

SES PTSA Board Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2013

The Board meeting began at approximately 6:30 p.m. at SES auditorium. The following people attended the meeting:

Heidi McNamee, Justine Light, Cindi Carrell, Elizabeth Levi, Jill Bryan, Beth Azar, Robin, Dana Buhl, Dan, Sue Lyon-Myrick, Amy Kleiner, Matthew Latterell, Ricardo Ismach

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2013 Board meeting. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

1. School to Family Communication

Amy led a discussion about improving communications with parents regarding what happens on a daily basis at SES. The discussion revolved around using technology to communicate instantly with families about the interesting things that happen during a school day. The general idea was to use tools such as Twitter, text messages, Face book or Integra.

The Board discussed the technical, logistical, and legal hurdles to doing this. For example, PPS' internal networks filter out Twitter, but Amy believes other schools are using Twitter. Amy is aware that Twitter is available on a 3G network on a smart phone. Amy and Rebecca could capture and “tweet” about activities and share photos using smart phones. The Board discussed the need for legal permission to use photos of children and ways to set up a clearinghouse for permission. This could be done using an opt-out form at the beginning of the year.

The Board also discussed the pros and cons of Twitter vs. Face book for this kind of posting. It was suggested that that this could link to the PTSA website. Matthew offered to work with Amy and Rebecca on this project.

2. Equity Issues / Courageous Conversations

The Board engaged in a discussion about diversity issues and obtaining more diversity on the Board. This issue came up in the Courageous Conversations workshop at SES that several members of the Board have been participating in. It was noted that simply asking people of color to be on the Board is not a good solution.

The Board discussed some of the barriers to participation in Board meetings by people in the SES community. Beth suggested that we need to talk about how we recruit new members and consider the barriers to participation. It was suggested that people know the PTA meets, but it can be difficult to get people to attend a Board meeting. One-on-one conversations may go a lot further in increasing broader participation in the Board than other outreach methods. Dana pointed out that the Board needs to be consistent with what is going on in Courageous Conversations. It was generally agreed that the Board needs to raise awareness of the diversity issues.

Cindi discussed some of the aspects of the PPS diversity program that could be useful to consider. Just getting a context like PPS program on race is really helpful. Heidi suggested that the people participating in Courageous Conversations could perhaps bring more ideas forward.

3. Read-a-Thon

Sue raised an issue to consider with regard to the Read-A-Thon. She reported that her daughter was initially excited about Read-A-Thon, then was disappointed to realize she could not win significant prizes solely by reading. There was apparently a rumor floating around the school about someone's grandparents had promised a large flat fee donation, regardless of the amount read. The Board engaged in a discussion of the issues surrounding the fact that not all students have access to friends and relatives who can sponsor them in the Read-A-Thon.

Cindi pointed out that fundraising events like the Read-A-Thon have been successful because committed volunteers, like the Willard-Herrs, who step forward and “own” the event. As a Board, we could undermine those efforts if we tried to control too many of the details of the event. It was discussed that the Board could improve communication with parents about the Read-A-Thon and perhaps make suggestions to next year's organizers about possible ways to “rejigger” how the prizes are awarded.

4. School Funding / Advocacy

Sue would like to have a weekly advocacy section in the Messenger now that the legislature is in session. She asked if it was possible to have Facebook feed into her blog but set it up so people can't make comments. The Board engaged in a discussion about whether it would be better to create something new or simply place something on SES page with no place for comments. There was a discussion of whether and how the Facebook page could link to the Messenger.

- A motion was made and second to start an SESPTSA Facebook page without the ability to comment. It passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Matthew agreed to work with Sue to set up the new Facebook page.

Later in the meeting, Sue gave a short advocacy report, noting that the legislature is now in session. She briefly outlined some of the budget issues and mentioned that Oregon PTA is having a call-in advocacy day. Information about that advocacy program is on the PTA website. It was noted that we still have \$500 in our budget for advocacy.

5. Treasurer Report

Cindi distributed the monthly balance sheet, profit and loss statement, and budget to actual report. She led a discussion about the risks of scrip. It costs \$100,000 over a year, requires PTSA to maintain an inventory, the margins are small. There was a discussion of the pros and cons of the scrip program. Cindi also mentioned that it is difficult to track the scrip inventory on Quickbooks. The consensus was to continue with scrip despite the shortcomings.

Cindi also recommended that the Board hire a tax preparer to prepare the taxes. Our gross receipts are high enough that the IRS requires filling of full file 990 form and a CT12 form.

- A motion was made and seconded to spend \$500 to have the CT 12 and 990 forms done by professional tax preparer.

Cindi noted for the minutes that 2 individuals provided 1099 forms for 2012: Musical director Caitlin Quinn and Choir teacher _____.

Cindi also noted for the minutes that Beth Azar and Cindi Carrell are now on the scrip team in addition to others named in the minutes previously.

6. Fundraising

Matthew gave a report about the orange sale fundraiser. He discussed ways in which it might be improved in the future. He pointed out that it would be nice if it did not overlap with the Applebee's fundraiser. Also, it might be nice to obtain some organic fruit.

Matthew also gave an update on the Hop House and Laughing Planet fundraisers. PTSA received \$676 from Laughing Planet. There was a discussion of fundraising from the Amazon link on the PTSA website.

Ricardo had fundraising idea to use his documentary filmmaking skills to prepare a DVD of the spring musical that could be sold. The Board discussed that.

- A motion was made and seconded to authorize Ricardo to make a DVD of the spring musical for use as a fundraiser at discretion of Caitlin the spring musical director.

Cindi mentioned that, to raise money for the Go Fund, there would be an announcement about an upcoming seed sale and parents' night out event.

7. Room parent / Communication

It was announced that Heather resigned as room parent coordinator. Heidi volunteered to take over this role for the remainder of the year. The Board discussed a problem with room parents or former room parents using email lists for personal promotion or use. It was suggested that the Board have a written policy to prohibit this practice and provide other information for room parents. Heidi agreed to draft a policy. Ricardo mentioned that at Ainsworth they used the Big Tent software to set up lists.

8. Safety and Resilience

Dana had to leave the meeting early, so Heidi reported that volunteer efforts that occurred at SES on February 1. Among other things, volunteers filled emergency buckets with additional supplies. The status of the emergency buckets is not adequate for a real emergency. Each bucket now has some additional items and a class roster.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:22 p.m.