



## PTA Meeting Minutes for October 15, 2014

*Board members present: President, Treasurer, Secretary. Quorum was met to conduct business.*

**I. CALL TO ORDER.** The meeting was called to order by the president at 5:46.

- The president shared responses to the membership activity held at the last general meeting in which members wrote participation goals for this school year on index cards.
- The president requested members pair up for a teamwork experiment: backward arm-wrestling matches among pairs showed that both participants can win.

### **II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.**

President gave members a few minutes to read hard copies of the minutes made available. A motion by membership to accept the minutes was made and seconded. Minutes approved.

### **III. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT.**

Ms. Foster-Mann made the following announcements:

- Thursday, Nov 20, will be the first parent / staff mixer from 6:00-8:00pm in the gym, adults only. The purpose is to build community. Spread the word!

Q: Will there be adult beverages? A: The principal said she is looking into whether it's permitted, and added that there will be dancing!

- Progress Reports will be sent home this week. Parents must sign and return the top page to teachers by Wednesday of next week. Please don't forget to complete the area provided to share your comments.
- A reminder was given to label children's belongings.
- The annual Fall Festival is this Saturday.
- Nov 13<sup>th</sup> is a half-day for parent/teacher conferences. The school is trying a new approach that some other schools are trying: Student-led Parent Teacher Conferences. The approach aligns with the school's teachings about leadership. Appointments will be scheduled – parents must be on time, and must bring their child. Your child will talk about his/her work, goals, and progress. Additional days will be added: 18<sup>th</sup> + 25<sup>th</sup> since it is expected that conferences will take longer than in the past. More info will be sent home soon.

### **IV. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS.**

- The president explained that the Bylaws Committee developed two lists of amendments: one to make the existing bylaws compliant with the Chancellor's Regulations A-660; a second to tailor the bylaws to better fit PS 133. The president thanked the Bylaws Committee for their work. The president explained that amendments to make the bylaws compliant would be read and voted upon tonight, in accordance with Chancellor's Regs A-660.
- Omena El, member of the Bylaws Committee, read the amendments to make the bylaws compliant out loud to general membership.
- The president clarified distinction between the two lists of amendments and which list was up for approval tonight.
- Three questions about the amendments to make the bylaws compliant were raised and answered.
- A motion was made and seconded by membership to accept the bylaws. All members declared in favor.

Q: Will the amendments be translated? A: Yes into Spanish. Carlos Saavedra offered to translate.

Q: What about French translation? A: The principal responded that it is not necessary because most of our French-speaking parents are bilingual.

### **V. ANNUAL BUDGET.**

Treasurer provided an overview of Income and Expenses. Hard copies of the annual budget were available.

- Treasurer pointed out new line item expenses since last year:
  - Classroom libraries. Building up classroom libraries is a priority for Ms. Foster-Mann.
  - [Line 25 under events – Title?]. This is possibly a cultural event, not a fundraiser.
- Treasurer pointed out changes in numbers over last year.
  - Priority commitments to Studio in a School + Playworks. The PTA's goal is to pay in-full plus secure funds for next year's payment this year.
- Two bake sales are in the budget. PTA is permitted to have a bake sale every month. Treasurer invited any interested volunteers to spearhead them!
- Reminder: School photos are a fundraiser. Photo Retake day is on October 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Treasurer explained that when general membership accepts the annual budget, membership is accepting these specific activities / fundraisers also. This means they will not need to be voted on by membership later in the year.

Q: Member would like to bring an organization to the school. How does that work? A: For an afterschool program, Treasurer directed ideas be addressed with the Afterschool Committee. Co-chairs Stacey Blissett and Sharon Ng were in attendance and introduced themselves.

Q: Members raised questions about items from last year not appearing in 2014-15 Actual column. A: Treasurer explained that some items were removed from last year's budget because either they were not executed or they were not successful.

Q: Member asked about the ability to introduce new programs. A: Treasurer explained they could be introduced at any time but must be voted upon by membership before implementing. All additional expenditures and fundraisers not listed in the annual budget will be brought to membership for recommendation and approval. Secretary added that executive board is developing higher-level direction for the PTA and establishing a longer-term operating framework. As such, the board is relying on membership to execute, so all ideas and volunteers are encouraged.

Q: Annual Appeal seems high compared to last year. A: Treasurer agreed, and pointed out that last years Annual Appeal brought in significantly more than the year prior. Treasurer explained that the school has currently been paying for Playworks and Studio in a School, then the PTA has paid back the school. This year the PTA is aiming to pay back the school and also raise sufficient funds to pay for the programs outright, taking all future payments over directly and in-full, as was the original intent of the agreement between the PTA and school. Additionally, in order to fund other programs in future years, the PTA needs to plan now and begin to show a balance year-over-year. Also, each year our enrollment grows so there are more people to support the larger goal. Treasurer explained that if we are not able to meet our current obligations, she will come back to general membership for approval on line items to cut.

Q: How did we arrive at the Annual Appeal amount? A: President and Treasurer explained that \$500 per person was thought to be realistic and while not achievable for all, was acceptable for many. This brought total fundraising amount to \$250,000. Treasurer subtracted income from other budgeted sources and the remainder was allocated to the Annual Appeal amount of \$170,000.

Q: How do we prioritize which expenses are paid? A: Treasurer explained that PTA obligations are Playworks and Studio in a School, which must be paid to the school. PTA will need to pay \$25,000 in January. The others are goals. In terms of priorities, after Studio in a School and Playworks would come Classroom Libraries, as this is the principal's priority.

Q: What is "International Pen Pal?" A: President explained that it was a program for 4<sup>th</sup> graders last year with South Africa. Last year the school received grant for a teaching artist. We do not have a grant this year and the president is seeking one.

Q: Are we holding a Hispanic Heritage celebration? A: No. Treasurer explained that Hispanic Heritage month was September 15 – October 15 and with no PTA in effect until September 15, there was not enough time to plan one.

Treasurer explained that PTA Administration costs are higher because of the following considerations made in response to general membership requests or to follow financial best practices:

- Improve childcare opportunities during PTA meetings
- Office supplies such as hole puncher, files, management software
- Resources such as file cabinets, lock boxes, etc.
- Printing supplies such as paper and toner to improve communication with members
- An accountant to file taxes
- Liability insurance for PTA events held outside of school hours/events
- Business administration fees.

A motion by membership to vote on budget was made and seconded. The annual budget passed unanimously.

**VI. COMMITTEES.**

President announced new committees:

- Strategic Planning Committee: If interested contact Kevin Ryan-Young (ptapresident@ps133brooklyn.org).
- Audit Committee: If interested contact Julie Couser (ptatreasurer@ps133brooklyn.org)
- Communications Committee: If interested contact Kate Holt (ptasecretary@ps133brooklyn.org)
- Father's / Dad's Leadership Committee (with Mr. D.): If interested contact Kevin Ryan-Young (ptapresident@ps133brooklyn.org).

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT.**

- A member announced that she is speaking with Mr. D about developing a school-wide listserve for non-school related matters and would like to spread awareness among parents.
  - PTA commented that Mr. D. is not permitted to share parent or child information with the PTA or other parents.
  - A member suggested sharing the information with Class Parents once it became available.
  - PTA suggested also letting the PTA know when it is set up so PTA can announce it in the weekly newsletter.
- President suggested that the next meeting be Thursday, Nov 20 @ 5:30 to precede the parent/teacher mixer, in which the primary agenda item will be to vote proposed amendments to tailor the bylaws. President motioned for a vote and it was seconded. The recommendation passed.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT.** President adjourned the meeting at 6:58.