

MINUTES OF THE **REGULAR MEETING** OF THE MEDICINE HAT PUBLIC BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD BY ZOOM ON **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2021** AT 5:30 P.M.

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Catherine Wilson, Pat Grisonich, Deborah Forbes, Rick Massini, Yvonne Sissons

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Mark Davidson, Superintendent of Schools
Lyle Cunningham, Deputy Superintendent
Tracy Hensel, Associate Superintendent
Jerry Labossiere, Secretary Treasurer
Jason Peters, Assistant Superintendent
Corey Sadlemyer, Assistant Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Coffey, Community Member
Yvonne Nickel, Community Member
Jennifer Kerslake, Director, Regional Community Engagement, Medicine Hat College
Lee Krasilowez, Communications Coordinator

CHAIR: Catherine Wilson

RECORDING SECRETARY: Marley Steinwandt

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. TREATY 7 LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy and the people of Treaty 7 Region in Southern Alberta. We honour and acknowledge the homeland of the Métis people. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

39. P. Grisonich

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Presentation and adoption of the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on **Tuesday, November 23, 2021**, and the Committee of the Whole meetings held on **Tuesday, November 23, 2021**.

40. R. Massini

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on Tuesday, November 23, 2021, and the Committee of the Whole meetings held on Tuesday, November 23, 2021 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

V. PRESENTATIONS

1. Tom Coffey and Yvonne Nickel

This delegation presented to the Board their concerns regarding Policy 546 COVID-19 Harm Reduction Policy and other COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

T. Coffey presented opinions on negative impacts of the policy on children due to the use of masks for long periods of time. Y. Nickel expressed concerns to the safety of the Covid-19 vaccine when administered to adults and children as well as the use of 72hr rapid testing. She also spoke to the increased strain on the mental health of children. It was noted that the government did not mandate the creation and implementation of this Policy. The delegation requested that the masking protocol be immediately stopped and that Policy 546 be rescinded.

D. Forbes requested information referenced during this presentation to be supplied to board members for further consideration.

Chair Wilson noted the board has a responsibility to ensure the safety of the students, parents and staff. The guidance of the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services were integral to the development of this policy. The policy will be reviewed, as scheduled, at the April 2022 board meeting.

2. The Beej Project

Jennifer Kerslake, Director, Regional Community Engagement from the Medicine Hat College provided a presentation to the Board on the Beej Project.

The Beej Project (through Medicine Hat College) has partnered with the Medicine Hat Public School Division (MHPSD), Prairie Rose School Division

(PRSD), Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education (MHCBE) and Medicine Hat Police Services (MHPS). The Beej Project has been created as a legacy in honour of Brandon Niwa who passed away in May of 2020. The project intent is to provide community mental health education and research.

Supports provided include mental health educational videos, and in partnership with MHPS, a new app called Health IM. Health IM (to be released in early 2022) is designed to provide first responders with access to mental health information on individuals in the community with the ability to transfer that information directly to the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital Emergency Room.

Other partnerships between Medicine Hat College and MHPSD include the Bring Back the Music Program and the Entrepreneurship Development Center (EDC). The Bring Back the Music Program was introduced in 2012 as a way to bring music back to students in the classroom. Participating schools include Elm Street School, Vincent Massey School and Dr. Ken Sauer School. Instruments provided include strings, guitar, choral and a drumline. The EDC (currently being provided at MHHS) introduces entrepreneurship as a career choice to high school students. The "Think Box" exercise provides students an opportunity to build a business out of items supplied in the box. Additionally, Mentor Monday's bring local professionals into the classroom to provide information and exposure to different career opportunities to the students.

VI. RECOGNITION/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in STEM

Nicole Pocsik, high school team lead and Robin Duncan, high school science teacher, both from Crescent Heights High School, are the recipients of the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in STEM.

VII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

1. Policy

The changes to Policy 530: Communications and Technology and the newly drafted Policy 503:

Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments were reviewed by the Coordinating Committee at their December 6, 2021 meeting. It was recommended that the Board approve policy 530 and policy 503 as presented.

Policy 530: Communications and Technology

Policy 503: Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments

41. R. Massini

THAT the Board approve Policy 530: Communications and Technology and Policy 503: Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments, as presented.

CARRIED

VIII. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

1. Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee held a meeting on Monday, December 6, 2021. The minutes were enclosed for information.

IX. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. Response Letter from the Minister of Education

Education Minister, Ariana LaGrange sent a response letter regarding our Board's request to cancel Provincial Achievement Tests and diploma exams for the 2021/22 school year.

2. Response Letter from the Minister of Environment and Parks

Minister of Environment and Parks, Jason Nixon sent a response letter regarding our Board's request to maintain the operation of Hidden Valley Ski Resort.

3. National School Boards Association: Annual Conference & Exposition

The NSBA Annual Conference & Exposition is scheduled for April 2–4, 2022 in San Diego.

X. **MOVE TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

42. D. Forbes

THAT the Board move to Committee of the Whole to discuss certain confidential matters.

CARRIED

The Board moved to Committee of the Whole at 6:06 p.m.

XI. **RECONVENE TO OPEN BOARD MEETING**

The Board reconvened to the open board meeting at 6:42 p.m.

XII. **ACTION ARISING OUT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

43. R. Massini

THAT the Board approve Personnel Item 2021-06 as presented.

CARRIED

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

44. P. Grisonich

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

CHAIR

SECRETARY TREASURER