

Chenery PTO Meeting, Wednesday 17 May, 2017

Welcome from Co-Presidents Jamie Shea and Laurie Bufano

Treasurer's Report, Elena Ruggiero. Talked about where most of the last years money came from, and what a difference a couple of BIG donations made, but can't rely on these going forward.

Secretary Meeting notes missing from last meeting. (Sorry).

**Liz Baker, Director of Science**, Belmont Public Schools: Spoke about the benefits to the kids, school and teachers, of the new Science books the PTO purchased recently for the Chenery 5th Grade. The text books reinforce the practical science side of things the kids are studying.

**Mike McAllister** (Principal) added how the text books are a foundation to the curriculum - NOT the curriculum - but a really big support/supplement to the curriculum.

*Parent Qt: Why don't the kids bring the books home?*

*Ans: Online access to the books will be available online come September.*

**MA:** Welcome talk from Mike. Talking about making the PTO even stronger than it already is. He worked on this at Butler, and would like to do similar work here. The more people involved, the more benefit to all.

**JS:** Spoke about events and programs the PTO raise funds for at Chenery. These events/programs can be found listed on PTO Newsletters.

**Belmont Goes Solar** presentation by Phil Thayer (& Belmont Energy committee member).

**<https://belmontgoessolar.org>**

Belmont Goes Solar ran a discount promotion for going solar at the beginning of 2016. Hoped for 100 homes to go solar, but got 260. With this great result, the solar installer (Direct Energy Solar) company awarded the town \$50,000 worth of panels to install, for free, on any public building. The leading contender right now is the Chenery Middle School. The south facing metal roof, which has a life of 50 years is the ideal location for the solar panels. Currently, no objections from abutting home owners. Great opportunity for the kids to learn about the science of solar power. There may be a kiosk or computer giving regular updates on power coming from the panels, so they can watch it's progress. End relief will be savings to the tax payers as reduces the school's bills. Still at Draft Steps to Approval stage. More research/feedback/support needed. If get the green light, will be installed before November 2017.

**MA:** Other schools have solar panels installed already (out of district) and they have a way for the kids to watch the gauge of the electricity coming in and the savings. Such a computer display page will come with the installation. There is a site to go to check your data.

There will be a public hearing to approve the public building selection for the panels. Chenery could be the first Belmont Public Building to go solar.

Belmont Energy committee and Belmont Solar committee meet at the library on the first and second Wednesday of each month. Attendance is encouraged.

**Qt.:** Do the installers maintain the panels?

**Ans:** CMS will own them but they will be under warranty for the maximum number of years available.

**Director of Technology, Belmont Public Schools, Steve Mazzola,** and Caitlin Corrieri talk about Technology at CMS.

**CC:** talked about teachers use of computer labs. About 90 teachers for 5 computer labs = limited availability. Recent addition to technology of the chrome book carts. They can bring technology into the classroom and continue teaching without being disruptive to others. Also talked about benefits of ipad, but also limitations. PTO bought the 8th grade team a chrome book cart about a month ago. One cart, for multiple classes.... FBE bought one for the 6th grade social sciences.

**SM:** Talked about getting access to technology. Survey about technology, of teachers, k-12: the teachers needed technology close to their classrooms. Asked about which device: more labs? smaller no. of devices in class? or carts working on a team level? Desktops/laptops/ipads etc. Overall response: First, ipad carts to use close to class (30 ipads), and chromebook carts came second. They all wanted wireless devices that would work in the classroom. Currently at 7 ipad carts (Some classes have a handful of ipads too), about 340 ipads total and 90 chromebooks. The school needs more. Applied to Capitol Committee to support 150 chromebooks, and to finish wireless infrastructure in the building. Presented 3 wks ago. Both got approval. Now need approval by warrant committee and town meeting in June. Wiring of building will be done. After town meeting, assuming approval, will put new carts into the 2018 budget plan.

**Chrome book testing:** 4th & 8th grade did their testing online. If other grades go to online testing, the school needs more devices! 8th grade could only go one team at a time... but the online test itself was a success. CMS did the online testing field test 2 yrs ago. The school needs a reliable wireless system for all that traffic online at once during testing. Other, out of district, schools had trouble with this.

Pending necessary approvals, come september, CHENERY WILL HAVE 1 DEVICE FOR EVERY 1.5 KIDS!

**LB: Introduced board for 2017-2018 year:**

Co-Presidents: Laurie Bufano and Barbara Bulfoni

Treasurer: Karen Thomson

Assistant Treasurer: Anna Freitag

Secretary: Laura VanderHart

**Upcoming event: GUEST SPEAKER, Peter Shelley, Senior Counsel, Conservation Law Foundation**

Wednesday, May 31, 7:00 pm Chenery Auditorium. Don't miss this important discussion of the impact of climate change and environmental stewardship on one of New England's most precious resources, our oceans!