

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 8, 2018

Kate Furbish Playground Committee

Present: Paul Perzanoski, Jeanie Doughty, Tracey Peck-Moad, Jeanne Baker (Bee) Stinson (chair), Steve Walker, Adelaida Gaviria, Nathan Hintz

1. Minutes were accepted without changes.
2. We welcomed two new members – Nathan Hintz, who is a parent of BSD children and is particularly interested in providing appropriate and accessible play for children with special needs; and Adelaida Gaviria, who is a math support teacher and master gardener who has a special interest in gardening with and for children.
3. Corey Perreault was our Vice-Chair and also added perspective as a school board member. We will need a new Vice-Chair.
4. Jeanne Bee handed out copies of a timeline of work completed to date and brought new members up to date.
5. Jeanne Bee used the timeline to remind all committee members that we need to hire a professional designer for our playground project and that figuring out how to go about finding and hiring the right person – while giving an appropriate chance for open bids on a public school project – has been challenging. Jeanne has spoken with Laura Newman of the School Ground Greening Coalition and she would be willing and available to work as a consultant to help us write a Request for Qualifications, get it out to professionals (with help from PDT), and show us some of the projects locally that are similar to what we are thinking of. Jeanne asked for, and received, support from the committee to request funds of approximately \$400 to hire Laura Newman. Paul P. suggested that we might ask for \$1,000.
6. Jeanne Bee shared that Laura Newman is also working with “Learning by Nature for ME” which is a “collaborative initiative to increase young children’s access to nature-based play and learning across Maine.” This group is going to be writing a guide to “improving...school or center’s outdoor play/learning environments” and our playground might very well be part of the publication as well as part of the cutting edge in playgrounds for young children.
7. Jeanne Bee had also been in touch with Steve Normand, who is a designer of wooden playscapes (like the one at the old Longfellow School) which were built by community members. He is also an architect and is semi-retired. He did not want to interfere with the work of the designer we will hire but is willing to meet with us and share his expertise if we feel it would be useful. We discussed briefly how we might use his knowledge and decided not to contact him again at this time but that we might see if he were willing to help at another point, such as when we need to make a choice between several designers, or if we are faced with wanting more playground than we can afford and need to plan a “phase two” of the project.

8. The Meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM.
9. Our next meeting will be December 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:00

At 6:00 Jeanne Bee joined the members of the building committee at their meeting. I gave a brief explanation of the request for funds as part of a Playground Committee subcommittee report. There were several questions

- How do schools usually pay for a playground designer? (I explained that the design is generally “free” because it is provided by the representative of the equipment company chosen to provide the large equipment and just amounts to placing that equipment in the space. This is a very different kind of project that we are envisioning!)
- \$1,000 won’t go far – you’ll surely need to come back for more... (I responded that this money was strictly for the purpose of hiring a consultant to help us write and distribute and RFQ and that when we hired a designer we’d have a much better idea of how much our vision will cost. In fact we were aware that the current budget of \$105,000 was not adequate to provide traditional play structures for three playgrounds and that one thing we were hoping a designer could do was help us stretch our budget or develop a phased plan for the playground if that turns out to be what we need. It is true that we will be spending some part of a small budget on design, which we have not done in the past, but for the kind of space we want to develop it will be necessary to have a professional design.)

The Elementary School Building Committee voted to fund our request for \$1,000 for hiring Laura Newman as a consultant.

I have spoken to Laura Newman by e-mail and she is not able to attend our December Meeting. She is, however, going to write a contract for her services and she is very excited at the chance to work with us!