



February 12th, 2014 – PTO General Body Meeting Minutes

Meeting Commenced: 8:44 am

Board Members Present: Cathy Gallinger – Treasurer, Mrs. Tsacoyeanes – Teacher Representative, Damian Sugrue – Principal, Andrea Keenan – Vice President, Ranjini Reddy – President.

Chairpersons Present / Parents Present: Rashmi Muralidhar, Sangeetha Shroff, Linda Vittum, Jennifer Korbly, Michelle Brown-Droese, Jeanne Hobbie, Joanne Wu, Lucy Li, Marina Khitrik-Palchuk, Rosari McCarthy.

Welcome and Approval of January 2014 Minutes

Ranjini Reddy welcomed the group.

The minutes of the January meeting were presented for review and approved.

First motion to approve minutes – Andrea Keenan.

Second motion to approve minutes – Linda Vittum

Treasurer Update

An update of the PTO Profit and Loss Budget versus actual sheet was presented by Cathy Gallinger. The income we have raised to date is \$27,012.61. We are hoping to raise \$42,000. We are still anticipating income from the Ice Cream Social, Willow Books night, and the school pictures commission. Assuming the expected income of those and the other fundraisers remaining, we still have a deficit of \$7,831. We will continue the Annual Appeal and with the faculty and staff variety show, we should hopefully make up this deficit.

On the expenses side, the second payment for the teaching assistants was recently sent. One more payment remains. A question was raised by Andrea Keenan on how the PTO was doing with respect to raising money as compared to the previous year. Cathy mentioned that we have made less on the Annual Appeal this year. However we need to see how we do at the end of the year as the fundraising events are different this year.

Michelle Brown-Droese asked about the idea of sending envelopes home to make it easier for families to donate to the Annual Appeal. Ranjini Reddy responded that the idea was temporarily shelved due to the expenses and person power associated with the process. Mr. Sugrue mentioned that the Riso copy machine can be used to print envelopes. Michelle volunteered to help with this process. Ranjini Reddy added that a PayPal account will be explored since the PTO has regained tax-exempt status.

Ice Cream Social

Sangeeta Shroff and Rashmi Muralidhar, the co-chairs for the Ice Cream social, gave an update on the event. The date has been confirmed for March 14th. The classroom gift pottery items will be done through a store in Tewksbury. The final pieces will be ready by March 5th. There will be no teacher and staff raffles this year as the teachers and staff will be doing the talent show. A “save the date” entry needs to be added to the Conant School website.

Christina Pharo suggested having students pick a new ice cream flavor to serve for the Ice Cream Social from three new flavors. The chairs will be approaching Ms. Melissa Hayes, the school Arts teacher, to see if this could be run through the student council. This will be done after the winter recess.

Sangeeta and Rashmi had met with Mrs. Hodsdon, the teacher-coordinator for the ice cream social. She recommended asking parents to only donate cakes and not breads, cheesecakes, or pastries. The preference will also be for small cakes.

Jeanne Hobbie asked the chairs to make sure that all the parent volunteers who serve the ice cream be aware that there will be an option for lactose-intolerant children.

Festival of Cultures

Joanne Wu and Lucy Li gave the update on the Festival of Cultures which is a joint event with the Douglas PTO. The event takes place at the Junior High. The event comprises of an international pot luck dinner, tables showcasing different countries, and a cultural performance. In the past, there were capacity issues with the Junior High auditorium for the cultural performance. No easy solution has been found as yet. For now, capacity language will be included in the information that will be sent home.

The performances are on track and there are currently 8 performances with room for one more. The event is also doing really well with respect to number of ambassadors represented. There are currently 9 ambassadors with Africa as a new country and possibly Ireland.

The committee also received a grant from the Acton Boxborough Cultural Council of \$200. This helps offset the costs of the event. There is also \$200 allocated for the event in the Conant PTO budget. The hours will be from 5pm to 8:30pm.

PTO Event Planning

a. Willow Book Night

Kathleen Little is organizing the event this year. Currently we just have information on the date, Wednesday, March 26th. We should have more information as we get closer to the date. The Conant PTO gets a portion of the sales on that night (excluding gift card sales). Linda Vittum suggested that we coordinate the event with a children's author book signing.

b. Coupon Books

Cathy Gallinger gave the update on the Coupon Books. There are currently a number of books out which hopefully will be returned or checks sent in.

Principal's Update

Mr. Sugrue gave the update on the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). PARCC is a test that is associated with the common core and is slated to eventually replace the MCAS. This year, the 4th and 6th grades at Conant have been chosen to take the PARCC to test its validity. Two of the fourth grade classes will be taking an online version of the performance based ELA test. This will take place after the first round of MCAS in March. The students will be from Mrs. Bellomy's and Mrs. Cole's homerooms. For the 6th grade, Mrs. Wilcox's and Mrs. Meek's classes will be taking the end of the year Math assessment. It will be taken as an online test in May/June. 6th grade students who are taking the PARCC Math will not need to take the Math MCAS. This is however subject to change as the state is still in the process of figuring out how to handle the accountability determinations. Currently the decision of not having the students take the MCAS rests with the district.

PARCC results will not be reported publicly as they are using this testing process as a reliability and validity measure. If the PARCC passes these tests of validity, the switch to PARCC from MCAS may happen as soon as the next academic year (i.e. PARCC will be given to students in grades 3 and up). The 5th grade will continue to take the MCAS Science and Technology as a PARCC equivalent does not currently exist.

Conant has all technology in place that will allow the children to take the test online. Discussion then followed regarding the challenges of taking tests online for students.

Open Items

a. PTSOs Meeting

Ranjini Reddy gave the update on the meeting of all the PTO chairs of all the elementary schools. This is usually a monthly meeting that is organized by Deanne O'Sullivan, a school committee member. The main issue discussed was the school budget for FY15. The budget passed the school committee by a narrow margin with the caveat that the budget needs to be reduced by 1% before presenting at the upcoming Town Meeting in April. The need to have parents with school age children attend the town meeting was emphasized. It was agreed that the PTO will publicize information on the upcoming town elections.

b. Movie Night

A Movie night for the K-2 grades is being planned for April. This event is planned as a family event and the movie 'Frozen' will be shown.

b. Kindergarten to First Transition Forum

A Kindergarten to First Transition forum will also be organized for the beginning of the next academic year. This event was a big success last year. Dr. Kotyk will help organize the meeting. E-vites will go out at the end of this academic year.

c. PTO Open Positions

A position that was open for next year was for the Nature Walk Coordinator. Deb Malloy, our current chair, broke the coordinator position into two smaller more manageable components. We have two parents who have volunteered to take over these roles. Missy LoPorto will be taking over the scheduling component and Elena Margarint will be handling all the materials needed for the walk. Jeanne Hobbie will continue with the training component. There will be an earnest attempt to video tape the trainings and also apply for grants that will help us update and digitize the material. The other major posts open are for the vice-president, secretary, and volunteer coordinator.

Linda Vittum brought up the issue of the playground. Mr. Sugrue shared with the group that he plans on updating the 4-6 playground with a major portion of the profit from the extended day and enrichment programs. The discussion moved to the possibility of writing grants for needs such as this. Michelle Brown-Droese volunteered to look into the Foundation Research Center and the costs associated with using their data base. She was also willing to train any parents who would like to write these grants. A new post for grant writing will be opened up for the next academic year. In talking about the grants, a topic that came up was the possibility of having a second language taught at Conant. Ranjini Reddy remarked that she had reached out to Bernadette Keegan at Community Education for the possibility of introducing a language option through the Conant Enrichment program. This program will run similar to the Math Olympiad, i.e. for most of the academic year.

Meeting Adjourned: Approximately 9:51 am

Budget vs Actual 2013-2014

	<u>Jul 1, '13 - Feb 11 '14</u>	<u>13-14 Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
Income			
Total Movie Night	399.95	400.00	(0.05)
Total Net Craft Fair - Proceeds (est)	9,701.00	9,701.00	-
Total Net - Ice Cream Social Proceeds	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00)
Total Direct Appeal (net of cost of items)	15,692.00	15,692.00	-
Total Net PTO Book Fair Proceeds	(178.00)	(178.00)	-
Total Net PTO Logo Item Sales	(69.00)	100.00	(169.00)
Scrip	-		-
Game Night	284.00	284.00	-
Willow Books Night	-	500.00	(500.00)
Kidstuff Coupon Books	1,050.00	1,300.00	(250.00)
Target Take Charge of Education	295.66	350.00	(54.34)
Grant Income	150.00	450.00	(300.00)
School Pictures Commission	-	1,000.00	(1,000.00)
School Store	(313.00)	-	(313.00)
New Fundraisers	-	7,831.00	(7,831.00)
Total Income	<u>27,012.61</u>	<u>42,430.00</u>	<u>(15,417.39)</u>

Expense	<u>Jul 1, '13 - Feb 11 '14</u>	<u>13-14 Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
Check Print Supplies & Software	419.67	75.00	344.67
Festival of Cultures	0.00	200.00	(200.00)
Annual & Tax Reporting Fees	64.30	45.00	19.30
Website expenses	0.00	75.00	(75.00)
Insurance	0.00	365.00	(365.00)
Accountant Fee - Taxes	1,750.00	750.00	1,000.00
Assemblies	1,954.00	2,000.00	(46.00)
Author Program	2,000.00	2,000.00	-
School Picnic	175.00	200.00	(25.00)
Copy Machine maintenance	790.64	2,000.00	(1,209.36)
FinComm Funds	50.96	2,000.00	(1,949.04)
Field/Games Day	122.63		

		150.00	(27.37)
Gardening	85.34	175.00	(89.66)
Hospitality/Staff Thank you Luncheon	181.84	400.00	(218.16)
Library - repairs	400.00	400.00	-
Miscellaneous/Birthday Ribbons	14.56	100.00	(85.44)
Muffins/Donuts with Mom/Dad	214.63	1,200.00	(985.37)
Naturalists/Nature Walk Program	0.00	150.00	(150.00)
Playground Recess Equip & Suppl	0.00	200.00	(200.00)
Principal's Fund/Scholarships	193.00	1,000.00	(807.00)
Directory Expense (separate from annual appeal)	292.48	700.00	(407.52)
Staff Fees	15,319.85	25,000.00	(9,680.15)
Chorus Piano	0.00	450.00	(450.00)
AB Senior & Retiree Reception	0.00	275.00	(275.00)
Summer Reading Program-keychain	241.14	220.00	21.14
Soda Machine/Assignment Books	(216.00)	-	(216.00)
Classroom Supplies & End of Year Thank You	2,290.74	2,300.00	(9.26)
	<u>26,344.78</u>	<u>42,430.00</u>	<u>(16,085.22)</u>
Total Expense			
	<u>26,344.78</u>	<u>42,430.00</u>	<u>(16,085.22)</u>
Net Ordinary Income	667.83	-	667.83

February 12th 2014 Meeting Minutes:

First Motion to Approve: Ezili Mayo Joseph

Second Motion to Approve: Mary Tsacoyeanes