

GES PAC meeting via Zoom video (link provided to all parents to participate)

April 6, 2021 7 p.m.

Present: Deb Small, Deborah Luporini, Jane Seyd, Martial Guillaud, Lorena Ruth, Christina Crosby, Sandra Squires, Emily Doyle, Pam Ruth, Jen Edwards, Nova Ami, Andy Lewis, Todd Hodgins and others.

Adoption of agenda: Sandra Squires first, Debbie Small second. None opposed

Approval of minutes: from March 2021 PAC meeting. Emily Doyle first, Debbie Small second, none opposed.

Open mic: Emily Doyle voiced interest in fundraising ideas that parents have been talking to her about. She will sent those to Christina Crosby. Also the school librarian has voiced interest in having the PAC help pay for sitting pads for kids to sit outside on. Other ideas included buying seeds for the vegetable garden.

4. Reports:

a. Principal's Report: Deborah Luporini. See principal's report for April 2021.

- 54 Grade 7s are going to Elphi next year, so enrolment will likely be down slightly next year
- Grade 7s will also be getting Out in School and Drug Awareness presentations
- Kids in Grade 4 up are now required to wear masks except when at their desks. Teachers also have to wear masks at all times
- School T-shirts have been ordered
- There are plant sale and cookie dough fundraisers taking place.
- Babysitting courses are happening for students in Grade 5 up on Saturday April 17 outside

Principal's report and discussion on tree removal at Gibsons Elementary

- Deborah Luproni: Some branches came down in the wind. Some of them can be large. On March 17 someone from the school district's maintenance department flagged trees as a danger to students. The school district contacted an arborist. The school district contacted the Town of Gibsons and got a permit to cut trees. There were eight "danger trees" and potentially 20 more. A notice was sent out to parents by email. On March 23 a private company was hired to cut the trees. Since then there have been some concerns expressed and a number of questions. The plan is to collect that information and relay that to the school district.
- For now the future tree cutting is on hold.

Questions and comments from parents:

Are there plans to replace the trees with replanting?
Or leave them as an outdoor play feature?
Why was this not discussed with PAC and parents prior to cutting?
What was wrong with the trees/forest/why wasn't it healthy?
Where is the arborist's report on these trees? We would like to have a copy.
Why were the "dead and dying trees" flagged as being on the edge of the property by town staff but the trees removed were not on the edge of the property?
Why wasn't federal/provincial legislation on nesting bird surveys followed?
What was actually wrong with the trees considered dangerous?
What is going to happen to the logs? Can be used to make a shelter?
What are we teaching our children about environmental values?
Have the neighbours been consulted?
Is it possible the tree cutting has something to do with wanting to create a more visible environment on school grounds after hours?
Can we get a second opinion from another arborist?

- It was agreed that Deborah Luporini will forward our comments and concerns to the school district requesting answers within two weeks and the option of further discussion after those are received. Please see further attached correspondence with responses from the school district. We have also requested that any revenue from the wood go back to the school.

b. Treasurer's report: Debbie Small. Please see Treasurer's report for April 2021

- There are new regulations on the gaming grant. Debbie is going to tune in for more information about that.
- It is possible we will be able to do some kind of sports day with a hot dog lunch if parents would like to provide that. Discussions on that have started.
- We are still looking for a treasurer to replace Debbie.

c. Trustee's report: Pam Ruth

- Trustees are doing virtual school tours
- Hiring process is underway for a new superintendent
- There is a new art in schools policy.

Old business:

Active transportation update: Sandra Squires

- Rita has come up with a letter for parents to put pressure on local decision makers about the need for safer bike lanes near the school. It would also possibly help our cause if it came from multiple families

- We will look into a launch to coordinate with Bike to School Week near the end of May.

Supportive housing community advisory group.

- The PAC would like to have representation on this committee. Todd Hodgins has agreed to represent us and attend the meetings. Emily Doyle will be an alternate. Deborah attended one meeting at sent Raincity a heads up about issues like traffic congestion at the intersection in the mornings and mask policy on school grounds.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9 p.m.