

Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Council

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

Zoom Meeting Minutes

Video recording: https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/mhH-IBH-XXmq-4XoWUfpZgbbzcufGZq4QX337JGoB_b0Ye1tzVce7-NQTGP4NzJt.vbG3cV7SNyihv0bB

Passcode: 5q2H^aaN

Attendance: Scott Sears, Sam Roberson, Joy Becker, Mary Geragotelis, Frank Olah, Ann Knowles, Geri White, Carol Sweat, Terry Surprenant

- 1) **Call to order:** Scott called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.
- 2) **Audience for citizens:** None
- 3) **Update agenda as needed:** Frank moved to add Election of Co-Chairs to the agenda. Joy Becker 2nd. Motion approved.
- 4) **Approval of October 26, 2021 meeting minutes:** Frank motioned to approve the minutes as written. Geri seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- 5) **Acceptance of financial reports**
 - a. **Hampton:** Joy moved to accept Hampton's financial report. Geri seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **Scotland:** Frank moved to accept Scotland's financial report. Mary seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 6) **Program updates:**
 - a. **Hampton:** No written report submitted. Joy provided a verbal update: The preschoolers participated in school-wide activities including the food-drive and door-decorating contest. Family project was a take-home activity to decorate a turkey. They continue to use iPads each Wednesday for Khan Academy assignments. Parent-Teacher conferences occurred recently. Still 9 students enrolled. (one child moved, and another enrolled in Nov.) Sam explained that there are 4 children expected to enroll in the near future. Frank shared that the preschool classroom has been closed due to a Covid-19 exposure. Will reopen next Monday. They do have remote and packets for families. Frank indicated that due to Covid shut-down-protocols family fee will not be charged for the week classroom is closed.
 - b. **Scotland:** Classroom updates were shared via email before the meeting for members to review. Ann shared: Still 17 students enrolled with 3 staff. Family events include family clothing drive. Preschool is included in all school-wide activities. Monitoring visit was completed. Carol shared about holiday-themed activities one example being the "hiding the turkey" bulletin board with children. PTO volunteers have been in the school but parents and other visitors not allowed in the classroom yet. Weekly newsletter is shared with families to keep them informed.
- 7) **SR Liaison report**

- a) Revisited OEC changes to Council membership. This is a challenge for many Councils. Liaisons have been meeting to brainstorm strategies to support smaller communities to achieve requirements.
- i) 25% of Council membership should be parents, either past or present. Recent guidance from OEC explained that parents should not be in dual roles.
 - ii) Terry checked 211 child care listings for Hampton and Scotland. Four licensed family day care homes exist in these towns. She suggested that the parent of a child currently enrolled in Scotland who is a family care provider might be interested to join the Council. Carol offered to ask this parent.
 - iii) Some other Councils are bringing in guest speakers or planning information specifically for parents to help draw their interest and participation.
 - iv) Each council can decide the size of membership as long as categories required by statute are included.
 - v) Terry mentioned the idea of assigning one parent from each school to serve as Ambassadors (or family representatives) to assist with family engagement. Frank suggested that Joy might be able to serve in that capacity for this year. Ann added that in Scotland, they are implementing room parents and maybe for the Pre-K, expectation could be to attend the Council meetings as a part of their role. Joy offered to ask a family member who is a registered nurse and parent of young child to see if she would be interested to join.
 - vi) Scott asked about developing a committee to work on a proposal for amending the bylaws. Terry offered to draft language and to participate in a Committee. Will bring ideas to the next meeting for a vote. Mary and Scott volunteered to represent Scotland. Geri and Joy volunteered to represent Hampton. Terry will email this group to figure out logistics.
 - vii) Geri asked for a copy of the most recent bylaws. Joy reminded that they were amended in Feb 2020. Terry offered to email those to the group.
- b) Terry asked about the Council's policy about child eligibility with regard to age. If they choose to allow children to remain in preschool after they become eligible to attend Kindergarten, there is a limit on how many children can be in SR spaces (no more than one per classroom) and that child must have been in a School Readiness program the prior year. A child of this age can only be counted in a SR funded space if the Council has a policy stating it allows. Other Councils have a policy that the family would have to make such a request the spring prior and if the school agrees it would be in the child's best interest to spend an additional year in Pre-K, then they can bring it to the Council for a vote. There was some discussion about allowing family choice and potential effects on children's social development due to Covid.
- c) Terry asked about policy regarding calculation of fees when children have special needs. When a child is in a full-day program, fees can be pro-rated, but Terry asked if there was a policy to guide these decisions. Discussion about how to count child's time. In Hampton, if a child has an IEP, the family isn't charged a fee. In Scotland, families are charged a fee. Terry will get further clarification from the OEC. The regulations aren't always clear-cut, but there is a page on the OEC website with links to the regulations. Terry will share that link with the Council.

- d) Monitoring visits were completed. There are new people in positions including Terry and everyone is working together to ensure that requirements are being met and paperwork is up to date. Classrooms are busy and happy and lesson plans are looking good. Terry has some extra hours due to the supplemental grant, and talked to Sam about needs in Hampton. She will provide support around family engagement and help new executive assistant to learn about paperwork and data requirements there. In Scotland, Terry has spent some time with Ann reviewing playground supervision/fencing and children's daily schedule. Terry feels confident that it's going to be a productive year!
- e) Sparkler App is a free tool for all families in Connecticut with children ages birth to five. This tool provides child development information based on the child's age. Families can complete the ASQ (screening tool). There are activities that families can do with children (off screen) and a way for them to document what they are doing together. It can also be used as a communication app. Terry could provide information for families and staff if schools choose to participate. Frank made the point that staff should be able to learn about the app and then make an informed decision about whether they want to participate. Geri made the point that the ASQ is a good screening tool. Sam has noticed that other preschools are providing information on their websites to promote and support families to use this resource. Families can use this tool if they choose regardless whether or not their schools decide to utilize it.

8) New Business

- a. Election of Co-Chairs
 - ii) Geri moved to nominate Scott as Co-Chair from Scotland. Mary 2nd. No other nominations. Motion passed unanimously.
 - iii) Frank moved to nominate Joy as Co-Chair from Hampton. Geri 2nd. No other nominations. Motion passed unanimously.
 - iv) The members thanked Scott and Joy for their continued work in these rolls.

9) Old Business

Scott asked the Council about location of meetings moving forward. Frank moved to continue with virtual meetings for the remainder of the 21-22 school year. After brief discussion, it was unanimously agreed to do so.

10) Audience for citizens – None present.

11) Next Agenda Development: There is no meeting in December. January's agenda will reflect the standing items as well as:

- a) Discussion about adjustment to Council membership in bylaws
- b) Clarification about age eligibility and how fees are calculated when a child has special needs.

12) Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Frank at 7:39 pm and seconded by Mary. Motion passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING will be held in January. Clarification needed on date.

Held through Zoom

Respectfully submitted by Teresa Surprenant, Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Liaison

These minutes are unofficial until approved at the next School Readiness Council Meeting