

Brooksbank Elementary PAC Meeting

7p.m., May 1, 2019 | Brooksbank Library

1. **Call to order, Welcome** (Corinna Bork) – 7:02 p.m.
2. **Approval of agenda and adoption of minutes** (Corinna Bork) – Approved
3. **Status of action items from last meeting** (Corinna Bork) - None
4. **Treasurer's Report** (Tammy Desor)
 - Bank statements are not available until the 3rd or the 4th of the month; therefore financial reports not available at this time (can be shared by request later on). Propose to move the PAC meetings to the second Wednesday of the month starting in September. Action: to coordinate with the Brooksbank office for a schedule.
 - Tracking to be \$10-15K over budget in profit for 2018/19 thanks to Fun Lunch revenue, additional fundraisers and postponed school spending (technology). echnology spending postponed to wait for district funding and a possible group buy in. Spencer to keep PAC updated.
 - Two items slightly over budget and require approval: \$50 classroom budget for one division, \$53 for music class (books). Motioned: Tanya Henderson, Seconded Theresa Duvall. Motioned Carried.
 - Will start sharing monthly actuals with teachers to inform what has been spent
5. **Principals' Report** (Spencer Kelly/Glenda Robertson)
 - Fees: published on the schools website for review. It is identical to last year.
 - Supplies: Intermediate school supplies to be distributed once lists have been finalized
 - New school supply company will be used this year: School Start
 - Basic package will be listed with the possibility to order other required items "à la carte" ordering
 - Online ordering available with the ability to complete supplemental orders mid-year
 - Parent Consultation for Student Placement – form will be emailed for families in mid-May. Please only use the form provided and please respect the deadline.
 - Calender Building 2019/2020 – In process, will be published by the end of May.
 - Mothers and Fathers Day – There has been a lot of discussion as a staff and there is concern that the gifts are not inclusive of all families and may put kids in the middle (example, needing to pick a family member over another). Going forward the classes will move away from gifts and cards. The school would prefer to celebrate families in all form with events such as the ice cream social.
 - Track & Field - Thank you to all the volunteer coaches and sponsors who are working with the largest Track & Field team in recent memory
 - Wednesday, May 15th, Track Qualifications at Handsworth, 8 am to 12 pm
 - Tuesday, May 21st, Field Qualifications, 3:30 to 5 pm; Grade 6/7 at Ridgeway and Grade 4/5 at Brooksbank

6. Family Dance (Eliza Burrows)

- May 24th 6:30-8:30 at the Brooksbank gym. This is a FREE event. Whether to have some concession was discussed by the organizers and it was decided that there will be no concession this year. Might expand if there are future dances, this is a trial to see level of interest.

7. 2019/2020 Budget (Corinna Bork)

- The school wish list was presented at the April PAC meeting. PAC executive to meet next week and put together a draft budget. The draft budget will be emailed to all parents to be discussed and finalized at the June meeting.

8. Natural Play & Learning Space

A presentation was given to all attendees from the Natural Play and Learning Space Committee. Included in the presentation was an introduction to the project, the timeline/history, and a Q&A session.

- **Committee Introduction**

- Allison Anderson (PAC Vice Chair, Committee Lead)
- George Thomson (Senior Project Manager with Ledcor Construction, 15 years' experience with managing over \$500 million worth of construction projects)
- Joel Roy (Senior advisor and consultant with over 25 years' experience, specializing in large scale sporting events, capital construction development, integration and delivery)
- Corinna Bork (PAC Chair)
- Spencer Kelly (Brooksbank Principal) and group of five teachers (primary/intermediate)

- **Project Background**

- Early 2018 the PAC had significant funds available (60K in addition to \$10k rainy day fund) - There was a desire to spend in a way that those families who raised the funds could still benefit from it. It was discussed that we wanted to create a legacy and that we wanted to promote experiences over things. The idea of a natural learning and play space was brought forward, inspired by similar projects at other elementary schools.
- Spring 2018 – 2 companies presented at a PAC meeting the benefits and costs associated with natural learning and play spaces.
- June 2018 – PAC members voted to earmark \$60,000 to develop natural learning and play space.
- September 2018 – Call out for committee members and discussing with other schools who have completed similar projects.
- October/November 2018 – Survey sent out to all Brooksbank parents for input. 124 responses. Results were shared at the November PAC meeting.
- December/January- Meetings and walkabouts with the school district and administration. Reached out to 3 companies for proposals (Richard Findlay, GCLC and Habitat).

- February 2019 - Habitat was chosen as it embraced the budget as well as prepared preliminary designs to suit budget without upfront costs. Both other company proposed starting budgets of \$120,000-300,000. Habitat is also well known to the District and considered a preferred vendor for this project.
 - March/April 2019 – Habitat created design and worked extensively with the school district; defining exact perimeter, accessibility, structures with fall hazard.

- **Teachers' comments**

On behalf of the teachers, Claire Spofforth and Cynthia Batista spoke on the benefits of outdoor learning and pay opportunities the space could provide. They reported that there was strong staff consensus in favour of the project. From the teachers perspective there is a need for the students to navigate unstructured play spaces. The proximity to the school was viewed as positive attribute as it would allow for spontaneity in teaching.

 - Parent questions for the Brooksbank Principal and teachers:
 - Parents were reassured that outdoor learning in the wooded area past the field of Loutet would still continue.
 - Spencer stated that Grade 1's would be welcome to play in the area at recess; the K's will still remain at the pink playground.
 - If the area is busy during teaching hours they will look into creating a schedule for use.
 - Glenda Robertson spoke that the intermediate teachers are also excited to utilize the space.

- **Project Presentation by Habitat**

Phil Milton from Habitat who was selected to complete the project presented the proposed plan. Habitat has completed many similar projects and is well known to the School District. They were the only proposal willing to embrace the budget which is considered on the very low end of developing this type of space. He stated that his goal is to enhance the natural space and create an area the kids want to play and learn in. The space is limited in size and is approximately 40ft deep and 120-130ft long.

 - Parent questions included:
 - What materials will be used and what is the expect life of the materials? Life span would be 20-25 years and the wood materials used is yellow cedar (with a drain mat below to limit moisture build up).
 - He also answered a question about maintenance of the area and anticipates it as minimal (bush clipping and wood fibre chips on the trails) that we may need a yearly clean up otherwise the children's use of the area would keep the plants and weeds from regrowing. PAC will look into whether a possible quote from a landscaping company or a parent volunteer crew is appropriate for maintenance.

- **Q & A**
 - ***Why is this so expensive?*** Play and learning equipment is very expensive (recently spent 17K on replacing just the netting on the climbing structure). All custom made, completely natural elements, tailored to our space. Consensus of both vendors and schools who have done these types of projects: \$70 is very

small budget for this type of projects. Other quotes (both formal and informal based on conversations with about 12 other firms) confirmed that typical budgets range from \$150-300K.

- ***Where is the funding for this going to come from?*** 60K already available in account. Raised an additional \$10-15K in 2018/2019 that will be available, and will also apply for grants once project is approved.
- ***Why does this look more like a learning than a play space?*** Survey results indicated that parents and teachers wanted a natural area, not just a third playground. Each element also designed to invite play. Designed to be both, plus a space to gather, to use imagination in nature, to connect with others. Also, more elaborate structures are a) well out of our budget and b) create fall hazards that put us into a different category of regulations and red tape (Canadian Play Safety Institute). Adding climbing elements and structures would require engineering, permits, and significant ground remediation (creating CSA required falls zones – x inches of bark mulch similar to what you seen at the larger red structure, removing organics and importing fill to satisfy geotechnical and engineering requirements for footings, structures, etc.).
- ***Why don't we just clear the space and leave it as is for the kids to play?*** That is not the scenario the Committee was tasked to explore and the teachers put on their wishlist. Unique opportunity and the funds to create something special for Brooksbank kids, today and into the future. Big difference between a clearing in the woods and a mindfully designed space. If majority votes against the project however, that would be an option.
- ***What are the next steps if the project goes forward?*** The District has committed to clearing the area in July. Construction to take place in August. Goal to have the project completed for the beginning of the new school year.
- ***Can parents clear the space and/or help build out the space?*** The district does not allow for this option. The district will clear the space and a general contractor with proper liability insurance and WorkSafeBC coverages is required.

A vote by raised hand was taken on whether to approve the plan and budget as presented to Brooksbank for the Natural Play and Learning Space. Motioned: Claire Spofforth, 2nd Jackie Mathers.

Results: In favour 23, Against 19

9. Adjourned at 8:52 pm. Next Meeting: June 5.

Meeting Notes By: Leanne Aveling, PAC Secretary