

SOCSD PTA Council Minutes
Monday, November 8, 2010
Tappan Zee High School Library

Meeting called to order: 7:10 p.m. by Michelle Jones.

Attendees: Michelle Jones, Ron Shapiro, Bonnie Bello (for Evan Karzhevsky), Pamela Aguilung, Seta Tunell, Janet Dayson, Mary Paul, Maureen Aitchison, Vicki Caramante, Orli Irgang, Karen Mignone, Anne Marie Kugelman, Rosemary Pitruzzella

Minutes: October 4, 2010 minutes approved (as amended with Vicki Caramante's revisions).

Treasurer's Report: Kathy Mart was absent; Council Budget as of November 7, 2010 was presented and approved. (See attached).

President's Report: Given by Michelle Jones.

- **Bond Vote** – Postcard was printed and mailed out for bond vote next Tuesday, November 16, 2010. Press releases were sent out to promote. *Our Town* and *The Journal News* have received this information. Rosemary Pitruzzella advised that the old voting machines will be used. (See attached)
- **Character Education Project** – it was questioned why parents are not involved or should they be included? Michelle advised that two representatives, Chick Foley and Barry Wasserman, came to the most recent BLT Meeting.
- **Clubs (SOMS & TZHS)** –
 - Michelle Jones inquired as to what the club advisors do and how it is assessed? Michelle advised that Dr. Mitchell stated that if teachers are interested, they can participate for \$1,500. If not, then the club may not run.
 - Michelle further inquired as to the timing of when we are opening up this opportunity to the community to get parent volunteers or others involved? Why are we not bringing in outside resources? Michelle advised that there were issues years ago at SOMS to get Science Olympiads started. Ron Shapiro inquired if this is similar to a teacher being a coach? Michelle stated that it would be great if we could get traction on this program and advised that you do not need a teacher to get a club started just the desire by the students.
 - Rosemary Pitruzzella advised that the club brochure can be found online and at least 15+ students must be interested in the club for it to run. She further advised that the club information and teacher/advisor opportunity must be posted inside to teachers first before seeking community volunteers.
 - Janet Dayson inquired as to the contact person to start a club at each school? Michelle advised it was Sheila Silverman at TZHS, and it may be the Principal or Assistant Principal at SOMS.
 - Seta Tunell inquired as to how a club is funded? Rosemary Pitruzzella advised that the District picks up the stipend for the teacher/advisor, but the students must fundraise for the club activities.

Unit Report – SEPTA: Given by Orli Irgang.

- Membership – there are currently 36 members; 18 people attended.
- Raffle – will be holding a raffle with Halloween goodies.
- Communication – SEPTA is hoping to send information out to other PTA unit heads to get emails out for broader distribution; Vicki Caramante agreed to assist with SOCES.
- Fundraiser – will not be done in the Fall; will be pushed to next Spring.

Unit Report – SOCES: Given by Vicki Caramante.

- After School Enrichment Program (ASEP) – we are currently working through stipend issues and trying to manage programs. **Summary of the issues taken from SOCES PTA Website:**
 - Beginning in the 1990's and up to about 2005, the program coordinator annually applied for and received a grant from the Orangetown Community Fund Grant, particularly because students from Saint Catherine's Parochial school participated in the program. SOCES PTA was able to keep the program fees very low, pay for a majority of the instructors' salaries, and later, the coordinator's salary. In the late 2000's, the Town abolished the grant and SOCES no longer received these funds.
 - SOCES PTA continued paying the coordinator(s) a stipend from the funds collected from students enrolled in the ASEP. The Executive Committee discovered payment of the stipend from its funds violates PTA rules. According to the NYS PTA Resource Guide, available at www.nyspta.org: "Resources and funds cannot be used for the benefit of an officer, board member, or private individual." SOCES PTA pursued corrective action and our Executive Board discussed the matter at its October 27th meeting.
 - After a lengthy discussion, the Executive Board voted for the 2010-2011 school year to hire the three parents who coordinated ASEP last year as consultants for one year and pay them a consulting fee of \$500 apiece while Executive Board re-evaluates the ASEP to ensure a compliant, vibrant program for our students.
 - After the October 27th meeting, the Executive Committee continued researching the requirements for a consultant contract. According to the NYS PTA Resource Guide, consultants are required to have their own Certificate of General Liability Insurance (this would apply to instructors also). Also, certain programs offered to students may require the PTA to purchase additional insurance.
 - SOCES PTA must address all of these issues before entering into contracts with coordinators and/or instructors and will do so at its November 10th meeting, 7:00 PM at WOS.
 - Anne Marie Kugelman stated that this is a PTA Council issue. Michelle Jones advised that it is not a PTA Council issue and further stated that it is not a Council issue until SOCES feels that is. A report from SOCES will be forthcoming.
 - Vicki further advised that she is looking into the comedians and insurance issues for the SOCES Comedy Night.

- Family Fun Night Fundraisers –
 - Bingo Night – this event was very successful and people had to be turned away due to the number of attendees reaching 250+. The reason was most likely that it was a “Boo Bingo” and was the Friday night prior to Halloween. Rosemary inquired if people came out because of the “no entry fee” and Vicki indicated that most likely it was due to Halloween and Boo Bingo theme. Mary Paul added that in past years, we were most likely able to fit more attendees due to different tables that accommodated more people.
 - Movie Night – the next Movie Night is scheduled for Friday, December 10, 2010 at SOMS at Cottage Lane for a showing of Toy Story 3.
- Membership – 43-44 staff members out of total membership.

Unit Report – SOMS: Given by Bonnie Bello (on behalf of Evan Karzhevsky).

- Character Education Meeting – was held early today Evan Karzhevsky and Alice Buchanan attended.
- Dance Party – was held two weeks ago for all grade levels. Attendance was in the mid-200s; it was not a sell-out as there were a lot of other events/activities that were happening that evening.
- School Spirit Sale – 220 orders filled.

Unit Report – TZHS: Given by Mary Paul.

- Founder’s Day Committee – no nomination yet. We have a few people in mind but it needs to be finalized.
- Yankee Candle Fundraiser – made \$600-\$700 profit
- Teacher Breakfast – held a breakfast on Conference Day for the teachers; it was well received.
- Membership – just under 300 members; 40 staff members. A thank you note will be sent to Cecelia Walker. Jennifer Amos is sending out individual letter to the teachers. Michelle Jones advised that she spoke with Dr. Mitchell about membership and they looked at the numbers for each unit. Mary Paul advised that that she and Trish will speak with Jennifer and work through her.
- Just Between Friends Program/System – Vicki advised that Jean Clancy has been using this program with great success and will ask Jean to come to a meeting and give a demo/presentation. Michelle advised that Vicki should let us know when and we can have all other unit presidents attend as well. Vicki will arrange for the next PTA Council meeting.

Other Business:

- Bond Vote – Michelle Jones reminded the Council that the Bond Vote is next Tuesday, November 16, 2010.
- Founder’s Day –
 - Nominating Committee – Michelle advised that we must get the Founder’s Day Nominating Committee in place and submitted by December 10, 2010.
 - By-Laws – Michelle stated that individual unit by-laws must be reviewed.

Michelle further advised that this should be talked about at unit PTA meetings next month.

- **Robert's Rules** – Michelle Jones stated that Vicki Caramante will give the Council an overview of Robert's Rules, which is a process that helps move things along and keeps meetings productive and calm giving structure to meetings. Vicki provided an overview of the following:
 - Agenda – call to order; gives meeting a beginning and end.
 - Resolution – adopt a motion (outlines position); second motion (allows discussion and solicits input from all on the topic); calls questions; then the attendees get to take a vote, by hand or roll call.
 - Vote – need quorum (depends upon the by-laws); Executive Board (6 people); General Membership Meetings (SOCES is 20-30 people).
 - Minutes – is a written record of meeting proceedings; should accurately reflect content but not every detail.
 - Motion – in a small group you can “table” it; vote to table (propose date when it will be tabled to) and indicate where tabled to which enables the action to be completed. If a motion is made and seconded, it does not mean that the person needs to vote that way.
 - Other Points – different rules are in play in larger forum.
 - Point of Order – i.e. budget, ask question and have an answer; anyone can do this and it can help add to the topics.
 - Position – don't leave without a position.
 - Bylaws – these must be followed, and if not presented in the right way, positions would need to be redone. Michelle added that every unit has these and must have these in place for the Nominating Committee. The Unit Secretary should always be present with by-laws in hand.

Vicki recommended that each unit buy this book and keep on hand.

- **Council Nominating Committee** – Michelle indicated that we need to establish a slate. Orli will do this for SEPTA; SOMS is needed; rep is needed from every unit. Michelle further advised that these are one-year terms, and it needs to be determined if all positions are willing to come back for a second year. Rosemary added that it's important to “thank” people for their service. Michelle further urged attendees to “go beyond your circle” and look far out for those that may not be immediately considered; have conversations and network and start early.
- **Founder's Day Planning Update** –
 - Seta Tunell provided an update and indicated that the meeting that was scheduled did not happen this week. She received 1-2 names from Heidi Garner and no responses from the website. Vicki also recommended having the forms available at General Meetings and that blasts should be sent out by the units. Seta also mentioned that Class Moms will be asked to email their parent lists. Seta further indicated that she is waiting for feedback on Nominating Committees. She indicated that students can also nominate.
 - Mary Paul shared concerns about nominations as those nominated are supposed to be someone with systemic reach who has had an effect on the whole community. She stated that it's better to have no one than an inappropriate candidate.

- Vicki added that the purpose is to nominate someone that has affected the community as a whole, not an individual that affected just one or two. Vicki mentioned that many of those awarded continue to have community impact even after their award. There were seven at SOCES last year. She also added that many SOCES parents, especially the younger ones, are unaware of this nomination and what it means.
- Michelle stated that someone should not be put forward just for the sake of it as it minimizes the honor. In the past, we have not put people forward unless well-deserved; while it is difficult to do so, it has to be done. Michelle also asked if we can do an eblast to get the word out and people on board.
- Seta wrapped up by advising that Wednesday, February 16 is confirmed and we will have the all-female band, Sapphire, playing that evening. The menu is completed.

New Business:

- **Council Meeting Dates/Calendar** – Ron Shapiro advised that the District Calendar had incorrectly listed dates for PTA Council Meetings. Dates were reviewed and confirmed.
- **Tenure List** – should be available to all; add to President’s Meeting Agenda.
- **Budgets** – Michelle advised that all units should be reminded to start thinking about the budget.
- **BOE Meetings** – all units should encourage their memberships to attend the BOE Meetings.
- **November 16 – 9:30 p.m.** – results of bond vote will be presented.
- **November 18** – BOE will have bond vote report.
- **BOE** – wants to know what is going on in the units; come to meetings and report progress.
- **BOE** – loved the “thank you” t-shirts. Thank you.
- **Convention** – Michelle urged each unit to find a representative to attend the convention in Buffalo.

Michelle Jones motioned to adjourn meeting at 8:50 p.m. Agreed by all. Meeting adjourned.

Pamela Aguilin
 SOCSA PTA Council Secretary
 Date Approved: December 6, 2010