

Parents and Friends Inc.

EAST LAUNCESTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of meeting held on April 6, 2016.

Meeting opened at 7.05pm.

Attendance: Jess Downie (P&F chairman), Ross Smith (P&F treasurer, meeting chairman), Michael Lowe (P&F secretary), Leigh Anthony (P&F general committee member), Hugh Christie, Claudine Ball, Lucy Hyde, Vanessa Ross, Greg Bradfield, Emmy Brient (ELPS principal), Julie Briggs, Paul Vandenburg, Tim Whiteley, Kim Barber, Anna Hills.

Apologies: Rachel Brown, Sarah Foster, Angela Phyland, Virginia Bower, Jane Gaetani-Black.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The chair (Ross Smith) called for a motion that the minutes of the previous meeting dated March 2, 2016 be confirmed as a true and correct record. Ross Smith, Claudine Ball. **CARRIED**

Business arising from the previous minutes: Michael Lowe apologised for not contacting the Launceston City Council, as he said he would, about requesting dog bags and dog patrols on or near the oval. He said he would do this before the next meeting. School principal Emmy Brient said that the school groundsman had to daily remove dog droppings from the oval.

Financial report: Treasurer Ross Smith discussed two financial reports. The report for the month to March 31 showed income of \$44,332.56, expenses of \$20,123.61 and a loss of \$15,791.05. The November-December report is not complete, as matters are outstanding from the Christmas cake fundraising project. The meeting agreed that the key to the canteen roller door should be replaced. Ross put a motion that the March report be approved. Seconded by Leigh, **CARRIED**. Ross also presented figures on income and expenses from the school fair, held on the oval on April 2. Fair income was \$25,550.75, income about \$10,364.94, with a profit of \$15,364.94. Emmy said the fair committee needed to reconvene to give feedback and Jess said a fair manual needed to be produced. The meeting also discussed how the P&F spent its money. Kim asked if there was a strategic plan. Ross said a plan was done in 2009, but it was out of date. Hugh said the three relevant groups (School Association, P&F and school) needed to better see how they all fitted together to make strategic investments in the school, and it was all about shared understanding. Jess said generally speaking, the groups were on the same page.

Correspondence: Ross tabled a letter from the Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations. The letter said the TASSO annual conference and annual meeting will be held at Burnie High on August 27. The letter called for agenda items and office bearer and regional delegate nominations. The closing date is July 1.

*Hugh spoke about an email that he sent, regarding the oval development proposal and how best to invest P&F funds.

*Michael tabled and read the main points of a letter from parent George Hyde. He was responding to the master planning parents information night held on March 30. He said he strongly opposed the gifting of P&F land, and it was inappropriate that the Education Department was making a school extension contingent on land being gifted to the department.

*Michael tabled a short letter from P&F solicitor Ross Hart, dated March 30. The letter said that a neighbour to the P&F oval entrance off Tasma St was interested in buying the land. Michael said that after consulting the P&F executive, Ross was instructed to negotiate price and terms for a sale, but not to commit to any sale.

Pavilion-oval: Oval coordinator Meg Culhane reported through Michael that there was nothing special to report.

Clothing pool: No report.

Fundraising: Fair coordinator Lucy Hyde said it was important that the good work on the fair from Julie Briggs was recognised. Emmy said staff would be thanked at an afternoon tea and Jess said she would go along to say thanks for amazing work. Ross said the fair committee would reconvene to record ideas to help organisers of the next fair. Lucy said in the past, a small group did the fair organising. When that group left, the knowledge was mainly lost. So it would be good to have a transition to the next fair. It would also be good to have year group representatives that sit on the P&F, to rally parents and teachers. Hugh said a funding plan would help people get involved. There was a discussion about better P&F marketing, including making a bigger deal of its donations and having a plan, or vision, that would attract more attention.

School report: Principal Emmy Brient said the Education Department was communicating more by Facebook. Jess proposed a motion, seconded by Lucy, that the P&F Facebook page be transferred to the school **CARRIED**. Claudine, who manages the page, will work with the school on the transfer. Emmy said the school used multiple communication channels and Facebook could be particularly useful for critical incident communication. Emmy said the school needed to keep the school safe. So the school will be fully fenced and locked during most school hours. Entry will be through the school office, and people will sign in and out. But the gates will be open until 9.30am and open again at 2.30pm. There will be discussions about fencing the oval.

Emmy explained the structure for strategic planning and said that Tasmania's Education Act was being reviewed. The School Association exists as part of the act, and the P&F is a sub-committee of the association. A fact sheet presented to the meeting said proposed changes included that school associations no longer be incorporated and would need approval from the department secretary to hold land, borrow money or employ staff. Other proposed changes include lowering the school starting age and lifting education and training leaving requirements.

Emmy said the school had been overcrowded for seven years and the Education Department had come up with options to generate conversation. The options included the department building on land gifted by the P&F. Lucy said the school had the lowest per-child funding in the state. As a poor school, the P&F was a valuable contributor to the school. Emmy said as an asset, the P&F land had the potential to be a greater contributor to the school. Maybe it was time to say what the purpose of the land was.

Leigh said there was little green space and there was a need to keep green space. Emmy said if the Education Department did not get the land, then it could potentially relocate part of the school.

Jess asked why the department was not offering to buy the land. Emmy said it effectively was, through a \$6 million redevelopment. Jess also asked that if the P&F did not own the oval, wouldn't the department have to buy the land? Emmy said the potential to solve the problem lay with parent collaboration.

Paul said that Emmy only had as much authority to decide what happened with the redevelopment as the P&F did. Emmy said that was disrespectful. The asset and planning section of the department had said they wanted to solve the problem. There was further extensive conversation. Emmy said the department was unable to proceed without an assurance of a co-contribution; Ross said they could have the land, but the school needed a decent gym; Jess said she would write a letter to the department inviting the department to discuss a possible co-contribution; Jess will also do a P&F submission to the Education Act review that she will circulate and then bring to the next meeting. Submissions close on May 13.

The meeting also agreed to form a strategic planning committee. Several names were mentioned as members, but no definitive membership was decided. Ross said he would circulate the previous strategic plan. Kim said the P&F needed to clarify its land ownership view. Several speakers talked about process and consultation, saying the process needed to be transparent and parents fully consulted. Emmy said there was a ``bigger picture'', about stimulating the economy, as well as solving the school's problems. Julie said it was an amazing opportunity, as there had been no major capital spending in five years.

Julie also asked about what decisions had been made on three funding requests mentioned last month. The answer was yes to requests for books and air conditioning, but the grade six trip funding request was not decided. Jess said the amount asked for was probably not sustainable. Ross said the P&F still wanted to do something.

General business: Ross said he had started a conversation with the school business manager about the P&F providing solar panels at the school.

Meeting closed 9.15pm. Next meeting from 7pm on May 4.