

## **Roberts Elementary PTO Board Meeting**

**Friday, October 5, 2012**

**8:15 a.m. Roberts Cafe**

In attendance: Ali Pilcher, Aliya Walji, Alyson Rooney, An'jum Khan, Ana Kaplan Courtney Tardy, Jennifer Thornton, John Thornton, Julie McFarland, Kara Niles, Lana Boutwell, Lara Frazier, Natalie Smith, Renae Holman Murti, Sheryl Barrett, George Castro, Seyed Moghaddeum, Ann Keikkinn, David Heikkinn, Simon Coronado, Vera Penerva, Layla Unger, Dave Kim, Minsoon Cho, Lida Meisami, Kirsty McCormack, Qiao Xue, Geng Ku, Margaret Henry, Neal Wingenbach, Valerie Tompson, Paramahansa Maturu, Roger Janz, S. McLendon (33 People)

At 8:11 President, Jennifer Thornton, called the meeting to Order.

**School Report by Rita Graves** – I want to give you as much information as I can to enable you to make an informed decision about the upcoming bond election. My presentation can also be found on the HISD website. If you have any questions, please let me know and I can address them in my blog. Roberts is not included in the bond for building purposes, but we are proposed to get bond money for technology. One change that is included in this bond, and is of interest to our community, is the rebuilding of Lamar High School, currently the plan is to keep the facade and build out from there. Bellaire High School will also have some rebuilding, but plans have not been confirmed. Both HSPVA and DeBakey are up for rebuilds with the new DeBakey High School being built in the medical center. There are some district wide projects, one that included technology. One of the big issues on our campus is wireless technology. Since our building was build before wireless technology was around, our signal is not effective. It bounces off all of our concrete walls up and down the hallway rarely making it into the classrooms. What we really need is to have a access points in each classroom, but this is very expensive. Although e-rate funds are available to the district, we are not eligible to receive those funds because we are not a Title I campus. The proposal for Roberts includes \$400,000 for a full technology upgrade from the bond, if it passes. We were part of the last bond for safety and security. Please remember that the bond is classified with propositions and can be found at the end of the ballot. With this being a presidential election year, you can expect long lines, so please don't skip it.

We are getting very involved with Rice University and will have some of their international students in the parade and they will go to 4-5th grade classrooms to discuss why they left their home county to come to school here. We will also have University of Houston students working with exhibitions. We have a central ides for exhibitions: Inequality can be solved through tolerance and conflict resolution.

We have found a new Assistant Principal, but I cannot announce who it is at his time. She will speak with her colleagues today and I will announce her name this weekend in my blog. We saw some very strong candidates and I am confident that she is a good fit for our community.

Right now I have been getting between 150-200 emails a day so if you have sent me something that you think I have missed, please resend it and accept my apologies.

**Approval of Minutes by Lana Boutwell** - Lana Boutwell, Recording Secretary, presented three sets of minutes for approval. Minutes were from the March, April and May 2012 board meetings. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Allison Rooney and seconded by Renee' Mutri. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report by Alyson Rooney** - As you will hear, membership is over budget by \$24,000.00, 5<sup>th</sup> grade has had one KNO even though their balance is low. This is due to them already having their 5<sup>th</sup> grade class shirts. International Festival has a high balance, but that is due to most expenses not being turned in yet. Overall it has been a great start to the year. Please be sure to turn in your expenses promptly.

### **Standing Committee Reports**

**Book Fair by Julie McFarland** – Our Scholastic book fair will be held November 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, & 15<sup>th</sup>. Since there is a half-day on the 14<sup>th</sup>, we have moved family night to the last day. Thursday night will close the event with supper options from Bernie's Burger Buss and Sylvia's Enchiladas. They will have food trucks out front and will be available to the neighborhood, even if they do not come to the book fair. So far we only have 5 people signed up to help on the website, so if you are interested in helping out, please sign up. We now have the classroom schedule, so if you want to volunteer during your class time, let me know and I can get you coordinated.

**International Festival by Ana Kaplan** – We are not two week out and will have 30 countries represented. All of countries have requested 2 tables, so I think we will have plenty of food and activities. We still need classroom presentations and are working on a schedule. Our entertainment calendar is full, thankfully. We have some really fun international games planned and these will help alleviate the crowds inside the building. We are planning to get help from Rice's volunteer group since those students need volunteer hours.

**100% Membership by Kara Niles** – If you haven't already seen the results, this years campaign had 76% participation and \$62,000. We surpassed our goal of \$48,000 largely because we didn't have the Sally Foster sale and also because we upped the donation levels on the letters. We are not including any anticipated company matching since it sometimes takes up to 12 months to get that in. We have also found that some companies have clauses in their matching policy, which prevents them from making contributions to schools. Our next stage will be sending out the thank you letters with the window clings. This year's clings will be inside clings. We had two classes reach 100% participation, Ms. Huynh and Ms. Waterman. We had several other classes that were very close to the 100% membership goal.

We are looking for ideas to revamp the campaign for next year. And we are looking for other to take over the following year.

**Budget Committee by Jennifer Thornton** – We have assembled our member of the budget committee. The members this year will include myself as President, Alyson Rooney as Treasure, John Thornton as Budget Chairmen, Chris Johnson in our Non-PTO chairman position along with our four PTO Chairmen Cheryl Sorak, Kelly Weher, . We will have our first meeting in the next few weeks to discuss the best way to spend the money-raised from the 100% Membership campaign. If you have any ideas on needs or wants to make the school better, please e-mail them to me. The Budget committee will also meet in February to plan the following year fundraisers and expenses.

**Middle School Night** – This year it will be held this Tuesday, October 9 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Representatives from Johnston, Lanier, Pin Oak, Pershing, and TH Rogers Middle Schools will give a short presentation and be available to answer questions about their schools and the admissions process. All Roberts Elementary School parents are welcome!

**+TALK I: SCHOOL CONNECTIONS** will be held **Thursday, October 11, 2012 at St. Paul's School** and will address ***why the way we connect at school and at home matters***. Former Pershing Middle School +Principal and current Kealing Middle School/Austin ISD Principal **Robin Lowe** will keynote this +TalkCombo to teachers/staff from **4:30-5:30pm** and to parents and all interested community members from **7:00-8:30pm**. A panel discussion will follow Robin's talk at the 7:00pm event.

At 9:02 President, Jennifer Thornton, adjourned the meeting.

The next PTO Board meeting will be held Friday, November 2, 2012 8:15 a.m. at Roberts Café.