, Tamara Legris, Tina Clarmo

#### **Non-voting Members and Guests**

Chris Toivonen (Principal), Alain Lalonde (teacher Rep), Jen Danby McDonald, Madison Conlin, Gloria Mackie

#### **1. Welcome Attendance**

Cynara Corbin opened the meeting, confirmed quorum and welcomed all new and visiting parents from the Kindergarten information night.

#### **2. Approval of January Agenda**

Jenni Bell made a motion to approve the January Agenda. Maria Armas seconded. Motion carried.

#### **3. Approval of November Minutes**

Tina Clarmo motioned to approved November minutes. Melanie Ritchie seconded. Motion carried.

#### **4. Co-Chairs and Vice Chair's Report**

Melanie read a thank you card from Mme Atkins regarding Council's support of her Ad hoc request for funds to update the collection of books for the library. 87 new books in French were purchased and are in the library in use, a list of books is available from her if interested.

- **Mr Jeff retirement book**

Alka reported that nearly ALL students had written cards for the book. More Mr Jeff photos are still appreciated and a suggested deadline of Jan 29<sup>th</sup> was given. Alka will ask Mme Abboud if a Santa Jeff photo is available. Cards were passed to allow council members to sign they are due back by end of next week, return them to the office. 20 days remain until Mr Jeff's official retirement date. On his last day, Feb 29<sup>th</sup>, there will be an end of day assembly at the school for him when council will present their gift, staff will present a gift. Chris mentioned there will be a retirement party in the evening at the school on the Thursday before his last day. There will also be a board retirement party for staff, which Mr Jeff knows about. Cynara thanked Alka for her work in creating and organizing the book for Mr Jeff.

- **Hotlunches.net**

This is an online program being discussed for use by council program coordinators for easier tracking of student orders and fundraising. The Demo has been activated and it is to be examined before the February meeting by those who would potentially be using the system in order to assess whether it might be a useful investment and time saver for council programs like hot lunches, milk and fundraising. If it is found useful, a better, CVESC data-specific trial can go ahead during the month of April. Cost for the program is \$400 per year with full service, plus the cost of PayPal fees. Alka estimates PayPal fees are \$0.30 +3% per transaction, which can be a shared fee with parents. Demo link will be shared with all council members for investigation. Estimate for cheque fees associated with deposits will be available for February meeting for inclusion in the information.

- Hot Lunch Program – Increase to number of events

It was noted from recent CVESC Facebook group discussions that some parents would like more hot lunches.

Tara S. Explained current limitations and challenges for current Lunch program coordinators, including local vendors unable to supply entire school, physical space limitations in the lobby, the amount of time commitment required to setup and track all orders correctly.

Tara S said she and Johan would investigate the “lunch lady” demo.

Additional volunteers would be required if additional lunch dates and programs were going forward.

Cynara had spoken with Lunch Lady Program and discovered they claim to be able to handle our school size and they offered a full service option, where the council would make virtually zero profit. Lunch Lady also offered a similar service to current lunch programs, which would require volunteers and would enable council to continue to use lunch programs as a fundraising venue. Patricia wondered if we could markup the full service distribution option for fundraising purposes. Tara suggested that if approved to choose different meals than what is currently offered. Cynara, Tara and Johan will investigate further. It was reiterated that any expansion to hot lunch programs would require volunteers. A call for volunteers immediately was suggested by Patricia.

More information will be brought to the group for February Meeting.

- Poppa Jacks Popcorn

Cynara reported the program is to sell 22g bags of popcorn for \$2 each, where each bag sold would net Council \$1.50 in fundraising monies. Chris suggested an end of day distribution. Cynara stated we would be doing a “Toonie Tuesday” fundraising program, not an order form program. Council would pre-order a volume of bags to sell to students. At Greely Elementary, Gloria mentioned that they call classes down at the end of the day class by class, the students pay and take their bags back to backpacks. No consumption at school is allowed. They offer the program weekly. Tina suggested we try once a month to start the program. Distribution methods were discussed, including a basket and a runner per class, or a cart system. Chris required more time to think on best options for distribution in order to cause the least class disruption. Leslie S. asked if the monies raised were going to any particular initiative, but it was indicated they were for general council funds.

Cynara proposed once a month for the rest of the year, starting in March with 3 flavors available to start and council will call for volunteers. Maria seconded. All approved.

- Library Committee

Council is proposing that for next year our fundraising will focus on Library Improvements– more books, more shelves etc.

Leslie S. asked Chris what council is allowed to do for Library Improvements. Chris suggested Council come forward with a plan and bring it to him. He supports the idea, would like to know our plan.

Currently library is used frequently for Intermediates to work quietly and he would like to see the improvements.

Melanie Ritchie wants to start a Library Improvement committee to talk about plans for next year.

Librarian wanted to do a book tree later in the year and council sounded enthused about the idea that they could help to donate or support book needs for the school. It was indicated this was strongly librarian led, but was suggested that such a thing could be ready for upcoming council and school events like, the Used book sale, Scholastic Book fair, Talent fest and Fun Night. Various methods that the tree might be utilized were suggested – kids could bring home leaves to parents, could have a online wish list tree, or an email callout for tree fulfillment were suggested.

Elli requested that a "wish list" of books be set out to parents to see what could be gathered from our school population. Melanie R. said she would get that list to council.

- Sleeping Mats

An email from Karen Persy explaining an alternate way to use the milk bags to make mats was read. She suggests perhaps students could take over the creation. Chris suggested a club be formed of interested

junior or intermediate students with a parent leader. Council asked where the mats would go. Melanie will reply to Karen with our questions and follow up.

## **5. PRINCIPAL, TEACHING & SUPPORT STAFF Reports**

M. Alain Lalonde spoke for the teacher portion through emails from various staff members. He reported Madame La Charité's class is reading poems and thanks council for the equipment purchased previously.

Mme Bickmore reported the clothing drive clothing went to Pinecrest, Hawthorne and the Shepherds of Good Hope. All were grateful, thank you to all families. Toy Mountain collected 400 gifts approximately. Next up ambassadors will be visiting the Shepherds of Good Hope. Thanks were offered for Shopping Day as a big hit with grade 6 kids! Paint day was a huge success; all the classes made beautiful paintings despite the time crunch due to the fire drill, the boys especially were funny as they were surprised how much they enjoyed it. All students were proud to take home their art.

Mme Frechette reported that Gr. 4 and 5 will be going skating in Metcalfe on February 3 and also on the Canal on February 11. Parent volunteers were needed.

Chris read notes from the Office that the charitable donation tax receipt amount has now increased to \$25 minimum, up from the previous \$20. Most items approved by Ad Hoc have been purchased and will be discussed with the Treasurers. Custodial notes that there are 20 days left until Mr Jeff retires. Chris reported that teachers are writing report cards for first term. He has begun creating the School Learning Plan with staff and will share with council when the time comes to begin adding council to the planning. Staff and student volleyball was loud and fun, teachers won both games. Chris indicated that Indoor Recess cut off is -25 C wind chill, in case any parents were not aware. Also noted was Chris wanted to purchase some additional furniture for the school lobby and reading areas and would follow up with council about an Ad Hoc request for the funds.

## **6. TREASURERS REPORTS**

See attached financial reports.

Cedar Bush raised over \$1600, which was unbudgeted for. However Macmillan's only raised \$1700, budgeted to make \$3000, perhaps because a 2<sup>nd</sup> event was considered initially. It was noted that Tammy was unable to coordinate a spring Macmillan's event. A second Cedar Bush event was suggested, and would be looked into as to whether they offered other seasonal decor. It was suggested to try Cedar Bush again next year, as the response from parents was positive.

Cynara asked about the Fundscrip amounts, and it was explained that 2 profit cheques are issued and more will come in through the year.

Hot lunch programs did not meet the budgeted amount, but this was due to vendor prices increasing and council did not increase prices as much.

## **7. FUNDRAISING /PROGRAMS/EVENTS Reports**

### **• KINDERYARD**

Tamara reported that direct ask fundraised \$5587. 2 Corporate donations so far. Committee will continue to work on finding more corporate donations. The City Grant is approved at 7,500.00 The Board deadline to confirm if the CVES bid has been approved is January 31<sup>st</sup>, so we are waiting to hear. Kinder Committee will have another meeting in the coming weeks. Total funds so far are at approximately 21,000 with more corporate donations to come, or if necessary, Kinder-project will borrow from council funds to move project forward if chosen to go ahead for summer 2016. Tamara noted that the Committee wants to get more corporate donations so that council will be able to support all initiatives, and is considering a direct ask to incoming JK families.

Future fundraising ideas were discussed, including a Movie Night, or working with the Talentfest team to fundraise at the same time, via bake sale, popcorn sales or perhaps small admission fee. Jen Danby Macdonald will approach Talentfest committee with the idea.

Movie Night was suggested to go ahead for March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Motioned by Jenni Bell, seconded by Sarah Slater. The Kinder Committee will run this event. It was suggested that Movie night be the unveiling for Poppa Jacks Popcorn.

- Fundscrip

Cynara read an email from Melanie Collins. She reports that fundscrip is boosting their e-cards program and wants to promote direct shipping to home as an option for parents. All information about fundscrip news will be added to the Facebook group and Website.

- Christmas Shopping Day

Kiera reported it was a great event. Setup was aided with the help of Mr Motts class who brought everything to the gym and helped sort. Teachers reported it went smoothly this year and even the last classes of the day had selection enough for their families. There were lots of volunteers on the day off, so many persons wrapping that there were no line ups. Kiera has prepped for wrapping supplies for next year.

- Talentfest

Jen Danby-McDonald announced that Talent fest is a go, 2 nights are booked, April 13-14, 6pm or 6:30pm start times, TBD. Dress rehearsal will be April 12 (both nights rehearsal on one night) Email regarding the event will follow with weekly CVES email. Mr. Jeff has agreed to look after the sound for the event. Audition forms are in the office and are due Feb 9 One Act per student is allowed, group format OR solo. A request for various volunteers was made and council will email and post the list on the Facebook and group email. New committee members welcome.

- Used Book Sale

Tara S was interested in booking a date, but was still in progress regarding finalizing a date due to Talentfest, Movie night and Scholastic Book Fairs dates. More will be confirmed.

## 8. INCLUSIVE, SAFE & CARING SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

Jen Danby-McDonald is stepping down as the parent lead on this committee and is asking for a new lead. This is a joint initiative between school and parents, working with the school VP, Diane Abboud. It was suggested that perhaps co-chairs might be best; Elli Kapsalis and Melanie Ritchie said they may be able to work on it. Jen indicated it is best done as a committee and not just a single person. A meeting was suggested to rebuild the committee – and email and call out for persons will be done. Jen also suggested she has a list of people.

Previously it had been suggested ISCS might put on a Multicultural night event, but it has been postponed until 2016-17 school year. The concern is that it needs to be an event with deeper meaning and fuller planning in order to be done effectively and to ensure presentations were more learning opportunities not just surfaces.

As such, the PRO Grant was earmarked to support Multicultural night and has become available again. Council is seeking ways to spend this grant on PARENT centered events, like guest speakers for parent interest topics. Alka suggested perhaps Talentfest might be PRO Grant approved.

The Committee will be doing something for Education week in May. Elli and Melanie R to discuss and plan a meeting.

## 9. OCASC

Alka reported back from the November OCASC regarding the student plan the board has, created from EQAO data and Tell it from Me survey Data. The information is on the council bulletin board in the school lobby. She was unable to attend Dec, and also the January event as it is the same evening as our meeting. The January meeting was to discuss liability insurance information for councils and Alka indicated she would get the information for council.

## 10. NEW BUSINESS

None

**11. IMPORTANT DATES**

None

**12. ADJOURNMENT & NEXT MEETING:**

Next meeting will be held February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Tara Starzomski motioned the meeting to adjourn, seconded by Melanie Ritchie. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

DRAFT