

SVES PTA Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and President's Remarks

The December 13, 2016 meeting was called to order by PTA President Dorie Howell at 7:00 pm. Dorie Howell gave appreciation for Julie Harris and Kara Manton's hard work on communications.

2. Approval of Minutes

Nancy Darmory moved to accept the November meeting minutes and Julie Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

3. Principal's Report

Mr. West thanked everyone for their work on the PTA. He reported the following upcoming dates:

- December 14th the chorus performs at Reston Town Center at 6:30 pm.
- December 15th is the 4th grade trip to Jamestown.
- December 16th is Spirit Day. Students can wear pajamas but should still wear shoes and appropriate clothes for recess.
- Friday, December 16 is a regular full day. School resumes on Tuesday, January 3.
- Holidays in January include Martin Luther King Day on January 16 and Friday, January 20 for Inauguration Day.
- The 2017-2018 new school calendar has a pre-Labor Day start so everything will be bumped up a week.

4. Treasurer's Report

As of November 30 we have \$36,000 in the account. Most of what came out during the past month was for enrichment programs and some reimbursements and funds for teacher appreciation. There were no additional memberships.

5. Officer Updates

5.1. Communications (Julie Harris and Kara Manton)

The communications team reported that a November discussion on the PTA Facebook group led to 86 pounds of Halloween candy collected and given to Stang Orthodontics. We came in second place and received a \$100 prize. The candy is sent overseas to service men and women. The team will post a thank you on Facebook.

We have gone from 175 to 182 likes on Facebook. The goal is 190 by the end of year. We passed out flyers at Skate Night. I think people are using it as a means of communication and posting pictures from events.

We have explored the idea of the PTA setting an initiative for the year to motivate people to join or come to an event with a tangible goal. People always want to improve technology for students so we met with Ms. Kramer and she spoke with Mr. Spiros and we found that the greatest need is laptops. The school has 41 laptops, 8 of which are on their last legs. Ideally they would have one laptop for each 6th grader. The lower grades use ipads more. Everybody would benefit. There are four 6th grade classes with 20 students each so 80 laptops are needed. The laptops have to be bought through the FCPS program. They cost \$355/laptop which would equal a fundraising goal of \$28,400. We can break it down into classes. There are 4 classes of 20 each. For grants Steve Pick said he would try to find corporate grants. It should be an easy initiative to sell. We can talk about it in terms sponsoring a classroom. Also we could designate proceeds from an event to this initiative. It could be a good way to raise awareness of what the PTA does. Maybe this would motivate 5th grade parents. The goal would be by the end of the school year. So we need to work off 5th grade class numbers as it won't impact this year's 6th graders. Mr. West said sometimes there are delays with funding. PTA has to zero out their budget by the end of this school year.

Dorie Howell asked Nancy Darmory about making the Basketball Challenge the kickoff for this.

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Nancy said it would certainly need a kickoff event. Howell asked if we know any parents with a marketing background who could help with this. Perhaps we could find someone who can guide us on this. Nancy said that since we are already half way through this year for planning perhaps we could hold a fall movie night at the beginning of the next school year to kick it off. In the spring it is light too late for an outdoor movie night. Coleen Elliott suggested a “Laps for Laptops event. She will explore ideas for the next school year and get back to us in a couple months. Dorie Howell suggested we act quickly on these ideas.

A new Volunteer Coordinator for the PTA has been recruited. Megan Murphy has a daughter named Audrey in the 3rd grade. She can't attend Tuesday meetings. If volunteers are needed we need to reach out to her. She is excited about contributing.

5.2. Membership (Colleen Elliott)

Elliott reported that there are two new memberships since last month. We are at 172.

5.3. Enrichment Programs (Gamble Gilbertson)

Gilbertson said Friday folders will include an announcement of winter term classes. We are just waiting for approval from the county. Early registration might be ready by December 19. Regular registration should open on Jan 9 so it gives us the first week of school and Friday folders to announce registration is open. We will rely on our email list and Facebook to get the news out.

One problem she found this past session was difficulty recruiting people to volunteer. All agreed that parents should be obligated to volunteer one day. Perhaps there can be a link from pay for school to the signup genius for volunteering. Gilbertson said she will change the communication and let people know they need to volunteer. She reported that she thinks the classes are good and kids are getting a lot out of it. The teachers have been fabulous for the most part. We just need more parent volunteers. Or maybe have a \$25 opt out.

She also reported that she found out from the county that the PTA could charge more for the classes. Maybe we can do this next year. We have 143 kids in programs so perhaps we could charge them all an extra \$20.

6. Spirit Wear (Dorie Howell) Carey was not present to discuss this but Howell wants to shift to an individual company that we can order individual items from all year long. It is really expensive the way we do it now. Someone reported that South Lakes HS uses a local Reston vendor. Someone asked about car magnets. There is a big stack of car magnets but they are with the old logo. They can be sold for \$6 each.
7. Skate Night Debrief (Dorie Howell) A discussion was held surrounding the procedures on skate night. Overall it was a success. Everyone had a great time. We sold 162 tickets. However, the planning and logistics were not handled as well as they should have been. Also, the money wasn't handled appropriately. Certain procedures need to be followed when it comes to handling money. Money has to be counted by two people, one of whom has to be a PTA officer.

Everyone agreed that we need to have a protocol for anyone wanting to lead a PTA event including an outline of what the leader of the event is responsible. It would state this is what you do, this is how you handle the money, these are the communicating timelines and if something comes up at the last minute these are the people you should contact. They should have to attend the prior PTA meeting and attend the event. Nancy asked communications, who attended Skate Night, to write down what was needed to improve how the night went. Nancy will share her outline for events. There are a lot of lessons learned. Discussion was held about perhaps ensuring there are two people to lead and event so they can work as a team and there is back-up if needed. Howell will call Beth White to check in on

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how it went.

8. Other Event Updates

- 8.1. Show What You Know – Andy Gallagher now has 8 names of people who said they want to help. He should be asked to come to a meeting in advance of the Expo and go over details. He should also write down his cheat sheet for how to run the event. We need a one pager on all these events.
- 8.2. Bingo Night – Dorie Howell thinks it will fall on her and said she needs to rally the troops. Perhaps the new volunteer coordinator can help.
- 8.3. Howell asked Communications to put together a calendar of events for this coming year. Nancy has a basketball challenge date (April 28), we need dates for Bingo night, and SWYK.
- 8.4. Howell said the Poetry Anthology is going forward.
- 8.5. We don't know about the Talent Show and Heritage Night for this year. The Talent show last year was headed up by Colin Mulvaney. Kids love the talent show. Maybe parents whose kids are in the show should be expected to volunteer. Heritage Night does not draw enough interest to warrant continuing to hold it.
- 8.6. Stacey Graf asked if the PTA can do a Thanksgiving Luncheon. Howell said the challenge is it is disruptive to the day and there is a space issue. Kelley Bell (5TH grade teacher in attendance) said there is also an issue for the growing number of children who can't have a parent who can be here. It is hard on those kids. Graf will talk with friends at other schools to see how it is done. All agreed that it might be helpful to have survey data to see if this idea has widespread interest. Maybe we should do a facebook poll or maybe it is a bigger survey about all events? Graf will come up with a survey. Responders to the survey could be entered in a reserved parking spot drawing to encourage responses.

9. New Business

- 9.1. Bylaw Committee Howell reported that we need to review and vote on our bylaws this year. We do this every other year. We need a committee of 3-4 people to review the bylaws and make recommendations. They should be PTA members and they need to meet one time. Coleen volunteered for it. We can post bylaws on the website.

Coleen asked if has ever been considered to be a PTO instead. Shallon Hartke investigated it 2 years ago and found there is a lot of administrative paperwork to get out of the national PTA. There are benefits but drawbacks such as needing to find your own insurance for your programs. Howell suggested Colleen ask Shallon.

9.2. Mini-Grant Application

A school grandparent asked Dorie Howell if the PTA can provide umbrellas to students and teachers at kiss and ride. Howell suggested they apply for a minigrant. The minigrant application was completed with a request for \$60. A discussion was held and it was decided that instead of minigrant funds the \$100 from the candy prize could be used for umbrellas. A vote was held that, pending Mr. Platts approval, the PTA is willing to donate up to \$100 from the prize money for umbrellas to be used by the patrol program. Colleen Elliott made the motion, Stacey Graf seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Kelley Bell, 5th grade teacher, was in attendance. She asked about her mini-grant application for supplies for two free libraries to be placed on campus in the grass area. One down low and wider for picture books and one higher for older kid's books. They want to start work in February as part of a geometry unit. Howell said it will be put on the January agenda for a vote and Mrs. Bell should ensure that the application has been appropriately submitted.

- 9.3. Dorie Howell gave an update that the accounting issue raised last month regarding a \$138 discrepancy in payment for a teacher will be resolved. The PTA owes Fairfax County \$138 but it is difficult because our books are closed and we've been audited already. It was a front office

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error so we have decided to take it from Mr. West's discretionary money. It will be paid this week.

- 9.4. Steve Gurney who organizes the walk and bike to school event has asked the PTA to consider how to respond to a request from the Reston Association about how to best acknowledge schools that participate in this event so they can encourage more schools to participate. Dorie Howell suggested this be put on next month's agenda and that Steve attend for the discussion. He suggested some sort of official recognition maybe a school assembly in the spring.

Closing

Stacey Graf made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Nancy Darmory seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm.