

Westmount High School PPO Meeting 24 January 2018

Present: Martien de Vletter, Sari Roston, Nicole De Verteuil, Miyuki Nakamura, Eunju (Michelle) Kim, Aaron Fraser, Neil Chazin, Linda LeMoyne, Alexandra Zorbas, Geraldine Theillier, Susan Finch, Mr. Mike Cristofaro (Principal), Charlotte McCaffrey

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes 29 November 2017

Martien welcomed everyone and we went around the table introducing ourselves as there were a number of new faces.

Martien approved the minutes from last meeting and Charlotte will put them on the website.

2. PPO support on potential projects

Martien explained that PPO has approximately \$6-7000 raised through PLUK, spaghetti dinner, etc. While we want to keep some money in the account (\$500 for scholarships and ~\$1000 buffer), we have \$5-6000 available to spend. The teachers were surveyed for ideas because we want to serve as many children as possible and give to projects that the school wants. We first reviewed the options discussed last time:

- a. Cafeteria Mural – This would be spearheaded by Mrs. Anania, who was not at this meeting, and we would just have to pay for the paint. Neil knows someone who might donate the paint.
- b. Gently used laptops – Linda reported that she spoke with her contact and they could provide refurbished HP laptops for \$250-\$500 each depending on what is needed and they would also offer follow-up.

Mr. Cristofaro explained that it's always tricky with technology because the maintenance and support can become an issue. The Board will not maintain any computers not purchased through them. He also explained that he gets about \$25,000 for IT upgrades and could think about using some of that money for another set of laptops, if the teachers feel they're necessary.

Mr. Cristofaro suggested that iPads might be a better option as they come with Apple Care and have special applications that students can't get elsewhere, but they are very expensive. Linda asked about accepting used iPads from Loyola; this would be possible with the understanding that there'd be no technical support from the Board.

- c. Piano upgrade: Martien admitted to not looking into this, but explained it would simply be a matter of bringing up an old piano from the basement, tuning/repairing it, and finding a space for it. Mr. Cristofaro is amenable to this idea (there would obviously be limits to when students could play it!) and Neil has a contact who he thinks would give us a good deal on the tuning.
- d. Glass Display Case in Lobby: Mr. Cristofaro explained that he thinks it's important to preserve the heritage of the school, which has been around since 1873. They have a complete set of yearbooks back to 1910 (with exception of war years), trophies back to 1800s, various artifacts, lots of old photographs, etc. He would really like a proper showcase for these items that fits with the building's design (oak and glass). He thinks it would probably cost about \$4000 (anything over \$5K should go to tender). Neil and Aaron both know people who might be willing to build something at a good price. Martien reiterated that the PPO would want kids to be involved in setting up and changing the display.
- e. Bike Repair Shop: Jennifer and Susan were to look into this but got the message that it was no longer happening, however Mr. Cristofaro said Mr. Drever is interested but would like to scale it down from what it was under Mr. Robinson's tutelage. They have plenty of supplies so, if PPO wants to help, finding volunteers/hiring someone to staff the shop after school (3-5pm) or during lunch would be most needed. However, Mr. Cristofaro expressed that it's best, for continuity of extracurricular programs, to have a staff member who's passionate about it to head it.

This led to a discussion about robotics. Mr. Cristofaro had a company in last week who offer sessions on robotics, structures, and coding. They are running a 12 week trial program but need space and Mr. Cristofaro thinks there's enough space where the bike shop is to renovate some of it for a robotics lab. Neil asked if this could be a parent run initiative but the Board doesn't like parents involved in renovation type projects because of the insurance issue. Mr. Cristofaro will look into the cost of renovations, putting up some walls, purchasing some big tables, etc. He thinks this might be something that the school board would cover.

- f. WHS Hockey Team: Neil gave an overview of this new program that started in October. 34 students currently participate on a rotating basis and there's interest from 12 families coming in next year when they hope to turn it into a competitive program. They currently have practice ice time at the Westmount rink 2x/wk through April for a total of 43 ice sessions. They focus on individual development with instruction equivalent to that received at LCC and Selwyn (from learn to skate to competitive hockey skills). An off-ice element will be introduced soon (conditioning, general fitness, healthy eating) and there will be an exhibition season after exams with 6 games,

including an exchange group from Thailand. There is a cost to the students participating but they really want it to be open to all and next year families will be assessed on level of involvement to determine price.

Neil explained what they need to keep the program going:

- i. Donations of equipment for kids in need (Sari volunteered to be in charge of collection)
- ii. Volunteers to support the professional trainers
- iii. \$2.5K in funds to pay the instructors
- iv. Jerseys for the kids

Mr. Cristofaro said paying instructors is something he has funds for and he can also purchase jerseys for the kids. PPO will send out a request for parent volunteers and donations of equipment.

Mr. Cristofaro then brought some other ideas to the table where PPO money could be helpful:

- g. Blinds for classrooms (~\$800/class) – while this should be covered by the school he has a building budget of 40K for repairs and supplies (toilet paper, soap, etc.)
- h. Good couches for the library reading area – he estimates this would cost about \$5000.
- i. Chanter and/or set of pipes for the bagpipers' group (\$80 for chanter, \$1500-\$2000 for set of pipes) – Neil thinks his fraternity might be interested in helping out with the bagpipes!

After much discussion, Martien summed up that it really comes down to two main monetary projects: Glass case and couches. **All in agreement to support the purchase of couches for the library!**

Action Items:

1. *Neil will touch base with his contacts re: paint for mural, piano tuning/repair, builder for glass case, bagpipes.*

- **Cabinetmaker** - Ebénisterie Don Papp - [514-568-4399](tel:514-568-4399) - Ask for Omar. (Barry Melnick recommended him)
- invite him in for an estimate
- **Bike program** - McWinnie's Cycle - Pino Mastantuono - [514-481-3113](tel:514-481-3113) - We are looking for a bike mechanic X# of times per week starting ? to run a bike clinic.
- **Piano** - Piano Prestige (John Rizopoulos) [514-482-5304](tel:514-482-5304) - Piano mover (Rob) [514-812-1600](tel:514-812-1600) / Piano technician (Julie) [514-772-2442](tel:514-772-2442)
- **Cafeteria beautification** - spoke to Michael Mendelson, parent volunteer and driver of the painting program at Royal West Academy (RWA).
- Was an ongoing program at RWA before Michael came on-board
-School values the program considering the offset of maintenance budget requirements to fund it - cost savings
-No longer an issue for parents to displace the work typically driven by Build and

Ground nor at conflict with unionized employees

-Program is ongoing, encompassing 85 parent volunteers on a regular basis

-Caretaker is provided by administration to open the school as the work is typically done over weekends.

-Defer discussion regarding liability between Mr. Cristofaro and Mr. Pita, Principals of both schools.

- **Bagpipes** - started the conversation with John Rizopoulos last night. To provide news at a later date.

2. *Aaron also has a contact for building who he'll check with re: glass case.*
3. *Linda will look into Loyola's used iPad program*
4. *Mr. Cristofaro will approach the board about renos to bike shop/robotics lab*
5. *Mr. Cristofaro and Neil will work out the details for hockey jerseys and instructors*
6. *Neil will work with Charlotte and Geraldine to prepare an email/Facebook/website notice for parents asking for equipment donations and volunteers for the hockey program.*
7. *Mr. Cristofaro will order the couches!*

3. Spaghetti dinner date, team, ticket sales

Martien explained that this was a great social event for the school community last year (that inadvertently raised funds for the PPO) and she wants to do it again in April. We will need a volunteer team to organize the event. Ms. Anania can donate pasta and sauce again. Tickets 10/person or 30/family. 50-50 draw. Prefects can sell desserts and get proceeds from that. Tickets will need to be sold at the parent-teacher night on March 1st.

Action Items:

1. *Martien will pick a date with Mr. Cristofaro and make sure we have tickets for the March 1st sale.*
2. *Announcement to go out in Newsletter in February.*
3. *Martien (?) will ask Mr. Phelan if he's willing to show short films made by the students again.*

4. Final report on Grab a seat campaign

Martien reported that \$16,723 (??) was raised by the PPO. The Board was so impressed with our initiative they took over the project. Renovations are being done now with the goal of being ready sometime in March. There's a push to have the auditorium named after Leonard Cohen.

5. PLUK sale at Meet the Teacher Night on March 1st

Susan, Linda and Martien are all available to help with the sale. Geraldine suggested making a sign about the Facebook page to post by our table to try to attract more followers.

Action Items:

1. *Email to go out by Mr. Cristofaro asking for donations of used items.*
2. *We will check if items need washing at the next PPO meeting.*
3. *PPO email will go out for more volunteers for the sale.*
4. *Someone (student?) to make poster about the PPO Facebook page to post at sale.*

6. Upcoming Meeting: February 21st from 6-7pm in the library.

Submitted by Charlotte McCaffrey