

River Grove Elementary
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, December 19, 2022 at 5pm
River Grove Commons
Minutes

1.0 Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:06pm

1.1 Roll Call: Katie Bruns, Annie Beck, Greg Beaumont, Jessica Hansen, Angie Hong, Lisa Dochniak. Eric Olsen arrived at 5:10pm. Also in attendance - Drew Goodson, Shirley Volk, Bridget Peterson (TAG). Elly Johnson and Jamie Souza - teachers. A representative from Cushman Wakefield was also present as an observer.

1.2 Mission Statement: Hong read the River Grove mission statement

1.3 Conflict of Interest Statement: Hong read the conflict of interest statement and asked board members to verbally affirm that they have no conflicts. All members affirmed no conflicts of interest.

2.0 Approve Agenda

- Annie Beck motion to approve agenda. Second by Lisa Dochniak. All members vote yes. Agenda approved.

3.0 Approve Minutes

3.1 November 2022 Minutes Approval: Motion to approve by Dochniak. Second by Beck. All members voting yes. Minutes approved.

4.0 Community Comments

4.1 Authorizer Comments: Not in attendance

4.2 Attendee Comments: None

5.0 PTO Report

5.1 Events: Fall clean-up day was a success. Halloween hike was very fun and kids got to trick or treat in their costumes. The library re-opened this year. The kids go to the library once a week. There is also a new PTO website for communications with parents. January open house. Clothing orders from the merchandise store will be arriving soon.

5.2 Fundraising: \$14,523 raised during events this fall - includes fall fundraiser, Victorianos and Chipotle fundraisers.

6.0 Finance Committee Report & Actions - Bridget Peterson, TAG

6.1 November 2022 Financials

- Cash is continuing to go up due to donations and the state paying us back for "hold-backs"
- Still working off of a 225 pupil budget. We currently have 224, but that could adjust down to 222.
- There may be a budget revision next month related to SpEd services
- We still have a balanced budget for FY23. Have a 6% contingency currently and would like to get that to 10%, per our bylaws.
- Will be applying for a line of credit
- Motion to approve by Olsen. Second by Beck. All members voting yes. Financials approved.

7.0 Director's Report

7.1 School Events

7.2 Enrollment and Open Enrollment Schedule - 40 applications so far, which is about the same as last year. 28 kindergarten applications. 14 are siblings. We are currently at 224 students for this year and have room for one more student.

7.3 Staffing - Very close to securing a new blue bus driver. Marcy Ost will be stepping down as

business manager for River Grove. Sandi Bonarski will be taking on that role, so we will have an opening for food service. Mr Carver may continue in that position. Two new paras were hired. PTO sponsored a holiday party for the River Grove staff at the Surf Yogurt Bar.

8.0 Academic Updates

8.1 Schoolwide Gratitude Events: Chipotle lunch for all of the staff today. The school has also been giving presents and extending gratitude to staff over the past month.

8.2 Community Connections: Grade Level Showcases, Community Experts and Field Trips

- 1st grade - participating in a unit based on seasons and celebrations. Studying the history of phenological celebrations. Using medicine wheels to learn about Ojibwe and Dakota ways of life and phenology wheels to study changes in the environment. The kids also learned about seasonal celebrations from different cultures - Kwanza, Hanukkah, Diwali, St. Nicholas, etc. There has been a service component for each holiday as well.
- K and 1st went on a field trip to the Scandia Gammelgarden farm museum and learned about Nordic traditions as well as local history and settlements in the area. They learned that even six year olds were involved in building local schools and churches.
- 3rd grade families will be visiting this week for the 3rd Grade Showcase. The kids have done units on science and government. The kids created a fort city with a government and a video to share with their families. They also created notecards and wrote gratitude letters to one another.
- 2nd grade had a STEM night.
- 5th grade had a science fair.
- 4th graders had a wolf showcase and had creative ways to share what they learned.
- 1st graders went to the Science Museum.

8.3 School-wide Food Drive for Valley Outreach, Led by Fifth Grade - they collected more than 800 lbs of food to donate.

8.4 Teacher Inservice: Outdoor Learning in the Winter by Community Expert Josh Leonard. Leonard is a River Grove parent. He brought lots of hands-on examples for the teachers to practice and potentially use with their classes.

- Hong brought a print called "Home in the Woods" created by local artist Tin Cup Design to put in the office. It shows kids playing in the woods and building forts, just like at River Grove.

9.0 New Business

9.1 Property Updates

- Three paths for the coming school year:
 - 1) Stay here with an extended lease
 - 2) Move to Warner Nature Center property
 - 3) Move to an alternative location with Manitou Fund support
- Goodson discussed the above in detail.
- Recommended next steps:
 - Formally request a lease extension from the Wilder Foundation following the recent Township Conservancy District updates. MCYP has offered a lease extension if they take ownership of the property, but the sale may not be completed.
 - Continue active engagement with Manitou Fund and work with Manitou Fund, site planners, and township officials on footprint reduction and CUP application/approval.
 - Continue to seek out alternative/temporary options
- Upcoming actions:
 - Thank you letter to May Twp.

- Engage township on process regarding Warner Property
- Continue to seek a copy of the MCYP CUP submission
- Submit letter to Wilder requesting a lease extension
- Continue conversations with interested parties on a fall-back option
- Discussion
 - Hong - if we decide to move forward with a new temporary build, do we need to make a decision by the end of 2022?
 - Miller - Manitou has assured River Grove that they will provide a feasible option for us for next year. But they also want to minimize environmental impacts. It would be ideal to have an extension on our current property or an alternative location for one year so that we could do a new build the right way instead of having to build twice.
 - Dochniak - how large does the storm shelter need to be? And where is that on our current campus?
 - Hansen - approx. 7sq ft per student.
 - Olsen - existing structures don't have to meet the same requirements. There are fairly stringent requirements that increase the cost a lot.
 - Beck - worries that people will already make their decisions for next year before we have certainty on what next year will look like. Both staff and parents.
 - Hansen - Is everyone feeling comfortable with the action steps proposed by Goodson?
 - Hong was hoping to take an action vote tonight, but it doesn't appear that we have any concrete options to vote on yet.
 - Goodson asked the May Twp planner about the MCYP CUP application. Sparks told him that it was returned as incomplete and would require an ordinance change to be approved. MCYP toured the campus last week at 11am during classes.
 - Dochniak - MCYP seems like a good partner if they do buy the property.
 - Miller - yes, but we can't sign an agreement with just them unless they successfully complete the sale.
 - Hong - it would have changed the course of this year if Wilder had agreed to meet with us in the fall or if we had sat down in the summer with Wilder, River Grove, and MCYP to discuss a reasonable transition plan that would be mutually beneficial for everyone involved.
 - Hansen - it's been a very challenging year and creates a huge hardship for everyone involved.
 - Dochniak - thank you to Goodson and Hansen for all of the extra hours you've been putting in.
 - Goodson - would like to have a concrete action for the board to approve, but it isn't a possibility yet.

11.0 Next Board of Directors Meeting: Move to Monday, January 30th, 2022: Motion to move the meeting to Jan. 30. Second by Dochniak. All members voted yes. Meeting scheduled for Jan. 30.

12.0 Adjournment - meeting adjourned at 6:20pm