

Huntington School Parent-Teacher Organization

Meeting Summary

May 13, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Meeting held on Zoom due to COVID-19

Board members in attendance: Ann Yarka, President; Ramie Miller, Treasurer; Meghan Vitale, Secretary

Administrators: Joanne Harlow, Principal

Others: 1 teacher, 1 parent, 2 community members

I. Welcome

Ann welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the current school year.

II. Approval of previous minutes

April 8 meeting minutes were available on the website. Ramie motioned to approve, Joanne seconded. No objections.

III. Board member reports

Treasurer: Ramie discussed the April 30, 2021 financial summary. Total account balance as of April 30 was \$24,263.76. Activity in April included reimbursement to Ms. Cameron for art materials, and a refund from the Empire State Building to NJHS because the trip was canceled last year and they will not be able to use the tickets this year either. Ramie noted that the reimbursement check to 3rd grade for pizza had been received by Ms. DeCarlo, but not cashed yet, so that transaction is pending. Other anticipated debits before the end of the school year are the 8th grade T-shirt purchase and the Skippy ice cream truck. All class account balances are expected to remain as-is except for 8th grade (they plan to use their \$100 balance for T-shirts). 6th grade has \$451, but none of that will move to the general fund because it is money they raised through their own fundraisers (freeze pops), not through PTO-sponsored fundraisers.

Secretary: Meghan said that Peggy Chase had connected her with Pete in the City's greenhouse, and that flowers for spring planting are available for pick-up anytime. Mrs. Harlow said that Mr. Burpee's 6th grade science class is planning to do the planting, and she has coordinated with the custodians to make sure they have shovels, etc., on hand. Meghan will get Pete's phone number to Mrs. Harlow; Mrs. Harlow will coordinate with him on a pick-up time.

President: Ann said that she will not be able to run the karate program next year. She has tried to reach-out to Shihan, but has not been able to get in touch with him. If another parent would like to run the program, she can provide the contact information, but at this point we are not expecting there to be a PTO-run after-school karate program next school year.

IV. Old business

Although not on the agenda, there was some discussion about the 8th grade T-shirt purchase. Their request for \$500 from the general fund was approved at the April meeting. They also planned to use \$100 from their class account, for a total of \$600. However, the invoice that Ms. Carpenter just sent came to \$956 for 120 shirts. That would leave over \$300 to be covered (however, if PTO is paying directly, we should be able to get the \$70 in sales tax removed). Ms. Carpenter said that staff members have offered to donate to cover the additional cost. Ms. Carpenter said that they surveyed students and only about 70 students actually responded to the survey to “order” a shirt. Mrs. Harlow expressed concern about ordering a shirt for every student, since so many T-shirts that were ordered last year were never picked-up. The Board members echoed that concern, but also expressed that they want to support the staff in recognizing the students – but to do that in a cost-effective way. The Board, Mrs. Harlow, and Ms. Carpenter agreed to continue this conversation off-line and discuss how to keep the cost within the \$600 already approved.

V. New business

Elections for 2021-2022 Executive Board positions

Nominations for Executive Board positions were due to Melissa Hidek, via email, by April 30. No nominations other than the existing board members were received. However, Maureen McCarthy decided to resign from her position as Vice President and not run again, citing time constraints and family commitments.

Jennifer Schultz nominated herself for the empty Vice President position, and this was accepted by the Board.

Ann made a motion to re-elect the current officers and the new VP nomination for 2021-2022 as follows:

Ann Yarka – President

Jennifer Schultz – Vice President

Ramie Miller – Treasurer

Meghan Vitale - Secretary

The slate of candidates passed unanimously.

Skippy ice cream truck fund request

The Board requested up to \$550 from general fund for ice cream from the Skippy Truck for grades PK-5. Ms. Brown has talked with Gina at Skippy, and they will be at Huntington on Monday, June 14 (with June 15 as the raindate) from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. Staff need to create a schedule for students to visit the ice cream truck – probably right after their lunch.

Ms. Carpenter said that a staff member has offered to make a donation to 8th grade to cover the cost of including the 8th grade students in the ice cream truck. Not sure if that could be on the same day? Ms. Carpenter spoke with other middle school staff, and 6th grade does not want to participate. Not sure about 7th grade. There are about 70 8th graders attending school in person. She is waiting to hear back from Skippy on whether there is a minimum number of students required to schedule a separate day for 8th grade.

There was some discussion about whether to include 7th grade, and to revisit the ice cream truck idea with 6th grade. And if PTO general funds are being used for PK-5, would PTO pay for middle school, too? The question was not resolved, since expanding the ice cream truck to include all of middle school requires discussing with those teachers. Ms. Carpenter will revisit the idea with the 8th grade team, and the Board will follow-up.

VI. Discussion/guest speakers

Dan Porter spoke about the after school program. There is still space in the before school program, which runs from 6:50 a.m. until 7:50 a.m. Students must attend the after-school program in order to attend the before-school program. Families can still apply at https://scsd.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efDKSTaafqNPzD On May 20 and June 3 from 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Teams, there will be parent-student painting events. Supplies will be provided – either to kids in school or parents can come pick up or they will be delivered. This is just for students enrolled in the after school program. A flyer has been sent home with those students.

Lisa MacBride-Matthews from Growing Good Works provided a brief overview of the splash pad idea. Lisa is also a TNT Facilitator for Eastwood. This is an idea that has been talked about for many years. Growing Good Works is a new non-profit. They have had some preliminary talks with the city about the splash pad. There is no outdoor pool or other water features within Eastwood, hence the splash pad idea. There was an initial meeting with the Parks Department, and a small focus group meeting, which Meghan attended. One of the comments made in the focus group meeting was that there is no master plan for Huntington’s green space, or for Eastwood Heights. Common Councilor Joe Driscoll is working to get a master plan for both parks – should be done in about 3-4 weeks. Mrs. Harlow asked if this would be on city property, and Lisa said that the property boundaries are something that will be looked at in the master plan. There was a question about how the project would be funded, and Lisa said they are looking for a combination of city funds, grants, and fundraising, and the current estimated total cost is about \$200,000. Ann asked how this idea would impact the future of the pools. Lisa noted that maintenance is very expensive for pools, and the city has had difficulty finding lifeguards. A splash pad would be easier to maintain, and would not require full-time staff. It would have limited hours of operation, and would be push-button operated. Not sure about other amenities yet such as fencing, trash cans, or bathrooms. Meghan asked if the master plan will be presented to the public, and Lisa said this would likely occur through TNT. It is likely that it would take two years to design and construct. Lisa offered to answer any questions via email.

VII. Administrative report

Mrs. Harlow talked about the expanded availability of the COVID-19 vaccine for anyone age 12 and up. The district will be hosting clinics, especially on Wednesdays when there are no in-person classes for middle school. There is a clinic scheduled for 9-11:30 a.m. at ITC on Wednesday, May 19. The district will be sending home registration and consent forms, and providing busing from middle and K-8 schools for families that are interested. Meghan asked if parents can also be vaccinated at the school-based clinics. Peggy Chase stated that although the focus of the school-based clinics is the students, they will not turn away parents that also want to get vaccinated.

Mrs. Harlow announced that she will be retiring at the end of the current school year. The district has begun the process of searching for a new principal.

VIII. Closing

Meeting adjourned at about 7:50 p.m.