

SVES PTA Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and President's Remarks

President Dorie Howell called the meeting to order at 9:31 am and explained that we are having a morning meeting to allow parents who can't ordinarily come in the evenings to attend.

2. Approval of December and February Minutes

Howell pointed out that minutes are always posted on the PTA website for parents to have access to them. Nancy Darmory made a motion to approve the February minutes, Julie Hansen seconded. The motion passed. Darmory made a motion to approve the December minutes, Hansen seconded it. The motion passed.

3. Principal's Report

Principal West was absent and had not sent Howell any updates. She reported that science night will be held tonight at the school.

4. Treasurer's Report (Stacey Graf)

Howell reported that Stacey Graf is absent but she had left the budget. About \$4,600 in payments were made this month on school fieldtrips and other events the PTA funds. Any questions about the treasurer's report should be emailed to Stacey.

5. Officer Updates

Communications (Kara Manton and Julie Harris)

Howell introduced them and said they do a good job on publicizing things through Facebook. Julie said we are up to 193 members on the Facebook group. Please add yourself to the Facebook group. We are really trying to use that as a method of communication. You can add friends. We want to improve our ability to use that. We are still low for the number of families at the school. Howell said it is a lot of general school news that is also posted not just PTA news.

Membership (Colleen Elliott)

Howell reported in her absence that membership is up one member to 179. We have low participation considering we don't make the kids do sales and raffles. If you have friends in the neighborhood who are not on the PTA we could do so much more if people just donated at the \$25 level. We have about 400 families and less than half are members. This is abysmally low compared to other schools. We've decided to have a higher membership fee than other schools to avoid the fundraising drives. It is not really apples to apples comparing to other schools. Howell said all we need is every family to join and every parent volunteer one hour and we could do so much for the kids.

Megan Murphy asked if people could volunteer time instead of paying \$25. Howell said it is a struggle getting volunteers to help with events but it would be hard to waive the fee. Howell said members don't have to come to meetings. Murphy also asked about getting the kids and classrooms involved. Howell said Mr. West and the administration don't want a distraction at the classroom level and don't want a membership drive to fall on the teachers. We do need the teachers to tell the parents that being on the PTA is important. Mr. West is open to a competition that doesn't distract from the learning environment. Another suggestion was made about having a parent coordinator for each grade or class to boost membership.

Allison Glennon, a third grade parent in attendance said she was confused when she came to the AAP open house. She wanted to be involved but didn't know how. There was a meeting in the cafeteria for all AAP parents. That could be an opportunity to tell people about the PTA.

Next Friday is the kindergarten orientation and Howell will talk with the parents about the PTA. Communications have prepared a flyer to place in the folder for new kindergartners. Howell encouraged

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everyone to send her more thoughts.

Enrichment Programs (Gamble Gilbertson)

Gilbertson reported that last week's weather cancellations have extended the classes after spring break. Some kids will have to pick if are they going to Mad Science or Running Club due to the overlap. We are working on paying the winter vendors and getting the spring people ready to go and she is working on a survey for next year's programs. I did a survey last year with teacher's first and then used that to inform what I asked the parents. Gilbertson asked for help from anyone who does surveys to log in to survey monkey and review the questions she has prepared. In terms of repositioning the morning classes volunteering mindset to a co-op program it has really helped. We have been struggling with Monday morning volunteers so that may affect what classes we offer.

Mini-Grants

Howell reported that there are 3 mini-grant applications:

1) The 4th grade holds a special day to celebrate Virginia's history which they have been doing for the past 4 years. They have requested \$688 for a historical interpreter (last year it was \$588) who travels from Williamsburg to portray Old Bess. She talks to the students as though they are living in that time, teaches them courtesies and talks about families. Also a group from Yorktown comes with a big kit of artifacts such as a wooden musket and they talk about what revolutionary life was like so the kids can appreciate that part of history. That is another \$120. They are asking the PTA to cover both expenses. Howell said the PTA can authorize up to \$400 per grade. Darmory reminded people that mini grants are for teacher special requests.

2) 2nd grade has requested \$250 for a presentation at Walker Nature Center on Saturday, May 6. There is a big festival there and they want to get a table and make 600 milkweed seed bombs to pass out. This is part of their science section on Monarch butterflies. They need to buy the seeds, bags, and other items for the seed bomb kits.

3) 6th Grade is doing a science unit and is asking for some water testing kits for this. It is \$320 so that each class can have this \$80 kit.

Gilbertson suggested approving the two requests that are within budget (2nd and 6th grade) and to provide partial funding of \$400 for the 4th grade request, with the remaining amount pending approval after the last mini-grant requests come in for the rest of the year. Teachers will be notified to submit any remaining requests soon. Allison Glennon made a motion to approve this suggestion. Darmory seconded it. The motion passed.

6. Old Business

Bingo Night – Howell reported that bingo night went really well. We raised about \$1400 which seems low but it does help buy a few more computers for the lab.

Show What You Know – Deadline was last week for sign-ups.

By-Law Committee – Howell reported that we have to put out the proposed changes and give people 30 days to respond before we vote on them. Manton reported that the committee is recommending four changes (see attached). These suggested revisions will be posted on the website and will be put to a vote at the next meeting. Manton handed out a document highlighting the four changes. Communications will also do some Facebook messages to let people know.

Computer Initiative – Howell said we set a goal at the beginning of the year to start this to raise money to fund enough laptops so each 6th grader has one. A few people have said they would like to be part of this. Meagan Murphy also has some people that would like to do that. We are trying to increase the number of laptops in the school so that they are more available. Younger children would then get more

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ipad access. It is a trickle-down effect and increases technology accessibility. We could start this with funds remaining this year but we need help. Julie Harris said we don't even enough for one class to have enough laptops for each child. They have to be purchased through the county purchasing department so the school can support them.

Murphy asked for more details about what the students are using these for. A parent in attendance answered that by 5th and 6th grade teachers are using Google classroom so it is wonderful for the kids to be able to access that. They are using google docs and all those things. Some of the frustrations are that the current computers are really slow and don't work.

Destination Dining – Harris reported that Flippin' Pizza has not responded yet about how much was raised but in general they said they were very pleased. We had a lot of people attend. We also would like someone next year to be the Destination Dining coordinator. It takes minimal time. We need more help to do these.

Basketball Challenge – Darmory reported that for 10-15 years we've had an event where our teachers play another school's faculty then the 5th and 6th graders play the other students. Last year we had a school back out and since it is done in two year cycles we had our teachers play some parents. This worked well and we will do that again this year and then cycle back next year into the old way. It is a PTA fundraiser and we get about \$4-5000 but it is also really fun for the kids. K-2 will have a pep squad performance. 3rd grade will have relay races on scooters 4th and 5th will do something and 6th graders will have fun. It will be Friday, April 28 at SLHS and we need a lot of volunteers. We need check-in help, and security to make sure the kids stay where they are supposed to.

7. New Business

New Pay Portal for Members – Howell reported that we don't love our payment portal so we would love to have some people help and propose some different options for that.

Budget Committee – Howell reported that we need a few people to get together and suggest the budget. It needs to be posted for 30 days and then it can be voted on. There is a short timeline. Allison Glennon, Megan Murphy, Deborah Nelson and Gamble Gilbertson offered to help. Howell asked Murphy to put out some feelers to get a few others to help.

Original Works Fundraiser – Howell reported that this is done around Mother's Day every year and we make a lot of money on this. Howell asked for a volunteer to coordinate it. Megan Murphy offered to help.

2017-2018 PTA Officer Positions - Howell said we need to fill positions for next year, including a President. Howell said it is not very hard. Stacey will be treasurer again, Gilbertson will be enrichment coordinator again. Harris and Manton will be communications again. Howell would be happy to talk to anyone about serving as President.

Yearbook – The two parents who have been running the yearbook for several years said they need someone to take it on as their kids are graduating. It starts in the fall. 6th graders come every Tuesday morning and we work on it before school for an hour. We have a calendar of events and grab pictures and try to capture the life of SVES throughout the year. We need someone to look at it now after its being sent. A lot of deadlines have to be met. They would like someone to meet with them before September. Howell stated that the yearbook is not a PTA project but we support it.

9. Closing

Darmory made a motion to adjourn and Julie Harris seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 am.