

Minutes

Roberts Elementary PTO Board Meeting

Friday, October 4, 2013

8:15 a.m. Roberts Cafe

In attendance: Courtney Tardy, Kelly Wehrer, Ali Pilcher, Aliya Waljii, Anjum Khan, Denise Metry, David Heikkinen, Emanuela Corradino, Emilie Heo, Jennifer Thornton, John Thornton, Kirsty McCormack, Kristine Jarosz, Lara Frasier, Meredith Beebe, Kara Niles, Paige Castaneda, Angel Plaza, Maureen Glancy, Samantha Madeo, Vanessa Wea, Rosa Aguilar, Elizabeth Grandich, Felita Joubert, Phaedra Harbaugh, Nathan Somera, Lauren Montesi, Tom Fowler, Julie McFarland, Shawn Parson, Vaibhav Shanbhogue, Manar Kanan, and others

Meeting Called to Order –Courtney Tardy

Courtney Tardy, President, called the PTO meeting to order at 8:16 am.

Approval of Minutes – Kara Niles

Kara Niles, Recording Secretary, presented the minutes from the May and September meetings for approval. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Denise Metry and seconded by Ali Pilcher. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

School Report – Rita Graves

The concrete foundation for gaga ball pit is going in, it will have to cure for several days then they will put rubber playground surface on top of that.

NCA = new network system – we are getting a complete upgrade, cable for hardwire drops and access points in every classroom. Due to the age of building, it is hard for access point signal to go through walls. There were deadspots in every classroom, now with access points in classrooms instead of the halls, we should resolve that.

The purchase order for new chiller is approved – work should get started in coming weeks.

Drip pan overflowed in one of the units, in administration we are 3 in one office until fixed.

PADRES – thanks, teachers got trained on the physics garden, they are very excited about it.

Ms Savarese is there to make sure teachers are confident about using the new equipment in the physics garden.

First magnet tour this week – Ms Ballard said it went really well. We had a lot of people coming to learn about Roberts.

Ms Ballard -

Bulldozer Student Coalition made up of 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. Ms Nobles and I had the first meeting last week – we want it to be student-led. They'll come back Oct 16th with two ideas to improve our school. It's part of positive works program.

Look for information on School improvement plan, exhibition, what day will look like on International Festival in my upcoming blog posts.

Questions -

Q- Directory ?

A -Nearly complete, will also be up on website

Q- Outdoor drinking facility? Plans for hand washing facility?

A -Kids put dirt in the fountain, perhaps a cover would help. No talk about a handwashing station at the moment.

Treasurer's Report

Courtney Tardy on behalf of Alyson Rooney, Treasurer. Referral to print out of financials, all is in good order. No questions were raised.

Budget – Chris Johnson

I have packets for committee chairs, please raise your hand if you are one. The packets inform how to deal with the budget piece of your committee. Please note it's listed that Jennifer is President – that's an error.

Check requests. Please use tax exempt form, we can't reimburse you for taxes. Please turn in your receipts and requests in as soon as possible.

Regarding checks – Alyson tries to do that as quickly as possible. Her goal is to make deposits every 4-5 days.

Budget committee – Courtney Tardy

Denise Metry, Prashant Murti, Ali Pilcher, Jennifer Thornton as PTO Board Members and Paige Castaneda as non Board-member.

PTO Board – we need to vote. All in favor say aye, AYE. Any opposed ? None. The motion was passed.

100 PTO –David Heikkinen

\$xx total before matching gifts.

74% participation – about same as last year. I will lobby another class or two to finish up 100% participation. We process on Saturday and give to Alyson Rooney on Sunday to process.

Next step tax forms and thank you letters. We'll need help stuffing envelopes. The Campaign was a resounding success. 100% is a goal, but a culture of giving time, energy and money is what we want.

Courtney Tardy -- Ann and David have had no free time over last 8-9 weeks and Ali has been a big help to them.

Camp Out – John Thornton

4th annual camp out is a week from today. We are expecting 440-450 people.

It's the same format as last year. If you signed up early enough to get the t-shirt, you'll get that next week. There will be a movie and a few games but kids manage to entertain themselves anyway. There will be also be the famous pancake breakfast.

The one change this year – if you signed up at Auction, we're trying to give people an incentive to sign up at that. Overflow will go to front lawn.

All gates will be closed. 24 hour security guard. All will have a wristband. If your kids can't manage the whole night -Yes, you can leave. Gates will be locked.

Restroom facilities = we'll have more this year. Don't want school open, so we will have portable ones

International Festival – Emanuela Corradino, Anna Kaplan

International Festival is also in line with most difficult events of the year! We have less countries this year – we had quite a few one-parent countries – so when they leave, the country leaves. We have to keep the parent community with this culture of participation.

We have 28 countries, we are designing the map, trying to stay in budget but some bring in receipts after the fact.

The concert is full and there are dances and performances. We don't need any more!

Doing a generalized call for volunteers makes us nervous as we don't know until last minute if we have enough help.

This year, parent conferences are not on the same day so our volunteers will be dedicated to their work.

Class presentations - Many new teachers, many also who just think they don't need to do anything. It does usually come together at the last moment. Each class has at least

one presentation. Maureen, Yukiko, another person will go into classes where there are no presentations.

Book Fair – Denise Metry

Its Nov 19-21 Tues – Thurs, with family night on Thurs. We need volunteers to cashier, help kids during the day.

For family night, we have Sylvia’s Enchilada Kitchen, The Coney Island Cruiser. Maybe have something in cafeteria. Maybe a special storytime by Mrs Graves. I have not actually asked her yet.

Community Night – Esther Pastore

This is the easiest, funnest, most joyful job. Film will be Monsters University. I do all the cooking and all the set up but I can not serve.

350 servings of pasta. 75 pizzas.

3 nonstop hours of popcorn. Gallons and gallons of lemonade.

Show up at 5, I provide the gloves. Maybe hairnets. There will be nachos and guacamole. Let me know if you can help me.

The date is Nov 9 a Saturday. Pizza for purchase, soda, candy, glow bracelets. We will raise a little money.

Community Partnerships - Ali Pilcher

This is a new role, I’m taking it up along with Kristine Jarosz – It’s called community partnerships - whether it is business or otherwise.

Three types – corporate sponsorships (money or in-kind)

Non financial partnerships – eg fotofest (educational)

Community itself - alumni and neighborhood. Raise our profile within the community.

With that in mind, try to raise profile in non-Roberts families – our experimental idea is growing our community garden tours. We’ll have Urban Harvest, a landscape architect and a grower who will do a tour of the garden with the garden committee. Discussion on native plants, selection for your garden. UH will talk about backyard gardens. We’ll send out flyers to the community. We could get 3 people or 5K, we want to develop relationships with these people.

We will do this with a postcard targeted mailing to the community, perhaps at the same time as a call to alumni.

Questions

Q Perhaps you could leverage the Nextdoor Website.

A- Yes. We are also doing this in concert with community night. And, also in concert with the 2 civic associations.

Kristine is trying to develop a sponsorship levels in consultation with our existing sponsors. We want them to tell us what they want.

Kristine – we've done comparisons with West U, Mark Twain. Besides logo on tshirt, name on marquee, if there are other ideas for sponsorship benefits, please let us know.

Ali - My gmail is available on community partnerships. Please write in with ideas.

HISD Liaison – Meredith Beebe

It's an easy job. I went to the last district 5 meeting. It was regarding food services for HISD. It was their food committee telling us what a good job they are doing on healthier options and less waste. I will scan the presentation and have it available for you. Rita Graves says – we will put in on the website.

Bettina Siegel is no longer at the school, she is an expert in the subject. Her knowledge allowed me to come armed with good questions. I asked my questions to Aramark – who seem to be holding back innovation as they are a monopoly. I wanted to know why we don't have more local producers. Did not get satisfactory answers.

Waste – If we want to change this, we need to approach city council about donating leftover food. It all needs to be thrown away. This has to be done at City Council level.

Waste containers are now in the kitchens. The workers are now weighing the food and noting what gets eaten or not.

Questions –

Question/statement - Unpackaged, unopened food, whole fruits should be able to be taken back with the kids to class. The culture is that people throw everything away. Non perishables should be fine.

Rita Graves – They can't take milk or other items that spoil with temperature change. Federally, there are guidelines about what can be taken out of the cafeteria. I'll check on it and write about it in my blog.

Q – Is there a recycle bin?

A - Yes, it is behind you. However, we don't do separation of paper goods.

Adjournment – Courtney Tardy

Any new Business? – None
Any old Business? - None

Oct 8 now changed to Oct 24 – Middle School meeting from 6-8pm here in the cafeteria.
Its good to talk to representatives before you start the madness of magnet week.

October birthdays – Rita Graves, Anjum Khan

Shout out – to Kirsty McCormack – I wanted to let you know that parents not at Roberts
said that the website was easy to maneuver and well set up.

And thanks again to David and Ann for doing the 100% PTO.

Please stay and mingle. We are adjourned at 8:51.