

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

September 2019

Date | 9/9/2019 | Meeting called to order by Sara Gilloth

In Attendance

Kate Broyles	Salesa Hancock	John Seevers
Sharon Burger	Dan Keane	Andrea Wardell
Sara Gilloth	Sara Miller	
Kim Halingstad	Aimee Pless	

Approval of Minutes

As this was the first meeting of the school year, there were not previous minutes to approve. Last year's minutes are posted on the school website on the [School Accountability Committee](#) page.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report. Our enrollment was projected to be 572 for the 2019-2020 school year; as of September 9th, 574 students were enrolled. An official number will be available after the count on October 2nd.

Safety and Security

All Advise classes reviewed [Standard Response Protocol](#) during the first week of school; teachers went over where the safe locations are in their classroom every class period on the first full day of school. West Jeff administration has already met with Bill Robbins, the district emergency manager, and the school will have a scheduled lockdown drill on Tuesday, September 17th, which will be communicated to families the week beforehand. Expected security improvements from the 2018 bond passed by voters include more security cameras, more secure exterior doors, and security glass in the front entry. It is hoped that Jeff Pierson, the district's director of Safe School Environments, is able to speak with the Accountability committee this school year.

Staff Updates

There are several new additions and changes within our staff:

- Dr. Britni Dawson-Giles, social worker;
- Sarah Dignan, art teacher;
- Kelly Grall, speech-language pathologist;
- Mitch Hahn, Composition, Yearbook, and 6th grade English/Language Arts;
- Marie Hughes, learning specialist;
- Dan Keane, counselor;
- Jen Knolmayer, speech-language pathologist;
- Jen Nickerson, 7th grade English/Language Arts and social studies;
- Jessica Popejoy, PE teacher;
- Tricia Samuelson, assistant principal;
- Dawn Wheeler, 6th grade math and science;
- Amanda Woods, 7th grade social studies;
- Jennifer Hodges, returning to West Jeff Middle for 8th grade math; and
- Becky Myers, changing subjects from math to 6th grade social studies and a GT elective.

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Key Goals for the 2019-2020 School Year

The school will be focusing its work this year in three areas:

- Responsive Instruction – using formal and informal data to focus our instruction on academic and affective student needs, adjusting instruction as we learn more about our students;
- School Culture – creating and elevating a more positive culture for the entire school community, utilizing a pride matrix, improving family engagement, and communication; and
- Instructional Technology – using technology to improve student learning and communication, increase access to learning outside of school.

Part of our instructional technology work is a revised personal device policy, which was communicated to students and families at the start of the year. The new [Away for the Day](#) practice has been going well.

The school is close to 1:1 for Chromebooks; as of the meeting, the school has 497 Chromebooks and 574 students. Next year's incoming 6th grade class will have their own Chromebooks as part of [TechForEd](#), the district's four-year plan to create technology-enabled classrooms in fifth through twelfth grades.

Design Advisory Group

As bond improvements will allow for some improvements, a mini Design Advisory Group will be formed to provide input. The group will be comprised of the principal, facility manager Jeff Tourtel, a few teachers, and a few family members or community stakeholders. Members of the group must attend every meeting; the first meeting is scheduled for September 17th.

New Business

School Garden

Plans are underway for a school/community garden to start in spring 2020. Anyone interested in participating or supporting the project may contact Kate Broyles.

Open Forum

There is an open part-time paraprofessional and full-time paraeducator positions at the school. To learn more about the positions or to apply for one, please go to the district's [Careers](#) page and search for "West Jefferson Middle."

Meeting adjourned at 3:29.

Next Meeting

Date: 10/14/2019

Time: 2:35

Location: WJMS Library

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October 2019

Date | 10/14/2019 | *Meeting called to order by* Sara Gilloth

In Attendance

Amy Born
Kate Broyles
Sara Gilloth

Salesa Hancock
Kim Halingstad
Mya Sapien

John SeEVERS
Glenn Van Airsdale

Approval of Minutes

The September minutes were [posted on the school website](#) and distributed to staff via e-mail. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the minutes without revision.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report. She brought copies of 2018-2019 CMAS data, which is publicly available on the Jeffco Public Schools website.

We get two kinds of information from CMAS data: achievement and growth. Achievement is a point in time measure of a student's proficiency. In 2018-2019 CMAS testing, our students met expectations on math and exceeded expectations on English/Language Arts (ELA). Growth is a measure of progress between two points in time and generally provides us with more specific information. In 2018-2019 testing, not all students showed that they had reached a year's growth in a year's time, particularly for math. We were close on ELA, with more of a gap in growth for students that receive free/reduced lunch or have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The district overall is seeing a slight downward trend in growth.

What does this mean for us? We are seeing expected amounts of growth in most students in our school. What we aren't seeing are students with Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) or IEPs showing as much growth as we should.

Potential causes of why our overall growth has been lower than expected:

- Inconsistent alignment of instructional planning and practice
- Inconsistent use of data plan to adjust instruction (differentiation)
- Need to improve development of numerical fluency and number sense
- Need to build strong student learning behaviors: perseverance through difficult tasks, stamina, independent work practice, student accountability, executive function, etc.
- Students have been focused on collaboration assignments but having some difficulty on independent tasks

This informs our draft 2019-2020 Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) goals to focus on increasing overall growth, increasing our median growth percentile in math, setting specific targets for students with ALPs or IEPs, and a process target for alignment of instructional planning and practice within content departments.

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October 2019

What are we doing to improve our student growth? We have switched to department planning with a weekly meeting that focuses on common instructional goal, assessment, and data analysis using the [Jeffco Deeper Learning Model](#). Teachers have completed modules of professional learning on expectations, learning behaviors/executive functioning, rigor/deeper learning, formative assessment & differentiation. Our math department is participating in a learning lab cycle to transform their instructional math practices to facilitate critical thinking and reasoning (2 years, 4 cycles, 1 planning day). Assessment design will include more items similar to what students may see on standardized assessments. We are planning for WIN (What I Need) rotations during Advise for the rest of year.

A parent asked about finding homework to ensure student is doing homework and getting review at home. Assignments should be findable in the gradebook on Infinite Campus with additional material on the teacher website. Teachers working to get more online consistency in those areas.

Another parent concern is about curriculum consistency between teachers. We are working to establish more consistency. The current system makes it hard for parents and students to develop more independent habits (executive function) and students need to get ready for more independence in high school.

It was suggested that Advise could be used to work on study skills across all grades.

New Business

Off-Site Field Trip Supervision Policy

Families have expressed concerns to the school about how supervision is managed for off-site field trips. The policy is to have two staff members on each bus and move students as needed to minimize difficulty. Administration will ensure going forward that staff are positioned throughout the bus and cognizant about where to place various groups of students. Two family suggestions are to provide a printed packet with guidance for chaperones about how to handle potential situations and to reconsider the ratio of staff to students.

Open Forum

There are two part-time kitchen positions and a full-time paraeducator position open at the school. To learn more about the positions or to apply, please go to the district's [Careers](#) page and search for "West Jefferson Middle."

Meeting adjourned at 3:29.

Next Meeting

Date: 11/11/2019

Time: 2:35

Location: WJMS Library

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November 2019

Date | 11/11/2019 | *Meeting called to order by* Sara Gilloth

In Attendance

Kate Broyles
Sarah Chase
Dan Cohan
Steve Cox

Sara Gilloth
Kim Halingstad
Salesa Hancock
Sara Miller

Aimee Pless
Stewart Sapien
John SeEVERS

Approval of Minutes

The October minutes were [posted on the school website](#) and distributed to staff via e-mail. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the minutes without revision.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report. The school hosted [Rachel's Challenge](#) presentations in October and received feedback from families. Concerns were expressed that the video footage of the shooting in the presentation created secondary trauma to some students. We want to avoid idolatry of the incident and its perpetrators.

A suggestion was made to consider making a recommendation to the principal that the School Accountability Committee assists with screening assembly presentations for content. Ms. Halingstad stated that the district has approved the Rachel's Challenge presentation; however, she is open to increased communication and establishing a process for sharing and receiving feedback from the School Accountability Committee for assembly presentations.

A comment was made that the district should revisit its approval of the presentation and provide feedback to the organization such as editing out scenes that show shooting and following several organizations' suggestion to not name mass shooters (e.g., [Don't Name Them](#), [No Notoriety](#), and "[Don't Name Mass Shooters](#)" from the Ethics and Public Policy Center). It was suggested the school send a letter asking that the active shooting footage be edited out.

The discussion was tabled to be picked up again after the new year.

New Business

Principal Selection Process

Dan Cohan, the community superintendent serving mountain area middle and high schools, presented the next steps for West Jefferson Middle School in selecting a permanent principal. After discussing the pros and cons of various selection processes, the School Accountability Committee recommended direct placement of Kim Halingstad as principal.

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November 2019

Agenda Item Request

It was requested to add an agenda item for the next meeting on how to respond to negative Facebook posts about the school and our students.

December Meeting

It was agreed by consensus to not hold the optional December meeting and resume regular meetings in January 2020.

Open Forum

There are two part-time kitchen positions and a full-time paraeducator position open at the school. To learn more about the positions or to apply, please go to the district's [Careers](#) page and search for "West Jefferson Middle."

Meeting adjourned at 3:30.

Next Meeting

Date: 1/13/2020

Time: 2:35

Location: WJMS Library

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

January 2020

Date | 1/13/2020 | Meeting called to order by Sara Gilloth

In Attendance

Kate Broyles	Britni Dawson-Giles	Sara Miller
Sharon Burger	Sara Gilloth	Aimee Pless
Sarah Chase	Kim Halingstad	Tricia Samuelson
Steve Cox	Dan Keane	Stewart Sapien

Approval of Minutes

The November minutes were [posted on the school website](#) and distributed to staff via e-mail. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the minutes without revision.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report.

2020-2021 Enrollment and Staffing

The projected enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year is 555 students, not including open enrollment. A smaller incoming sixth grade class is expected. Staffing is expected to remain stable; more language arts and math course sections or a world language/cultures position are being considered.

Review of Key Goals for the 2019-2020 School Year

Brief updates were provided on the school's work in the three areas of focus for this year:

- Responsive Instruction – each department continues to work on aligning with the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP);
- School Culture – we have been implementing using restorative processes focusing on how to repair relationships after conflict, reached 90% of our goal for students to be able to identify at least one trusted adult to talk to if something comes up, Coffee with Counselors has had good attendance, hoping to improve as the program gets more traction, and possibly hosting a screening of the documentary [Screenagers](#);
- Instructional Technology – we plan to replace 99 Chromebooks approaching end-of-life to support upcoming testing and provide improved access for classroom use through the end of the school year.

The annual [Make Your Voice Heard survey](#) is open today through February 7. Aggregated data from the results is provided to school administration to help maintain the positive aspects of our schools and to address individual student needs and concerns. General feedback from the community and school has been positive this year.

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January 2020

Winter MAP testing results

The overall data from the winter [Measures of Academic Progress \(MAP\)](#) testing looks good and shows improvement in student growth from the fall tests. Reading results are stronger than math, with students showing at least a year's growth in a year's time in reading. In subgroups, gifted and talented students' results continue to be above target. Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are not showing growth at the same rate as other students, so we will continue to examine possible causes for that trend.

Budget Feedback

The top three priorities for school-based budgeting identified by the School Accountability Committee have been submitted to the district: additional electives (languages in particular), additional teachers, and more resources/support for mental health.

New Business

Parent Teacher Conferences

Feedback from families on the conference format used this year was shared to the meeting:

- The fall conferences feel like a getting to know the teacher, the winter conferences are more substantive.
- The 10-minute windows feel too brief and difficult to plan around delays with other conferences.
- Three things appreciated by families:
 - Teachers including students in goal setting documents for the year.
 - The winter conferences split between an invitation and appointments.
 - A questionnaire sent to families to provide a classroom teacher with information they want to share about their student.

Community Garden Report

The proposal to use the abandoned tennis courts for a community garden is among 29 finalists for Innovation Acceleration Fund grants from the district; voting is open January 11-17 to students and staff. We will learn the results on February 14. Next steps for the project include fundraising, continued coordination with community partners ([Denver Urban Gardens](#) and [Evergreen's Alliance for Sustainability](#)), and continuing to explore options for a water source.

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January 2020

Old Business

A discussion on schoolwide assembly content was tabled from the November meeting. In the future, whenever a schoolwide assembly is scheduled, the School Accountability Committee will be consulted. (It was not clear whether the committee will be given an opportunity to screen the planned presentation for content.) No additional schoolwide assemblies are planned for this year.

Open Forum

There is one part-time kitchen position open at the school. To learn more about the positions or to apply, please go to the district's [Careers](#) page and search for "West Jefferson Middle."

Meeting adjourned at 3:30.

Next Meeting

Date: 2/10/2020

Time: 2:35

Location: WJMS Library

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February 2020

Date | 2/10/2020 | Meeting called to order by Sara Gilloth

In Attendance

Kate Broyles
Steve Cox
Sara Gilloth

Kim Halingstad
Dan Keane
Aimee Pless

Tricia Samuelson
Stewart Sapien

Approval of Minutes

The January minutes were [posted on the school website](#) and distributed to staff via e-mail. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the minutes without revision.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report.

2020-2021 Budget and Staffing

A draft of the 2020-2021 school-based budget was submitted the week before the meeting. After the district provides feedback, the school can make changes as needed.

We have a standard carryover of 4% and plans for carryover funds are related to scheduled renovation this summer: décor in the commons and cafetorium, flooring in some classrooms, replacing windows to improve security, and possibly mounted displays in the commons with hard-wired ports to support collaborative work.

The Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff positions will be reduced by 1.17 FTE in the 2020-2021 budget. The math intervention specialist position ends this year and the .17 FTE that covers Laura Sarché teaching separate sections of band and orchestra for each grade (six classes to our 1.0 FTE teachers' five classes) will be applied toward a classroom paraprofessional for instrumental music. An English Language Arts (ELA) teacher position will be eliminated due to overstaffing and that FTE will be realigned to a World Language elective teacher position. The plan is for 7th grade students to have the option of taking World Languages and Cultures and 8th grade students to have the option of taking Spanish I.

Other budget notes:

- The need for at-risk student funding increases each year with 1:1 Chromebooks and Outdoor Lab;
- Increased funds for staff development, science curriculum, and library media;
- Each teacher will be given \$200 for their own classroom to use as they wish; and
- Implementation of PaperCut print management software has significantly reduced copying costs.

We anticipate hiring for four positions: a 6th grade math position to replace a teacher that is moving out of the area, two positions that were temporary hires for the 2019-2020 year (a 6th grade math and social studies position and an academic intervention position; the teachers in those positions this year may reapply through a competitive interview process), and a World Language elective position.

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February 2020

New Business

20D20-2021 Student Fees

Expected student fees for the upcoming school year are consistent with the fees for the current year. There will be a new \$50 technology fee for sixth grade next year. Families experiencing financial hardship may work with the school to arrange a payment plan; financial secretary Debbie Jessee works with families on that.

2020-2021 SAC Chair/Co-Chair

Sara Gilloth's term as School Accountability Committee chair ends in May. Nominations and self-nominations are open for the next chair and/or co-chairs. Voting will take place at the April meeting.

Old Business

UIP Update

We are hopeful to see improved math growth as students whose MAP testing scores indicated low growth and/or low achievement students have been targeted to receive intervention if they have already received intervention and support. We have been identifying other patterns on testing for students that could likely benefit from intervention. Students seem to really enjoy the added help.

Open Forum

There is one part-time kitchen position open at the school. To learn more about the positions or to apply, please go to the district's [Careers](#) page and search for "West Jefferson Middle."

It was agreed by consensus to not hold an Accountability meeting in May unless the need arises.

The date for 8th grade continuation has been adjusted to Wednesday, May 20th. This change is reflected on the school's calendar and family handbook on the school website.

We have had fewer behavioral reports this year since implementing the "Away for the Day" personal device policy.

We are continuing to develop the Gifted & Talented elective taken one each year by students with Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs). All ALP goals are up to date, in line with the annual ALP lifecycle.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30.

Next Meeting

The March 9, 2020 meeting was canceled due to a lack of agenda items.

Date: 4/13/2020

Time: 2:35

Location: WJMS Library

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May 2020

Date | 5/18/2020 | Meeting called to order by Sara Gilloth

In Attendance

Amy Baker
Kate Broyles
Sharon Burger
Steve Cox

Sara Gilloth
Melissa Gutierrez
Salesa Hancock
Kim Halingstad

Sara Miller
Aimee Pless
Stewart Sapien
John SeEVERS

Approval of Minutes

The February minutes were [posted on the school website](#) and distributed to staff via e-mail. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the minutes without revision.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report.

Remote Learning Feedback

The district has run three remote learning surveys and provided disaggregated data to schools so individual schools could follow up with needs for additional support. Initial feedback our school received was that non-systemic processes and platforms were confusing, students missed direct instruction, and there were many extra steps when students needed one-to-one help. Students felt many assignments posted early after the pivot to online learning were not particularly engaging.

Many teachers have learned how to use screencast software. Math teachers have been using [Kami](#) to work through math problems step-by-step with students. It has been a challenge to meet students' different ways of learning. Some classes are running more smoothly than others for a variety of reasons; overall we have seen improvement. It has been good for many of our teachers to learn to use additional tools for when physical class time resumes and to see ways students can do work from home.

The streamlined single daily attendance check-in supported the school in both tracking attendance and identifying students that needed extra support to improve their engagement.

Grading has been difficult for teachers at many grade levels, not just middle school. We learned about a loophole where students could submit assignments to Google Classroom without completing the work and have had to work on teacher responsiveness to contact.

A parent thanked the school for quickly pivoting to supporting online learning and providing material for students to start working on right away, even with the curve of adjusting to online learning.

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May 2020

2020-2021 Restart Plan

The district's restart plan is in early draft form. At this point, we are expected to start the 2020-2021 school year on Tuesday, August 18; this is subject to change. A survey will be going out to families via the district's Community Daily Update this week; please keep an eye out for the survey and complete it as soon as you can.

One possible plan is to keep Monday as a planning/student catch-up day and have students in on-site classes in rotations by to-be-determined groups as in-class time would be limited to 10 people per classroom, with focused work time/virtual office hours on Fridays

There are still many logistical challenges to be addressed: would teachers rotate through classrooms, how would screening for health work, how would we support families and staff with school-age children, and how we would support families where students require more adult supervision to work effectively. If a student or staff member tested positive for COVID-19, the school would have to close for a week for cleaning.

A parent asked how grouping might occur; we might group by last names and rotate through three groups; numeric caps would be set to work with current guidance.

Kim Halingstad has had many conversations with Laura Sarché about virtual sectionals and other ways to support instrumental music.

A parent asked about how eating lunch in a classroom instead of the cafeteria might impact students with food allergies. Social distancing will probably reduce that issue.

A parent asked if Spanish still be offered for the 2020-2021 school year. We have enough students for two sections. Kim has worked with our incoming Spanish teacher Susan Bergkamp to arrange the purchase of a site license for an online textbook that will be used in the Spanish classes.

A parent asked about transportation. The plan is to have transportation, we are just not sure what it will look like yet. We will be working with Conifer HS since middle and high school historically bus together.

A parent expressed appreciation for the communication from our school to students and families. The sooner we all know about next year's plan, the more families can prepare.

A parent asked about how the school is working with Conifer HS regarding hotspots for home WiFi access. Digital teacher-librarian Amy Baker responded that the school applied for them, did not receive any at that point, and eventually received three. The school has been printing packets for students without access. Some locations in our articulation area don't receive strong enough cell signal for hotspots to function.

A parent asked about how we are meeting needs for families with food needs. Our counselors have been making food runs twice a week with food from the 285 Backpack Project and the Mountain Resource Center. If anyone is in

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May 2020

need of supplemental food at home or wants to donate, please contact either of the counselors through the end of May or Kim over the summer.

2020-2021 budget

Dr. Glass has previously announced for schools to expect 1-10% in budget cuts and that impact to student experience/learning should be last when trimming budgets. The district has reserves but cannot spend all of those funds, although we expect to use some of it.

Furlough days are a possibility; each furlough day would save the district 1.6-2 million dollars. Schools are under a hiring freeze, which affects us as we have one open position and potentially a second that we have to hold for potentially displaced staff from other sites in the district.

The school created budgets for both the best possible situation (Plan A) and a more moderate situation (Plan B). The Plan B budget won't have money for extras, but can maintain the services and programs offered this year.

A parent asked what the school expects with an increase in families applying for the federal free/reduced price lunch program. The school has allocated funds in the Plan B budget, expecting that we will have more eligible families apply for free/reduced price lunch program, but we will adjust. We are trying to reduce the impact on families in fees; the school has already refunded fees for programs not taking place, such as the third trimester robotics class fee, SeaCamp, and field trips that did not take place. For comparison, we have historically funded \$4000-5000 in student fees for all students to attend Outdoor Lab; in the 2019-2020 school year, we funded \$13,000. (As an aside, our school is scheduled for the week of September 28, 2020 at Outdoor Lab, pending the program happening as expected in the 2020-2021 school year.)

A parent asked what changes were planned for students participating in Technology Student Association (TSA) next year. Kim explains that we had two sections of an elective during second trimester this year to allocate time for those students to work on their projects for competition. We could not justify two sections of that elective at the detriment of pre-engineering sections during second trimester, so only one section will be offered for the 2020-2021 school year. It will be initially offered to just seventh graders but can add eighth graders if needed. The TSA program itself will still be the same as in past years.

End-of-Year Items

A group of parents decorated the driveway for 8th grade locker cleanout today; students received Continuation packets including certificates, a pennant from the school, and a \$15 Chill'd gift card from PTA. Fewer 8th grade students came to pick up personal items than expected. There is still a lot of stuff at the school but expect more students to pick up items tomorrow and Wednesday.

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May 2020

A parent asked about later dates for pickup. They were advised to contact Mr. Squires to set up a time, but note pickup for the summer has to be done this week as demolition has begun for renovation work to be done over the summer. (The 2020-2021 budget does not affect renovation plans, because those funds were already allocated.)

We anticipate hiring for four positions: a 6th grade math position to replace a teacher that is moving out of the area, two positions that were temporary hires for the 2019-2020 year (a 6th grade math and social studies position and an academic intervention position; the teachers in those positions this year may reapply through a competitive interview process), and a World Language elective position. We have already hired Susan Bergkamp from Conifer High School for the World Language position.

New Business

2020-2021 SAC Chair/Co-Chair

Kate Broyles and John Seevers have offered to co-chair with Sara Gilloth as secretary for the 2020-2021 school year. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the proposed slate. The vote was unanimous.

Summer Meeting

Sara Gilloth will e-mail the 2019-2020 accountability mailing list when details have become more solid for a summer meeting. It is expected to be in mid-July or later, after the district has finalized their 2020-2021 plan.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.

Next Meeting

Date: TBA

Time: TBA

Location: TBA (likely online via Zoom)