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Palouse Prairie Educational Organization

Doing business as
Palouse Prairie Charter School
Business Meeting

Pursuant to the recent proclamation by Governor Little in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, PPCS will hold its March 23, 2020 Business Meeting virtually. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. The public may access the meeting using Zoom, which enables video, document sharing, and more. To join the meeting, you can log-in with your computer, call in with your phone, or both. Contact Jessica at jessica@palouseprairieschool.org with questions.

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March 23, 2020

Location: Virtual

Time: 6:00pm

Meeting called to order at: 6:01 p.m.

Attending: Amy Ball, Jessica Bearman, Zac Crist, Gabe Baker, Juan Albaitero, Mike Connell, Jeneille Branen, Debbie Berkana, Jessica Long

Absent: None

Public: Katie Sorenson, Sunny LNU, Erin Corwine

Note Taker: Jessica Long

1. Welcome to public audience and guests (5 min)

We welcome our guests to this evening's Palouse Prairie School board meeting. The meeting is public and has a structure to meet the legal requirements on public governing boards. At the same time we strive to have the meeting reflect the values of Palouse Prairie School. Our vision is for an inclusive, respectful and supportive learning environment. The goal for this meeting is to meet our vision, our legal requirements, and our practical need to accomplish business in an efficient manner.

Board Members will now introduce themselves.

Now, we would like to welcome members of the audience. Further in the agenda is a place for comment from the public within this board meeting. Please say your name, if you wish, so we may know who is presenting.

2. Approval of Agenda

Item 5 - approval of the Minutes - was removed from the agenda. With the removal of this item, Mike Connell moved to approve the agenda, Juan Albaitero seconded the motion, passed by unanimous vote.

3. Presentations & Reports

3.1 Director's Report

Jeneille Branen presented her director's report.

-The bus is painted and may now be operated as a school vehicle. Jeneille expressed her thanks to Juan and the other parents that helped.

-She attended a webinar today. All schools in the state of Idaho are currently closed or on spring break. The State Board of Education is recommending a soft closure until April 20th. A soft closure means the schools still provide instruction, but students are not allowed in the classrooms. The ISATs will be waived for this year. The SBOE is still working through how to ensure special education services are provided. Rhonda Brooks is addressing how to provide speech therapy. Schools must provide a minimum of 4 hours of instruction for all grades, and 2 ½ hours of instruction for kindergarten; this may be documented in different ways. PPCS will cancel all trips for the spring. They are trying to figure out what to do

with passages and a graduation ceremony for 8th graders.

-Jeneille will copy the Board on all communications. They are still working out how to get materials to kids and families. The school district will have lunches available at designated sites in town. She is receiving offers to help from several families and is grateful for the support.

-The issue was raised about what happens if a teacher contracts the virus as there is only one person teaching each grade. The board recognized that we need to develop contingency plans.

3.2 Landscape/Wellness Report

Jeneille gave the report for the Landscape/Wellness Committee. They are still moving forward with the playground project. Jeneille meets with Jen Elliott weekly and met with staff to get feedback on different playground designs. They are now seeking bids for the grading work. The next step is to get feedback from families and students. Jeneille will write a letter to the families about the project.

At the last wellness committee meeting, the members reviewed the original wellness policies and went through changes made over time. They also looked at the current policies and the new ones coming out. The committee discussed the need to recruit more stakeholders and committee members.

4. Announcements

None.

5. Approval of Minutes

5.1 Approve Minutes from 2/24/20 Board Meeting

5.2 Approve Minutes from 3/13/20 Special Board Meeting

Removed from the agenda.

6. Public Comment Period (limit 15 minutes)

At this point in the agenda, members of the public are welcome to come forward, identify themselves (name and address) and speak on any topic relevant to Palouse Prairie School and not on the agenda of this meeting. The time allotted for a speaker is three minutes. The Board will refrain from responding beyond asking for a clarification. The comments presented at this time will be reviewed by the Board.

None.

7. Action Items

7.1 Consent Agenda

Any member can ask to have an item removed from the Consent Agenda and considered as part of the regular meeting. These alterations to the agenda will happen at this point in the meeting.

Removed items will be addressed immediately after the Consent Agenda. Consent Agenda items are not discussed and will be addressed as a single motion.

7.1 A Approve February Financial Statements

7.1 B Approve Temporary Waiver to Policy 5400 to Allow Up to 15 Days of Sick Leave, Without a Requirement to Access Regular Sick Leave or Other Leave, to any PPCS employee diagnosed with COVID-19.

Jessica Bearman moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Gabe Baker seconded the motion, passed by unanimous vote.

7.2 COVID-19 Contingency Planning

The Board discussed Covid-19 and school operations.

-PPCS will be closed until April 20th. Zac Crist moved to approve a soft closure until April 20th, Mike Connell seconded the motion, passed by unanimous vote.

-The Board considered what to do if we believe we can reopen but the Moscow School District remains closed. The Board decided to table this discussion for a later meeting.

-The Board discussed how to give Jeneille as much authority as possible given how quickly the situation is changing. Jeneille requested authority to follow the guidance of our state officials, with Board review and consent at the following board meeting. Mike Connell moved to give Jeneille authority to follow the directions, guidance and recommendations of our state officials and the State Board of Education regarding Covid – 19, Zac Crist seconded the motion, passed by unanimous vote.

-The Board discussed whether to move the date of the lottery. We cannot waive the lottery requirement, but we could delay the lottery with appropriate notice to all prospective families. Jeneille indicated that we have already done our big tours and promotions; she believes the lottery can be held as scheduled. The Board agreed to keep the original lottery date.

-The Board discussed how it could help support our most vulnerable students. Jeneille is unsure what the Board could do to help at this point. She doesn't know how many kids will be affected, and believes if it is only a few kids, they have the resources to handle it without Board involvement.

-The Board discussed contingency plans in the event someone contracts the virus or has to stop work to care for someone that is ill. Jeneille will work with staff to develop a contingency plan.

For Board officers: Amy Ball is the chair and Jessica Bearman is the vice chair. Zac Crist agreed to be third in charge. For the Board secretary, the Board decided not to designate a back-up. They will ask someone else to serve as secretary for the specific meeting if Jessica Long is unable to attend. For Board treasurer, the chair will assume the role if Zac Crist is unable to work. For the development committee, the Board considered asking Tiffanie Braun to assume leadership if Jessica Bearman is unable to continue as chair. Jessica Bearman will discuss this with her. Gabe Baker and Juan Albaitero serve as co-chairs of the facilities/wellness committee so they can cover for one another. Amy will ask the ISBA what to do if we cannot reach a quorum.

Jeneille will divide her duties between Debbie and Trish to ensure operations run smoothly in the event she is unable to work. Members of the leadership team would take over instructional responsibilities – Zac offered to help with some of Debbie’s responsibilities. The Board raised the possibility of collaborating with Moscow Charter School, particularly to help fill in for Debbie and Rhonda.

-The Board discussed staff, and those who are now working at home with young kids and/or no longer have child care. The Board emphasized the need to be flexible. We need to ensure that critical tasks are being completed, but otherwise, we should give as much flexibility to staff as possible. Zac Crist moved to authorize Jeneille to give teachers as much flexibility as she deems reasonable as long as work is still being completed, Jessica Bearman seconded the motion, passed by unanimous vote.

-The Board discussed the hourly staff and recognized that some of their work must be done onsite so we cannot give them as much flexibility as we can to teachers. The Board considered options for how they could perform their duties at home. Jeneille will look into options for how staff can continue answering phone calls from their homes. She will also look into assigning more projects rather than focusing on the number of hours worked each day. The Board supported having everyone work from home.

7.3 Board Elections

The Board election process will begin in April. Zac will remain on the board, but Amy will not. Jessica Long’s term is done and she will not run again. The Board discussed the skills we specifically need. We need someone with skills in business and finance to replace Zac when his term ends. We need someone with

strong development and fundraising skills since Jessica Bearman will replace Amy as chair. We also need someone with strong management skills to serve as vice chair and to work with the Parent Crew. The Board agreed that we should try to fill all 4 open positions. Board members were encouraged to reach out to potential board members. Jeneille will get feedback from staff regarding committed parents that would be good board members. Jessica Long will serve as election contact.

7.4 Director Evaluations

Amy is still working on the director evaluation rubric, and will email the Board when it is ready for review.

7.5 April Board Tasks

The governance committee will finalize the director review instrument and settle on a process for the director review. They will also begin working on elections. The facilities committee will provide an update on the playground project. The development committee will meet and rethink fundraising strategies for the spring. They will still try to participate in Idaho Gives. The finance committee will present a 5 year budget and begin working on budget priorities. The Board will review a draft budget at the May meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

2019-2020 Board of Directors

Jessica Long, term expires 2020

Amy Ball, term expires 2021

Zac Crist, term expires 2021

Jessica Bearman, term expires 2021

Gabe Baker, term expires 2021

Juan Albaitero, term expires 2022

Mike Connell, term expires 2022