

Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2018

Present – Mal-Lee Gong, Brittani Hanna, Kathy Hewitt, Jason Perrin, Kathleen Pratt and Andrew Robinson

Excused – Carlos Wampler

Absent – LeAnn Deardorff, Kenny Hassinger, Julie Myers and Jeff Williams

Old Business

- **Maroon & White and Gettysburg Gazette** – The next *Maroon & White* edition is coming out this June. Andrew and Mal-Lee are working on the articles and information for this issue. There was no January issue for the *Gettysburg Gazette*. Mal-Lee said the next issue should be out in about a week.
- **District Website Update** - The district website is still seeing major improvements being made to enhance its ease of use by all stakeholders. Most recently, the staff directory from each individual building was combined into one directory with easy-to-use search features to make finding an employee much easier. Each individual school webpage redirects to the district directory with their respected school already chosen and sorted.

The next two projects forthcoming on the website are a unified district calendar displaying events around the district with a sort feature and a new section on the website for new families just coming into the district or are looking for information on our schools.

- **Tech Prep Open House (January) Recap** – The open house for the Adams County Tech Prep (ACTP) program garnered a lot of positive press. The event was a success according to its director, Frank Flamini. Andrew assisted ACTP by working with the press on coordinating coverage and recorded and created a video showcasing students from each of the seven programs offered. The three-and-a-half-minute video had over 100 views online by the time of the event. Andrew also worked the digital platforms created by the district to promote attendance at the event. One of

the main goals for the open house was to reach maximum enrollment of each program offered by ACTP.

New Business

- **Committee in 2018 (*Attachment*)** – Kathleen said the attachment is a good opportunity to see what the function of district communications are. Jason and Andrew discussed the role since Jason came on board with the district last summer. The committee predated a lot of the work that Andrew did as a contracted person, according to Jason. The forthcoming full-time communications director position will open a new opportunity and change the focus of the committee.

Jason broke down the attachment into detail. Acute/real time communications are for times when there is an urgent message that we need to get out immediately. Delaying or closing school is an example.

Then there is intra-district and external to district communications. Both intra and external communications then fold into the web/digital and social media platforms and spreading the positive news from throughout the district.

Jason said subcommittees are charged with (a) task(s) that have a mission by the board. The big major initiatives, like changing the school day, would require a multistep plan to get that message out to parents effectively and would be something that the board would work on with school employees on the subcommittee.

Currently, Jason and Andrew meet on opposite Fridays to work on getting the board items out so that Andrew can get press releases together that we hand to the press after the meeting. A press release helps get quotes from key personnel before the meeting and assists in minimizing potential errors in reporting.

In the past, Jason has seen all board subcommittees have a communication arm. For example, the policy committee would have an arm of the committee that handles communications and effectively relaying messages to the public. The new communications director will become a de facto member of the board subcommittees. Jason said the goal is to establish a relationship with the board and the communications director.

Looking to the near future, the next big ticket item that we will be tasked with informing the public on will be the budget and finding ways to get that information public effectively and efficiently.

Jason said we are in an environment where we need to communicate our desire to be the school of choice. We are grappling with how to sell our district and how to sell our brand so that we are the school of choice for anyone moving into the district or those currently in the area that are looking at schools. One of the goals of the new communications director will be to assist in making the district the school of choice.

Kathleen brought up the future of the committee and asked for input. Mal-Lee asked Jason how other schools run their communication committees and he mentioned that they are very flexible. Some districts have several board subcommittees- including communications. In his previous district, Jason said each committee had a part in each of the board subcommittees. For part of the time when he was there, the committee met every other month. When projects started to pick up, he enjoyed having the committee meet every other month. Jason said meeting every other month was most effective for them, however, we can program the committee to work the best for us as we move forward.

Additionally, Kathy shared the history of the communications director position and how it came to be.

- **Comprehensive Communication Plan (*Attachment*)** - The most recent comprehensive plan is from 2014. Kathleen said we have real opportunity to come up with an integrated marketing communications plan. She said this was nice to have in 2005 and then in 2014, but we need something more updated to assist in promoting our school and brand. Previously, it was required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to have a plan. That is where the plan originally came from. The communications director will be tasked with creating an integrated marketing plan that fits for the district and the current climate.
- **Warrior Fest** - Kathleen said that from the last meeting, she was unclear of a purpose of the Warrior Fest. Kathy said the original intent was to reintroduce the new stadium and it brought a lot of the community out where there were organizations represented to go along with the stadium introduction. Kathy gave some background knowledge on the festival.

The committee agreed that an event of this type would be beneficial if there was a new school being build or a stadium constructed. However, since there are no significant projects going now, a festival coordinated by the committee is unnecessary.

- **New Resident Guide** – The new resident guide is currently in progress. Andrew is working on this project under the direction of Jason. He is currently gathering key

data to put the guide together – such as test scores and district demographics, for example. The current guide will then be combined with a new section on our website titled “New Families” to assist those moving into the district with key information that may benefit them.

- **Next Meeting** - The committee will meet next in April. The March meeting is canceled. We will notate on the door that the March meeting is canceled.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:11 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Robinson