



May 20, 2016 – PTO General Body Meeting Minutes

Meeting Commenced: 8:50 a.m.

Board Members Present for General Body Meeting: Amy Happ, Jennifer Jones-Hodgson, Shijesta Victor

Parents, Teachers, Guests Present for General Body Meeting: (see Sign-in sheet)

Welcome

Amy Happ welcomed the group.

Approval of March 2016 Minutes

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

First motion to approve minutes – Linda Vittum

Second motion to approve minutes – Archana Iyer

Treasurer's Report

Shijesta Victor gave the update. PTO has raised \$18,949.80 from Direct Appeal (\$43,146.69 is now total income balance).

Outstanding expenses: \$800.00 plus. Money still left to raise to meet annual budget is \$3,000.00

Changes to Treasurer and Bank Signatories

For the 2016-2017 school year, Treasurer will be Lin Zhang. New Signatories for the Bank Account at Middlesex Bank will be: Lin Zhang, Ezili Mayo-Joseph, Jane Archer, and Kristen Kenny. Remove previous signatories: Amy Happ, and Jennifer Jones-Hodgson. Andrea Keenan may remain as a signatory.

Nature Walks

Discussion of paid nature walk position postponed until next meeting.

School Supply Orders

Staples "school kids" program. Order forms going home next week (parents may order online or paper form). 3rd-6th grade teachers have opted into this program and have made their requests. Price is \$25-44 per student depending on classroom teacher and the package includes all they need for the year. Program available May 31-June 10. Supplies delivered to classrooms in August.

School Committee Representative

Deanne O'Sullivan gave the update. Train the Trainer (for teachers) regarding ALICE begins Monday May 23. Because of regionalization, teachers should not accept checks for field trips because of gift guidelines. Extra money makes for difficult accounting. Field trips are to be paid for with checks, not cash. By using the PTO to pay for field trips, the accounting would be easier for teachers and school. Separate bank account administered by PTO needs to be set up for school trips for all grades. Extra money will be in one account, not earmarked per grade.

PTSO Meeting

Jennifer Jones-Hodgson gave the update. Superintendent feedback requested from ABRSD community via e-mail. Link will be included in next Newsflash and comments are due by June 1st. Survey regarding school selection and number of

school days being sent home soon. Key dates—May 31 8:30 p.m. @ RJ Grey Library: School Safety Planning meeting (ALICE), June 16—Capital Expenditures and School Need meeting 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at RJ Grey Library. Bus passing to businesses will be ended next year. Bus passes to private homes with student occupant present will continue.

Festival of Cultures May 14

Organizers gave the update. About 540 activities at festival. About \$2,600.00 made via Douglas PTO. They will make necessary payments for the event. The food was delicious and everyone had a fun time. 12 performances, 8 ambassador countries. Organizers wish for more diversity and new faces next year.

PTO logo items

Jane Archer gave the update. More parental involvement and community building is needed at school to translate into higher participation especially in Annual Fund giving. Photographic organizational chart could be used to introduce the PTO and school admin and staff to all members of the school community. Facebook page has recently increased in users by about 60. Idea to do a “faces of Conant” piece online to familiarize people with each other and build community spirit. A volunteer is needed to administer the facebook page and keep it vibrant and up to date. Photo permissions for children should be verified before posting.

Willow Books Night and Business Award

Michelle-Brown Droese gave the update. Business award for business that has supported our school at biggest annual event. This is a relationship building opportunity. Steinberg-Lalli, for example, granted \$17,500.00 for playground last. Conant PTO could present them with framed certificate at the ice cream social, e.g. Willow Books will only do fundraiser in March so we will not be having one this year due to our late request.

Movie Nights

Ranjini Reddy gave the update. Profit for both nights was \$1300.00 However, Movie Nights remain an official community building event, not a fundraiser. Ranjini and Cini are handing over the team lead to Swati, Vandy, and Varsha. Licensing company is called K12 Movie Licensing Inc. Their annual fee goes up and is \$443.00 next year. They have the best selection. Criterion Pictures USA is priced less and also has a good selection. Suggestion to open the event to other elementary schools.

Box Tops

Transfer responsibility of counting box tops to Room Parents is proposed. Confusion happened at the front office when volunteers took the wrong bags. A sign out sheet at the front office needs to be included so organizers know who took what and the bag can be tracked back to them.

Teacher Appreciation Update

Veena gave the update and would like to meet with board about the budget for next year. Teachers and staff really appreciate the food. Need ways to raise money for the food or get more volunteers involved.

Principal's Update

Damian Sugrue gave the update. He has received a lot of responses to his e-mail regarding classroom placement for upcoming school year. FAQ is regarding the process of placement. Placement is determined on one day when current teachers and special educators get together with principals with input from parents and make the best possible matches for next year. Switches in August are usually not done. Principals will attend ALICE training May 22-23 and will receive certification. They also receive safety training in de-escalation. Polar Pride Picnic is more inclusive across grades than former games day. Demos of changes to school buildings will be given by architects in the fall. Over the summer, some work will be done on upper playground access, exterior of rear school building (there is no structural damage), and smoothing out ground near bike rack. Section drops due to lower enrollment in recent years “the bubble.” Gates has highest numbers and may add a 4th grade. Conant has some room for expansion and will be accepting the extra students from Gates and has hired two 4th grade teachers and is hiring a new Kindergarten teacher. Average class size will be 18

for grade 4 next year. Naturescape playground still needs digging for drain. Should be done in June. Bubble needs to be carried through the years and teachers may shift around. Teachers are certified in elementary and can usually teach any grade.

Open Positions

Andrea Keenan and Jennifer Jones-Hodgson gave the update. Thank You to Shijesta Victor outgoing as Treasurer. New Treasurer next year will be Lin Zhang. Jane Archer and Kristin Kenny will be Co-Vice Presidents next year. Amy Happ, President. Veena Kamath will be Hospitality. Linda Vittum will do Mom's Night Out. Rashmi Muralidhar will do ICS and Festival of Cultures. Stanphanie Yao – Book fair. Michelle BD-Grants and business relations. Volunteer Coordinator (?), Shijesta Victor may do Newsflash.

Drawings

Bose: Luke Droese

Jewelry: Mrs. ?

? Ellie Zhang

Holiday stuff: Anupama ?

Basket: Maxwell Du

Conant bag: Michelle Manchanda

Other

Linda Vittum points out that there is a lot on the calendar which might be too much for some parents. Spread it out over the year. The end of the year ends up being overwhelming for some parents. Presidents will finalize budget and e-mail out for approval. Shannon Milhomme passed away in accident in Acton recently and there is a fund in her name for her family online.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:10 a.m.

First Motion to Approve:

Second Motion to Approve:

Minutes Typed By Elise Calisi