

# DRAFT

Ward 10 Council Meeting  
Minutes  
Thursday, November 22, 2007  
Essex/Hawthorne II

## **In attendance:**

Rebecca McMurray (King Edward), Howard W. Jin (Ogden), Jim Stathopoulos (Principal, Huron), Alex Petro (Huron), Victoria Barclay (Essex/Hawthorne), John Willis (Niagara), Robin Crombie (Dewson), Lise Bois (Clinton), Jasper Miller (Horizon), Jim Prince (King Edward), Joann Sochor (Palmerston), Ivor Sinfield (Principal, Essex/Hawthorne), Maritza Guzman (Lord Lansdowne), Andy Buxton (Central Tech.), Joy Brickell (Central Tech.), Steph Carrier (Hawthorne), Ian Hutson (Dewson), Peter Chang (Superintendent, SW6), Chris Bolton (Trustee, Ward 10, Trinity Spadina), Esther Levin (Constituency Assistant to Trustee Chris Bolton)

(apologies for any errors or omissions)

## **MOTIONS**

**1. That the draft agenda be approved.**

**Moved:** John Willis; **Seconded:** Lise Bois; **Approved.**

**2. That the minutes from the October 29, 2007 meeting be approved.**

**Moved:** Andy Buxton; **Seconded:** Victoria Barclay; **Approved.**

**3. That Amanda Johnson be accepted as the Ward 10 FSLAC representative and that Victoria Barclay be the alternate.**

**Moved:** Jim Prince; **Seconded:** Ian Hutson; **Approved.**

**4. That the next meeting date be in January.**

**Moved:** Jim Prince; **Seconded:** Andy Buxton; **Approved.**

## **ACTIONS**

1. Jim Prince will compile the comments made at the transportation meeting and send them to Esther Levin who will circulate them to the ward council members for feedback. Then the comments will be forwarded to Robin Wilson at the TDSB.

2. Esther Levin will cancel the Dec. 6 meeting and reschedule it for Jan 15 at Ryerson, if possible.

# MINUTES

## 1. Welcome, Introductions and Overview of Host School

Joann Sochor chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She asked members, when introducing themselves, to comment upon the change of order in the agenda at the last meeting, that is, placing the business items at the beginning of the agenda and the information sharing near the end. Introductions were made around the room.

### Overview of Host School, Essex/Hawthorne II

Principal Ivor Sinfield welcomed everyone to Essex/Hawthorne II and provided a brief overview of the schools:

#### Essex:

- the original schools were Christie Jr. P.S., which was a K-6 school, and Essex Sr. P.S., a grade 7 & 8 school; they amalgamated to form Essex Jr. and Sr. P.S.;
- enrolment is 334;
- the east building now houses Essex, a K-8 school, and Hawthorne II, a K-6 bilingual school which will expand to grade 7 (fall, 2008) and grade 8 (fall, 2009);
- the schools are representative of the community;
- Essex is designated as a special education site with five special education classes and therefore, a lot of adults in the school;
- the main feeder school for grade 7 & 8 is Palmerston Jr. P.S.;
- the Design & Technology program has been recently regenerated by one of the teachers, a former winner of a best teacher award.

#### Hawthorne:

- it is the largest elementary alternative school in the TDSB, and is the only bilingual school;
- enrolment is 194, with a potential to grow to approximately 330;
- the original school was a private school which later became part of the old Toronto District School Board;
- previous principals established strong partnerships between the school and the community.

#### For Both Schools:

- it is a balancing act between the two schools – sometimes the concerns are similar and sometimes they are different;
- a recent “Meet Your Neighbour” event brought out over 300 people from both schools;
- there are two separate school councils but they do communicate;

## 2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

### a.) Agenda

**Motion:** That the draft agenda be approved.

**Moved:** John Willis; **Seconded:** Lise Bois; **Approved.**

b.) Minutes

**Motion:** That the minutes from the October 29, 2007 meeting be approved.

**Moved:** Andy Buxton; **Seconded:** Victoria Barclay; **Approved.**

### 3. Trustee's Report

Trustee Bolton submitted a written report which will be posted on the Ward 10 website.

#### Parent Advisory Committees

- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – this is provincially mandated;
- French As a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC) – this committee has a specific line of responsibility and can give regular reports with recommendations to the Program and School Services Committee (PSSC);
- Parental Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC): this committee has a specific line of responsibility and can give regular reports with recommendations to the Programs and School Services Committee (PSSC).

There are other committees, which are in a different category. These are:

- Liaison Committee – this is more informal;
- Ethnocultural Community Network (ECN) – this deals with International Languages, Black Culture and ESL.

All of the committees receive some board staff support, for instance, having minutes taken and distributed, notice of meetings sent out, etc. ECN just had a conference for parents. More information on the committees can be found on the TDSB website ([www.tdsb.on.ca](http://www.tdsb.on.ca)) under Parents, then Parent and Community Involvement.

Deputations: Anyone can make a deputation to a TDSB Standing Committee.

These are: Program and School Services  
Administration, Finance and Accountability  
Human Resources  
Operations and Facilities Management  
Planning and Priorities

Another committee, Alternative Schools Advisory Committee, has existed for many years as an unofficial committee and it is now seeking official status.

#### Suspensions and Expulsions

The Board report has been released. It covers the whole city and is broken down according to wards. Trinity Spadina, Ward 10, statistics, can be found at the TDSB website, under Parents, then Safe and Caring Schools, and then Suspensions/Expulsions.

In Trinity Spadina, elementary suspensions are well below the TDSB average and are slightly below for secondary schools. For the ward, enrolment numbers for elementary (K-grade 8) are approximately 5800 and for secondary, approximately 4500 (grade 9-12). In Ward 10, we depend heavily on offering specialized programs in the secondary schools and attracting students from other areas. Enrolment in secondary schools is an issue across the city.

Citywide, the number of suspensions for special education students is over 25%, with the number in Ward 10 being slightly above that number. However, Ward 10 is home to many special education programmes. Elementary suspensions for special education programmes are just under 30% **board wide**.

In Ward 10, secondary suspensions for special education (that is, identified by exceptionality) are 37%. The total number of expulsions is 35 for the term, with 25 of the 35 being males. There are two types of expulsion – Full, which means the student is expelled for the rest of the year, and Limited, which is time related (that is, it could be for a week, a month, etc.). Over 50% of the expulsions for special education students are of those who have had an IPRC; this is in line with the rest of the city. The exceptionality associated with the greatest number of expulsions is behaviour related. In the Ward, there have never been any expulsions at the JK/SK level. The total number of students, across the system, who have been identified as requiring special education is approximately 10%, that is, they have had an IPRC.

Ward 10 is fortunate to have St. Stephens Community Centre, which operates a program to support expelled students from both the public and Catholic boards. This is funded using their own funding and grants, and not funds from the TDSB.

**Q.** If it is feasible for St. Stephen's to run programmes for expelled students, why doesn't the TDSB do the same?

**A.** As of February, 2008, Bill 212 will require the board to run programmes for students who are expelled for over five days. The problem is funding – the board is \$2-\$4 million short of Ministry funding for programs for suspended and expelled students. Peter Chang added that there are four sites in existence in the board. The TDSB Safe Schools Committee has been reviewing the programme at St. Stephen's with the intent of establishing a formal partnership with them. Once such a partnership is in place, a TDSB teacher will work at St. Stephen's allowing the students to acquire credits for the work they are doing. St. Stephen's also has a program for younger children.

#### System Coordination

Today the board began the budgeting process with a session for trustees. The board would like to develop a more coherent coordination of its systems and functions. The report on Continuing Education will be going to the board soon. The Program and School Services Committee has already reviewed it and will

bring a motion to the whole board on whether the board should be providing only K-12 learning programmes or life-long learning ones.

#### School Community Safety Advisory Committee

A symposium was held on Wednesday of this week to consider the collected information and for open discussion. The final report is expected by mid-December.

#### Organizational Board Meeting

This is held annually at the beginning of December and is the meeting at which the chair and vice-chair are elected and committee chairs and members are selected.

#### Ward Issues

Both Niagara and Montrose have requested expansion to include grade 7 and 8, with Montrose further along in the process.

The south end of the Ward is being developed very quickly. The old ward boundaries weren't based on all of this new development. Peter Chang and Chris Bolton are working with the TDSB planning department on revising the boundaries so that people living near a school will be able to send their children to that school.

On December 11, a dinner is being held at the Bright Pearl Restaurant in support of the Continuing Education department and the teaching of Chinese. Tickets are \$36 and everyone is welcome.

**Q.** Has the Toronto Lands Corporation been established?

**A.** Yes it has, with David Crombie as the chair. There are 99 properties on the list that the Corporation will be looking at, including Essex W., which is being rented by Artscape. Trustee Bolton has been talking with David Crombie, who views the process as developing "social capital", much in the manner of the process that occurred with Essex W. and Givens/Shaw and Artscape. At a committee meeting, Chris stated that he wanted to see the use of school properties for the betterment of the local communities.

**Q.** Are any of the properties just land without buildings?

**A.** Yes, some are, for instance in Scarborough, plus the board has "holding rights", for instance, at Fort York. If there is a building, the land and building are sold as one package.

There are a number of schools, especially in Etobicoke, that are closed and mothballed. The population has matured and rather than putting other programmes, such as seniors' programmes, in the schools, the buildings are empty.

**Q.** Are you amenable to opening these buildings?

**A.** Trustee Bolton believes that we can use all of our sites for programming including mounting programmes in condo sites at a premium cost that would help defray costs of the other programmes. In recommendations that have been presented to the board, new programmes would have to be revenue neutral.

**Q.** Why not let the City use the schools, such as the one at St. Clair and Caledonia that is being used as a transition home for women?

**A.** Our problem is that the downtown area has too many programmes in comparison to the rest of the city. Now, in order to get more funding, many of the downtown organizations are opening up branches in the 13 areas designated as high priority.

#### **4. Superintendent's Report**

Peter Chang submitted a written report which will be posted on the Ward 10 website.

##### Suspension/Expulsion

Please see the written report for specific details.

When he looked at the numbers from school to school, he found that many of the Ward 10 elementary schools had no suspensions. The principals have put in place proactive programmes to deal with problems.

##### General

Parent-Teacher Interviews for elementary are coming up.

The PA Day on November 30 is for both elementary and secondary students.

##### Character Development

This is a Ministry of Education initiative. Principals will consult with parents and teachers, and the information gathered will be forwarded to a board level steering committee. From all the suggestions and ideas gathered, the top ten values will be selected.

#### **5. Committee Reports**

##### FLSAC

Victoria Barclay has had to withdraw but Amanda Johnson has agreed to be the representative and Victoria will be the alternate.

**Moved:** That Amanda Johnson be accepted as the Ward 10 FSLAC representative and that Victoria Barclay be the alternate.

**Moved:** Jim Prince; **Seconded:** Ian Hutson; **Approved.**

##### Safety

Joann Sochor reported that the following Monday, November 26, from 7 – 8:30 pm, a discussion session on safety issues will be held at Palmerston P.S. The purpose is to share information about issues the different schools are working on, completed projects, obstacles to resolving safety concerns and identifying joint

initiatives. The meeting is open to anyone interested in safety issues whether they are on the safety committee at their child(ren)'s school or not.

Peter Chang suggested that another session be held later on to share ideas with the police or just as a follow-up session.

Joann asked for topic suggestions, one of which was to have doors in schools locked or not, and to use buzzers and locked doors.

Peter commented that having locked doors is a simple, logical step and that parents want to know that school administrators are taking the best care of their children.

John Willis said that at Niagara, the message the parents received was that the school had to lock the doors and there was no discussion. He asked what means, other than through the use of technology, were there of providing a secure, safe environment, of building a culture of safety? He added that it is essential that all schools have a safety committee that includes parents.

Another parent added that parents must be engaged in the discussion around safety. If they aren't, then the school administration is saying that they don't trust the parents.

Trustee Bolton added that he doesn't believe there should be a centralized approach. The decision around providing a safe environment should be a local one developed by the school and the school community. When he was a principal, the issue wasn't locked or unlocked doors, it was having more people in the schools who were connected and empowered enough to question a stranger.

At the Ethnocultural Community Network Symposium on Saturday, parents were very upset about the possibility of buzzers being installed. Cameras are not a monitoring device, they are only useful after-the-fact. There aren't enough staff to monitor them properly anyway. For schools with offices not on the ground floor, of which there are two in the ward, the issues are different.

A parent added that at the Japanese daycare that his family uses, there is a buzzer system. However, the approach should be worked out with the community. Another parent questioned whether the locked doors were providing parents with a false sense of security. If we only use locks, we aren't teaching children about proper behaviour of adults and what is appropriate and what is not. The situation that makes more sense is one where the people in the school know who should and who shouldn't be in the building.

Superintendent Chang acknowledged that the latter is a good approach but when something happens that is urgent and important, you have to put a mechanism in place. As a public institution where we are dealing with the most precious

treasures in our society, our children, we have to use the most effective mechanisms.

Another parent expressed concern that policies determine behaviour and that when we take responsibility out of people's hands, we lose trust. We are utilizing technology rather than teaching people to take responsibility and look out for others. He also added that he would like to see if there is a security system other than locking doors that can be used – he doesn't want to see a fortress mentality develop. Ward council members felt that an alternative to locking doors and installing buzzers was to use hall monitors.

Chris Bolton added that there are hall monitors in elementary schools -- they are the education assistants. Some secondary schools, such as Central Tech, Heydon Park and Central Commerce, do not have buzzers and do have hall monitors, but they are few in number (Central Tech. has three buildings and only two hall monitors).

Superintendent Chang commented that perhaps there hasn't been enough consultation with parents about the use of buzzers and locked doors.

Concern was expressed about what happens when doors are locked and late students, particularly elementary level, have to walk around the whole school to get to the front door. Another added that all guests to the school should have to go to the office and sign in and get a guest pass. Peter stated that most schools have such a system in place already. Another parent suggested having a safety/security system composed of parents who spend time in the school at specified times similar to hall monitors. Another parent added that on a school-by-school basis, parents should have a say in what procedures are put in place.

#### Outreach

Kate McMahon sent regrets that she could not be at the meeting due to illness.

#### **6. Update on Transportation Meeting**

Jim Prince provided a brief summary of the transportation meeting that took place prior to the Ward Council meeting. Both parents and school administrators had provided input to the meeting.

**Action:** Jim Prince will compile the comments made at the transportation meeting and send them to Esther Levin who will circulate them to the ward council members for feedback. Then the comments will be forwarded to Robin Wilson at the TDSB.

#### **7. Meeting Dates**

The December 6 meeting at Ryerson Community School is cancelled as it is too close to this one.

**Motion:** That the next meeting date be in January.

**Moved:** Jim Prince; **Seconded:** Andy Buxton; **Approved.**

**Action:** Esther Levin will cancel the Dec. 6 meeting and reschedule it for Jan 15 at Ryerson, if possible.

## **8. Information Sharing**

Robin Crombie, Dewson: An issue around police background checks for volunteers arose in September. Ten parents who were to act as coaches at field day were requested to get police checks. The school council was not sure how to deal with who should pay for the checks. The issue divided the council. What is the policy on police checks for volunteers?

Peter Chang said that it is necessary for adults who engage regularly with students to have police background checks. A police check is not necessary for a parent to accompany their child on a field trip. Regarding payment – the expectation is that the parent will pay, but schools can absorb the cost. If you go through the Board, it takes 8 – 12 weeks. During this time, a principal can agree to a parent’s involvement. An Ontario Education Security Check takes about 2 weeks and costs \$16. If you go to Police headquarters on College Street, it takes about two weeks and can cost \$45, depending on the type and frequency of involvement with the children. Ivor Sinfield added that some police stations can sometimes do it in a few days.

Robin asked that this item go to the safety committee for investigation.

Andy Buxton, Central Tech: November 29 is the school council meeting and the main topic is on how to prepare for exams. There will be three translators at the meeting.

Maritza Guzman, Lord Lansdowne: On Wednesday, November 28 at 7 pm the movie “Hairspray”, partially filmed at Lord Lansdowne, will be shown.

Jasper Miller, Horizon: The school has a life science lab in a classroom and have set up a greenhouse. A large, school-wide project is to construct a model town with involvement of all students. Each student will have a role in the town. The project is meant to teach the relationships between different disciplines and life skills.

Lise Bois, Clinton: The school is embarking on greening of the school with funds raised by the parents. Some parents feel that capital projects should be funded by the TDSB. A problem with jurisdiction arose – the parents called the City about planting trees in the schoolyard and the City will do this for free. However, the board is saying that only the board can do this because it is on school property, and it will cost a lot of money. Given that the Board is trying to save money, can’t a partnership be set up for projects such as tree planting?

Peter Chang and Lise agreed to discuss the matter later.

**9. Other Business**

No items were raised.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.