

# James Bay Community School

## PAC Meeting Minutes

Jan 17, 2018

**In Attendance:** Mayor Lisa Helps, Jeff Mitchell (Principal), Lindsay Swan (Vice Principal), Darcy Topinka (JB Community School Coordinator), Carrie Peter (Chair), Laurel Hovey (Vice Chair), Bruce O'Hara (Treasurer), Corinne Robinson (Secretary), Doug Robinson, Andrea Woodrow (PAC Volunteer Coordinator), Denyse Zumach, Stephanie McRobb (Member at Large).

### **Welcome & Introductions – special guest Mayor Lisa Helps**

**NEW BUSINESS-** Discussion with Mayor Lisa Helps.

The City is engaging in a “**One City Many Voices**” project this year and wants to hear from different communities. She is starting by talking to PACs, and wants to hear our questions, challenges, and opportunities the city can help with.

### **Questions from JBCS:**

**1. Jeff Mitchell:** James Bay is experiencing huge growth, with no new sites available to build/expand our current school. We are also the only official school in JB catchment area (South Park has different designation). Recent kindergarten projections show our enrollment will be up significantly from last year. Our school is at maximum capacity, and on limited land, and reaching the end of its life (b. ~1950). We don't want to cut school programs in order to find more room. **Can the school district work with the city to meet this challenge and maintain our status as a Community School?** Could we one day build a new school on the current rugby grounds, and have the school and fields swap spaces, for example?

**Mayor Helps:** Possibly! The city is working with school district right now on how best to redevelop schools that are currently closed (eg. Burnside school is in the process of being reopened in some capacity that will benefit school, community and city.) **She suggests that she and Jeff sit down with Peter Rantucci** (Manager of Strategic Real Estate for the city), as he's doing a great job on strategies for these schools. **She will connect us with him if we email her.**

Regarding neighbourhood growth: The city is working on a **30 yr Neighbourhood Plan based on neighbourhood feedback**. Vic West and Fairfield Plans are already underway, and then James Bay will be next. James Bay Neighbourhood will have a role, but will not be an official voice in planning process. **The City is looking for diverse representation on the committee, including visiting the schools and getting student input as to what they want their neighbourhood to look like!**

**2. Darcy Topinka:** As development happens in James Bay, **what will replace current affordable family housing that is lost? We pride ourselves on our neighbourhood diversity!**

**Mayor Helps:** The City is working to address affordability, seismic concerns, along with Energy and Green Retrofits by way of a “**Market Rental And Revitalization study**” (MaRRS). This looks at ways to preserve and upgrade the large stock of aging market rental housing throughout the City. It’s a big task, and the City is taking an integrated look at all these factors to try to meet this challenge.

**Darcy:** **A large portion (68%) of our school population stays in After School care** at JBCS. It is only possible through City grants and funding that the Community Centre is able to hire our Out of School Care staff. **Having a Community Centre in the school is an extremely important piece for our school and community, for students to feel like they belong here. Community schools are unique and rare.** He is Community School Coordinator left in the District.

**Mayor Helps:** There is no worry about the City pulling any Community Centre funding! **The City values our community school tremendously, and recognizes how important it is for people to feel included.**

**3. Carrie Peter:** **Many schools in our district are having an ongoing issue not being able to hire crossing guards.** Even with our secured funding from the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, the split shift and minimum wage salary offered by Beacon Services has unfortunately proved to be not attractive enough to potential employees. **Does the City have an opportunity to support us with this important issue?** It could just be one of job design. Despite the many recent welcome improvements of traffic calming and crosswalks on Oswego St., there are still many traffic safety concerns in front of our school.

**Mayor Helps:** She will look into this for us. The City provides funding to Beacon Services so would like it to be used effectively! **The City may be able to connect us with available employees that we haven’t reached yet.**

**4. Denyse:** On the topic of school safety, **could we have more police doing speeding checks** by our school, the way they do at South Park? Speeding can be a real problem around here, especially taxis during cruise ship season.

**Darcy:** We thought the GVHA’s portable Radar Speed Signs were great at reminding drivers. They were positioned on Oswego, as well as moved around to other locations. We would love to get them back, but are told they aren’t funded anymore.

**Mayor Helps:** She will check if there are any available signs around to bring back!

**5. Bruce:** Kudos to the City for all the recent traffic calming in James Bay, as well as the Resilient Neighbourhood initiative! [www.resilientneighbourhoods.ca](http://www.resilientneighbourhoods.ca)

**6. Lindsay:** **As part of the new curriculum we have been looking for a way the kids to get involved in a neighbourhood Environmental Initiative.** For example, we saw a City works crew pulling ivy from along Dallas Rd, and thought that might be the kind of project the kids could get involved with, ideally on an ongoing annual basis.

**Mayor Helps:** Would be very supportive of this idea, and the **school should contact the City about how to set this up.**

**7. Lindsay:** There is no lighting in the staff parking lot. The lot is shared by the school, City (McDonald Park) as well as the rugby club. It is very dark at night, and some of the staff feel unsafe going to their cars alone. **Can the City install lighting?**

**Mayor Helps:** She is glad to know of that concern, and would like us to **please send her a picture of the lot, and our requested location of lights** (eg. Either along the path, or parking lot). (Darcy will send her a photo).

**8. Denyse:** She is in **favour of the recent changes BC Transit made to the bus service to James Bay.** While some service coming into James Bay has been changed, overall **it is much easier and safer for students to travel directly to and from Central Middle School and Vic High.** The scheduled access is much increased, and most importantly students do not have to transfer downtown.

**Mayor Helps:** **These changes came about in direct response to James Bay feedback!** The community gave a lot of helpful input through the **Transit Engagement Process** when it came to James Bay in 2016.

**9. Denyse:** In softball season, how are we best to deal with players who use **McDonald Park and leave cigarette butts all around our playground bleachers?** (Since it's on City park property, our school custodian is not responsible for cleaning them up.)

**Mayor Helps:** It's a CRD bylaw, but it's true that it's hard to enforce in a timely fashion. Comes down to personal responsibility. Other than clear signage, **there is a type of cigarette garbage bin that we could ask the City about.** (Stephanie already knows about this and is looking into it.)

**10. Denyse:** How will the new proposed bike lanes on Dallas Rd impact the already limited residential parking in the area?

**Mayor Helps:** No 'Residential Only' parking will be lost. Engineers are working with the City to limit the impact of loss of parking spots along Dallas Rd. **City Council is NOT in favor of losing that many parking spots.** The angled parking will stay. Contrary to misconception, the City is very committed to maintaining parking spots. Most of the parking spots that are lost downtown are because of development, not bike lanes. For example, only 11 out of the existing 208 parking spots are actually disappearing on Fort St.

**11. Stephanie:** Is it an option to put the bike lane along the existing walking path, rather than on the road? That way it would not impact the parking, and also have a much more scenic view.

**Mayor Helps:** It is the CRD Wastewater Sewage project that will be paying for the bike lanes, so they are required to go on the road directly above the spot they are digging up anyway to lay the sewage pipe. Because the Dallas Rd. bluffs are ecologically sensitive, the sewage pipe and therefore the bike lanes need to be far away from the bluffs.

**END OF NEW BUSINESS WITH MAYOR HELPS.**

**Continue with BUSINESS MEETING:**

Approve Agenda & Minutes of Dec 13 2017 meeting.

**MOTION: to accept the Minutes, Moved by Laurel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Carrie. Passed.**

## **REPORTS**

**1.Principal's Report:** Upcoming focus is on **Kindergarten registration, and Grade 5 Transition to Middle School.** Projected Kindergarten registration numbers already at 45, up significantly from last year. There have been new District changes in place regarding Registration Priority & Transfer policies. Info on transitioning to middle school will be given out here at school shortly.

**Upcoming Events:** Central Middle School Band concert Thurs Jan 18 @ 9am. A Central Middle School rep will come to speak to our Grade 5's on Mon Jan 22.

Grade 9 students from MMA (Maria Montessori Academy) have been visiting several classrooms to help out on a weekly basis until spring break. ProD day next Fri Jan 26.

**2. Vice Principal's Report:** Intramural Basketball underway, with gr. 3/4/5 practices, and games with neighbourhood schools. Prep is underway for our school participation in James Bay's "Window Wanderland" window art display, (Feb 24/25).

**3.PAC Chair Report-** Ogden Pt. Bottle Donation bin is not getting our hoped-for traffic near the Helijet, so talks are underway between GVHA and Bottle Depot to find a better spot, possibly at Fisherman's Wharf!

**Vancouver Island Parent Conference** is Sat Mar 3 at Royal Bay Secondary School. This year's topic is "**Parenting Now for the Future**", and covers a multitude of excellent speaking & workshop topics on social media, internet safety, the creative mind, beyond the talk, self regulation, connected parenting, bullying, and anxiety. **The PAC encourages any interested parents to attend! We put funds aside each year to offer subsidies on ticket prices. Register online at: <http://vipc.ca/>**

Corinne will print poster to put on bulletin board. Carrie will advertise in newsletter and/or separate email to Anna. Early bird registration pricing ends Jan 26.

**4. Treasurer's Report**- We are in good shape, with our Expenses sitting approx. at what we Budgeted, and Income slightly ahead of what we'd budgeted. If the upcoming Cultural Kaleidoscope does manage to bring in the same amount as last year (~\$500), then even a small Silent Auction would **only need to bring in an additional \$500 for us to get through the year on budget.**

**OLD BUSINESS-** Cultural Kaleidoscope date has been set for **Wed Mar 14, 6:00 – 8:00pm.** Denyse Zumach will be our head coordinator, with Stephanie Robb assisting. Stephanie will contact entertainment, Denyse will talk to families. The Centre can help with advertising posters etc. for the school – and for outside the school IF we decide the event could handle the extra people. It was pretty full last year. Denyse will likely consider a new kid-friendly event this year rather than repeating the Passports. She is not planning to do a repeat of all the door prizes, but will have a couple of giveaways. We also will simplify things by not letting tables sell any items or services this year. **She is working on entertainment ideas, if anyone has any ideas!** It would be great to get student or staff participation with tables or performances.

**Silent Auction - General consensus tonight is rather than trying to combine with Cult. Kaleidoscope, it would be better suited to have it at another time this spring.** One possibility is to combine it with Gallery Gala in May. If staff approves, one idea to discuss further is for each class to assemble a themed basket consisting of both family & commercial donations that Melissa has been working on. Baskets could be on display for few days leading up to Gala. **To be discussed further at Feb 21 PAC Meeting.**

**PROPOSAL: To form a Planning Committee to organize Silent Auction for a later date. All in favour. Passed.**

**School T-shirt Reorder** – Some families have been asking if they can still order the ever – popular t-shirts/hoodies. **Carrie will contact Chandra about doing another order.**

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:20 pm**