

PTSA Board Meeting Minutes -- January 9, 2013

The meeting convened at approximately 6:30 at SES auditorium. The following people attended the meeting:

Eric Herr, Ricardo Ismach, Jill Bryant, Dana Buhl, Cindi Carrell, Elizabeth Levi, Beth Azar, Robin May, Jolee Fay, Kim Jarvis, Sue Myrick, Meg Hartley, Matthew Latterell, Heidi McNamee, Valerie Stegall, Diana Deumling, Amy Kleiner, and Dan Keppler

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the November board meeting. The motion to passed with a unanimous voice vote.

1. Parent education

Meg raised the possibility of having parent education night with a film on dyslexia. She has viewed the film and found it entertaining and informational. She has had a personal journey with a child with dyslexia and has discovered there are a lot of myths about dyslexia. Because of the lack of good information, it can take longer than it should to identify a problem as related to dyslexia. She wishes she had known more about the condition and wants to help other parents by making better information available. She has three other parents involved and came to the board meeting to see what interest level was.

The board engaged in a discussion about a dyslexia parent program and how the condition is handled at PPS, which depends on how it is diagnosed. Cindi had two suggestions for a program: first, that a teacher team be ready to respond with questions from parents, and second that child care be available for the program. Meg wondered whether the program could occur at the same time as a middle school dance. The board discussed the logistics of that. Beth discussed some of the publicity and advertising considerations in promoting parent education program.

- A motion was made and seconded to spend \$45 in funds from the discretionary budget for a parent education film and program on dyslexia. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

2. Spring Musical

Elizabeth initiated a discussion of the spring musical. Caitlin Quinn will again be directing the musical. This year, once again, students will do their own script, but she has outlined the basic story and framework. A greater effort will be made to involve middle schoolers in the process before the younger students become involved. The musical will occur during the first week of May. There was a discussion of the budget for the musical, the fees being paid to the director and music person, and how to recoup those costs with ticket and concession sales. The director's fee currently stands at \$3000. It was suggested we could use Hop House funds earmarked for art to help pay for the musical. The board agreed that we need clarification on the musical budget from Caitlin.

3. School Safety

Amy led a discussion about school safety. She noted that SES left for winter break with no opportunity to talk about school safety issues prompted by national events. PPS has some recommended practices for school safety, which includes having only one door unlocked. Amy noted that SES can't really have only one door unlocked during the day with two portable classrooms. Currently, teachers are not allowed to have external keys. She expects the front door will remain unlocked and plans to ask permission for exterior keys to be issued to portable teachers. Amy believes we can do better with security but that the risks of violence at a school are not as high as other risks.

The board engaged in a discussion of school safety issues, concerns, and risks. The consensus was that SES could take measures to tighten up security, but that it was important not to over react to national events. The point was made that if all doors at SES are locked, it may be difficult for EMTs to enter in an emergency.

Cindi suggested a window or security camera be installed so the front door can be seen from the office. Dana suggested a volunteer manual could be assembled for school safety. Amy noted that other schools have done a better job with security, for example, Laurelhurst has buzzers. If SES would permit more exterior keys, we could have more locked doors but Amy is not getting anywhere with PPS. Ideas for equipment are door buzzers that ring when the front door is opened and walkie-talkies for teachers. Amy suggested a letter from the PTA president raising the issue. Dana and Elizabeth agreed to write a letter to PPS with our concerns and requests.

4. Read-a-Thon

Eric gave a report on the status of the Read-a-Thon. It will start in early February. The theme will fit in with Valentine's day, something like: "love to read", "passion to read" or "be my reader" Eric's team is assembling a teacher's choice reading list, a reading thermometer for reading core classes, and a promotional poster. There will be prizes for top fundraisers. The top three prizes include (1) kindle (2) \$50 scrip gift cards (3) \$25 scrip gift cards. Top readers by unit get Ben & Jerry's bookmarks with a coupon. Eric will give them a nod in the publicity. The top class in each age group will receive an ice cream party. All students who read get commemorative bookmarks. They expect to have a dress as your favorite character event.

Beth pointed out that we need someone to succeed Eric's team in running the read-a-thon after this year. Eric said he would burn a disc of materials and binders. Cindi noted that for our insurance, all cash and check are supposed to be counted at school in order to be covered. This can be a problem with the read-a-thon because of the logistics necessary to get the money counted. However, the amounts of money are small so the risk of loss is fairly low.

- A motion was made and seconded to allow the Read-a-Thon team to handle some of the funds collected off the SES grounds with the understanding that this is an acceptable risk. The motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

Eric closed by stating that he will get the choice book lists assembled. He will soon coordinate with Amy on contacting teachers, publicizing the event with students, and finalizing the kickoff dates.

5. General Meeting on January 23

Elizabeth led a discussion about the upcoming PTSA general meeting. Mo Philips the music teacher in the lower grades has agreed to give a presentation. Cindy, who is now acting treasurer, needs to be formally elected as treasurer will give a budget breakdown presentation. Amy will have a conversation with the SES community about safety issues. Food will be available for the meeting, perhaps with donations. There was a discussion of childcare and other planning needs for the meeting.

6. Treasurer's Report

Cindi gave the treasurer's report and passed out financials for November and December 2012, including budget to actual reports. She really likes the new quickbooks online software but is having problems tracking pledges of people who give monthly. Also, the software doesn't track scrip well. The back to school ask is currently up to \$30k and received some matching grants. Although we haven't received the amount we received last year, we got a huge uptick in donations after Amy's letter. So far we have good payment for middle school trips. There was a slightly larger than expected draw on the Go Fund for Camp Collins. We set aside \$17 K last year for Go Fund but \$30 this year.

7. Fundraising Report

Matthew gave the fundraising report. He noted an upcoming Laughing Planet fundraiser. The Hop House will be switching its monthly fundraiser to Wednesday night. The next big fundraiser is the citrus fundraiser where we will be selling and getting delivery of oranges. Prices are comparable to stores. There was a discussion of getting the forms and publicity out as a backpack distribution.

The board then had a debrief discussion of the Taste of Sunnyside fundraiser. The wish list board worked especially well. We made about \$6900. The craft vendors also lent a nice touch to the event. The location was good, but there were some accessibility issues. It was a good social event but the auction income could be increased. We needed more pens for the auction.

8. Safety and Resilience Committee Report

Dana gave the report of the Safety and Resilience committee. They have applied for a FEMA grant for \$10000 for the disaster dinner and for a permanent storage space for emergency supplies. They still need to figure out where that will be located.

The SSaVE project to evaluate and make repairs to the SES building is on hold for a while. Corey the engineer lost his company affiliation and needs to become affiliated with another company so he can verify all plans. Dana met with Don Geddes at Walsh. The first priority will be to reinforce parapets over entire length of back walls where the fire escapes are. Corey recommends we do additional welding on fire escapes. This would need to be contracted out. Another volunteer project is on Friday, Feb 1, which is a teacher planning day. We could have a team of people check light fixtures and do other work that volunteers can do. Another team could go through classrooms and fasten stuff that would not fall in way of exits. A third item needing attention is that the emergency buckets need to be filled with more stuff and emergency blankets need to be added. There was a discussion of the additional supplies needed.

The committee is recruiting volunteers on Feb 1 from 9 to noon. Don and Corey think biggest vulnerability is in the cafeteria. There needs to be a retrofit of the roof. PPS would reroof it, but we need to find out more about the expected costs.

9. Announcements and Miscellaneous.

Heidi announced that an important meeting would be occurring the following Thursday from 6 to 8p.m. at Reed College about the Future of Public Education, with speakers to include Rudy Crew, Jules Bailey, Diane Rosenbaum and others. She outlined some of the issues that she believes will come up. Heidi also reported that she has additional memberships.

Beth asked that material for the messenger be sent to the messenger email rather than her personal email because it is more likely to be checked before the messenger is published.

Sue is recruiting volunteers to participate in the PTA closing closet program.

Diana reported on steps being taking to sort items and to organize the community kitchen.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.