

PTSA Meeting Minutes – November 21, 2013

The following people attended the meeting, which commenced at approximately 6:35 p.m. in the SES auditorium:

Elizabeth Levi, Beth Azar, Karen Belsey, Cindi Carrell, Heidi McNamee, Jennifer Hutchinson, Dana Buhl, Ricardo Ismach, Amy Kleiner, Diana Deumling, Matthew Latterell, Ina Zucker, Bert Dupre, Kim Jarvis, MaOxford Lerotholi, Dan Keppler

- A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the October meeting. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

1. Foundation Report

Karen Belsey gave an update and led a discussion about foundation fundraising and goals. She expressed appreciation for the supportive role of the PTSA and noted that, according to the All Hands Raised organization, other schools have an uneasy relationship between their PTAs and foundations.

We currently have \$23k in our foundation account and Karen has set a goal of obtaining \$50k. Because of the foundation sharing policy, we need to raise \$33 k to accomplish that goal. The foundation has brought in \$5k this year. Currently, the proposed fundraising events include the Back-To-School Ask, raffles and a paddle raise at the Taste.

Another fundraising idea is to have volunteers teach or lead after-school activities that members of the community would pay to attend. It was noted that this proposal would have a lot of moving parts in terms of organization and volunteer time.

Burt raised the issue regarding how much a teacher FTE costs. A good approximation is about 100K per FTE. Amy noted that our Kindergarten numbers are down at SES and there is nowhere left to cut at the school.

Karen made the point that foundation money roles over, so it makes sense to try different fundraising approaches and see what works. She further discussed the possibility of raising money with after school programs, doing house parties, and doing a skit at the Taste to introduce the paddle raise.

Karen asked whether the foundation can receive a portion of funds raised the taste and in what amount. The Board engaged in a discussion of the budgeting process and procedures regarding expected donations. There was a discussion of potentially spinning off other fundraisers to raise foundation funds. Karen expressed concerns about fundraising fatigue. The consensus was to have a foundation-dedicated paddle raise at the Taste but, if needed, to obtain a vote of the membership in the January general meeting to transfer additional PTSA funds to the Foundation account – along the lines of what we have done in the past.

2. Taste / Auction Fundraiser Report

Matthew gave an update on the status of the Taste, scheduled for Friday, Dec. 6. He was going to try one more time to obtain permission from the Laurelhurst Club to allow mixed drinks but we may end up selling beer and wine only. The issue has to do with having an sufficiently large insurance policy. Matthew was going to try to “stack” the PTSA policy with the All Hands Raised policy to determine if that is acceptable to the Laurelhurst Club.

Matthew and Bert discussed the status and process of gathering auction items, including classroom art and party boards. An email will go out to get the SES community thinking about auction items. There was discussion of a Westwind suite as an auction item.

3. PAT / PPS Contract Negotiations

Amy reported that at SES, everyone is getting along and no one is angry over the ongoing teacher contract negotiations. A mediation is scheduled for Dec. 4. She pointed out that there are multiple perspectives, and she encouraged people to educate themselves about the issue. She provided information both from PPS and from PAT.

The Board had a discussion of whether the PTSA should offer additional sources of balanced information on this subject to members of the SES community. It was decided that it would be better for PTSA not to address this issue at all because it is likely to draw criticism regardless of what sources are provided to the community.

4. SSaVE Update

Dana gave an update on the Seismic Safety Volunteer Effort project (SSaVE) and building-related issues. External work involving welding the fire escape stairs is expected to cost \$13k. Dana is working with Jen Solm at PPS and Don Geddes at Walsh Construction. Nonstructural work in rooms, stairwells and other reinforcing is expected to cost about \$13k. We are looking at fundraising \$26-\$30k and we’ve raised \$5 with \$5 matching from Walsh Const. The firm of KPM is going to sign off on the structural engineering.

Also PPS has indicated that they will be installing entrance monitors at SES.

5. Scrip (now the Gift Card Program)

Ina gave an update on gift cards and scrip fundraising. They are set up to do automatic withdrawal and standing orders. The Scrip table continues to stock only good sellers. They are now referring to scrip as the Gift Card program. They need an easy way to communicate to the SES community how the program works. The Board consensus was to use the slogan: “Gift Cards = Free Money for SES”

6. Amy announcements

Amy gave a few announcements. An extra classified instruction assistant has been hired. Amy is opening up the equity group program to new people. The middle school will be exploring a new middle school art-based pedagogical method developed from the MOMA museum.

7. Christmas Tree Recycling

The Christmas tree recycling program needs a new coordinator because Mike can't do it this year due to his work schedule. The Board agreed to query the volunteer list. Information about the program needs to be provided to Metro now so it can be included on a list of tree recyclers. Heidi will take care of that.

8. Treasurer's Report

Cindi reported that PTSA taxes were filed and she will scan and pdf the tax forms and make them available on the website. We paid \$750 to have the taxes prepared but doing so saved a lot of effort and was extremely helpful. PTSA had gross receipts of \$240k.

Cindi also passed around the usual financials including balance sheets and budget-to-actual reports. She noted one minor error in the latter report

She noted that overnight scholarships cost about \$24,000, which primarily serves students on free and reduced lunches and acts as a backup for the Go fund. Last year, we supported 130 students, about \$12,000 went to students on free and reduced lunch and \$12,000 for other money needed for the Go fund. We spent \$1800 supporting parent overnight requests but one was paid back.

Dana asked a question regarding the accounting of disaster dinner funds, and Cindi explained how those were budgeted and accounted for.

Harvest Faire still has outstanding expenses. Cindi is awaiting bills from the kitchen, janitorial, and PPS printing. Also there was a discussion of what to do with leftover harvest fair sausages.

Last thing, Cindi wanted people to know that we receive a check this week for \$300 from KD Lang.

9. General Fundraising

Matthew mentioned that there was no wreath sale this year because no person stepped up to manage it. He noted that the Taste of Thanksgiving fundraiser at Whole Foods sold a lot more passports than at other stores, and we are cultivating a good relationship with WF.

Cosmic candy shop is doing a 2-day fundraiser during Thanksgiving week. Straight for NY pizza is doing an event on Dec 17. The Waffle Window on Hawthorne is raising money by selling a special Sunnyside waffle. Read-a-thon is moving forward. Chinook book sales are continuing, but we still have 1/3 inventory, which we may be able to auction at the Taste or sell at River Festival

There was a discussion of having a Parents night out and giving the funds to the Foundation.

10. Other Announcements

Grade-specific email lists are now done and available. Kim reminded the Board that the River Festival is coming Dec. 13.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:35. p.m.

-- Dan Keppler, acting secretary