

PTA MINUTES
07/16/2007

Chef Cheryl Smith generously donated her restaurant space and catered the event. The meeting was called to order by George Sanchez, CO-President at 7:28pm, opening the discussion of the following agenda. Conversation skipped back and forth through the agenda items.

Items distributed: Agenda; Treasurer's Summary + Pro Forma Income Statements (Fund-raising +funded Programs/Expenses); PTA/School Calendar Draft; Revised Bylaws

I. Introductions/Welcome

George Sanchez – Co-President; Jerry Piper; Co-President; Ann Biddlecom – Executive member at large; Rachel Godsil – Executive member at large; Ramona Fluker – 5th Grade Committee Chair; Janine Taylor – After-School Treasurer; Fran Castellanos-Ross – Secretary; Audrey Patton - Treasurer; Nadine Jervis – Co-Vice President; Klara Carames – 1st Grade Rep; Stephanie Steinberg – Co-Vice President; Teri Brajewski (joined later in the meeting) – 4th Grade Rep

II. Budget and Financial Processes Review – Treasurer, Audrey Patton

Between the Afterschool, events, and donations the PTA receives roughly \$800,000/year. We have a current bank balance of \$44, 218.81. After receipt of this month's final bank statement, we expect to have roughly \$30,000 available.

Audrey circulated a budget for the next year. Audrey highlighted the items below:

- According to the Chancellor's Regulations, the Treasurer's report needs to go to the Board of Education.
- Bookkeeper – Susan Hyacinth was hired. She did a spectacular job with the book sale and we are pleased to have her join us.
- The PTA will begin to use QuickBooks to account for income/expenses and prepare the Form 990 for the IRS. Audrey will set up the system and begin to train the bookkeeper, Afterschool staff, and PTA Exec to use the system. She anticipates the training will take place late August.
- QuickBooks is a web-based program that the bookkeeper and up to 4 people can use at the same time and at a discounted price costs the PTA \$20 +/-month. It can generate invoices and print checks.
- QuickBooks will allow the Afterschool to enter information on children already registered before the beginning of the school year so that invoices may be sent to parents.
- Last year, event organizers did not handle \$ generated or deposits as expected; creating a variety of difficulties.
- The 5th grade income/expense budget is not completed for the past year, although "it looks as if the 5th grade has made enough deposits to cover expenses." It is possible to be about \$300 over budget. Audrey is not sure if any \$ will carry over into this year. Audrey reports having paid the vendors.
- The PTA needs to vote on the budget at the 1st meeting. Specific line items discussed include, the 5th Grade, Enrichment, and Computer needs.

- Teri reminded us that the PTA needs to consider that Enrichment is now school-wide and that there is an Enrichment Coordinator.
- Chris Peyser should be consulted about computer needs, since there are unknown variables, including what \$ we may receive from M. Markowitz's office. Judith Goldner developed and submitted that proposal.
- Klara stated that picnic tables and umbrellas for the pre-K trailer will be ordered with the money received from Lowe's.

III. Executive Board Roles Overview – Co VPs

The PTA passed over a general review as members did not think a review necessary. Grade Reps were identified as the point people for class parents.

IV. Walk-Through of 2007-2008 School/PTA Calendar – Co-Presidents

George walked us through the calendar through the beginning of October. Meetings days and times were discussed to maximize participation.

- Exec Board meetings – being changed to Monday (calendar needs to be updated) as long as they are not on the 1st Monday of the month.
- 1st Exec Board meeting is on Sept. 10th. The October meeting will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 10th due to Columbus Day holiday. Treasurer will not be present.
- General meetings to alternate and perhaps have some in the morning to get a different population (differing opinions expressed by various members). Nadine suggested that they coincide with Academic meetings if done in the morning.
- Janine identified March 29th as Spring Tea Day.

Clean-up Day – August 29th will be chaired by Stephanie and Janet G-Martin. A logistics and needed-items list and budget will be distributed by Ann Biddlecom. The time is confirmed as being between 2-6pm.

PTA Breakfast for school staff on August 30th– chaired by Audrey and Carmen – Audrey to give teachers their check and template for collecting parent contact information. Audrey will get list of teachers who did not submit for reimbursement.

Welcome Back to School on September 4th and 5th will be chaired by Jerry Piper. Teri, Rachel, George and Audrey can assist.

- Audrey stated she could bring the apples and bananas.
- Calendar, printed PS 261 pencils, volunteer form and flyer about listserv to be distributed.

Curriculum Night on Sept. 11th – chaired by Zip

Atlantic Antic on Sept. 17th will be chaired by Ann Biddlecom. Co VP- Nadine requested the permit.

Grade Rep meetings on Sept. 18th will be chaired by Rachel.

Candy Magazine from Sept. 18-Oct. 9th will be chaired by Susan Hyacinth

Middle School Meetings on September 19th – Teri B. will chair, she will need assistance

Fall Fest on October 13th – Nadine is chairing with Klara and Janine assisting.

V. Next Steps

- Fran (Secretary) and Audrey (Treasurer) will draft a simple protocol to give to event organizers. The protocol should list a sequence of expectations, responsibilities and timeframes for completion.
- Audrey to finish her report for the Dept of Ed and wrap any old business with teachers.
- Rachel to get Pam Potischman's great template for collecting information from parents (contact info – parents/kids) – will e-mail to Jerry to place on website
- Jerry can include protocol on the website and create a series of e-mail reminders for organizers about next steps they need to take. He will update the Calendar. He will amend the template for Parent Contact Info and make it downloadable so that it can be printed and attached to the checks given to teachers on August 30th. Jerry is looking to relinquish responsibility over the website.
- Klara will make available a “book” detailing Fall Fest vendors and other helpful information. THANK YOU.
- Nadine (?) will speak with Chris Peyser about finding a parent volunteer who knows how to use “Filemaker Pro”
- Raise suggestion with Zip about designating school walls for specific categories of information, i.e. - Afterschool, Fund-raising, etc.
- Rachel and Klara to send orientation letter to Kindergarten parents using the one created by Zip last as a model.

VI. Burning Issues

Discussion throughout the meeting raised concerns and suggestions regarding the 5th grade budget.

- Co VP, Nadine, suggested the PTA cover specific and known expenses, such as Caps and Gowns, the yearbook and the end-of-year party. PTA members agreed. The 5th grade budget for will depend upon the projected expenses and the PTA is not in favor of “automatically” covering expenses if the 5th grade goes over budget. It is the responsibility of those overseeing a committee, event, or activity to stay within budget and/or account for discrepancies.
- Ramona- 5th Grade Committee Chair received no information from previous chairs and is not sure if 5th grade will go to DC. That will be decided by school administrators.

- Ann B. reported that the 5th Grade Committee deposits were delayed and communication compromised. Efforts this year should focus on remedying those circumstances.
- PTA members agreed it is best to collect, document, and pass on the information so that we can build upon lessons learned.
- Ramona – 5th Grade Committee Chair needs the actual Graduation date.
- There were several suggestions for having a structured and on-going way of informing parents and recruiting their participation in events: including sending a notice to parents to join the listserv who did not already do so; collecting information on interest at Clean-up day.

George, Co-President, called the meeting to a close at 9:04pm reminding us that because of last year's success we were able to have this meeting at Cheryl's restaurant.