

Minutes - General Meeting

October 15, 2019, 7:15pm

Call to order, Flag Salute – 7:16pm

Quorum established – 7:16 pm

September's Minutes were approved with no objections. Sandy Gallucci motioned; Dawn Costantini seconded.

President's Report

Renee Tisi reported that the annual Back to School Block Party was a success, with many families in attendance, great food truck participation, and overall a great time. The event profited \$314.

The Johnson's Locust Hall Farm fall weekend wristband sale resulted in 84 bands sold at \$4 profit each, for a total profit of \$344.

Renee also reported that total sales for the Friendly's Celebrity Scoop Night were \$2016. The PTA receives 20 percent of sales for a profit of \$403. Our contact at Friendly's shared that this was the highest sales of their recent participating schools and would like us to repeat this event.

Lastly, Renee mentioned that we have upcoming events including the Scholastic Book Fair and first Dance-a-Thon, and that they would be discussed later in the meeting.

Treasurer's report

Kim Jeanette shared copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report, which is attached to the end of the minutes. No questions were raised.

Correspondence

None received or sent since the September meeting.

Room Representatives/Halloween parties

Theresa Timian will send an email this week to all Room Parents, reminding them to send in planning form to teachers. Water and snacks for all classes will be ordered. We have confirmed at least one representative for each class so all classes have party planning underway.

Scholastic Book Fair

Book Fair Chair Hillary McWhorter provided details on the October Book Fair.

The new Halloween theme will enable decorations and theme items to be reused each year, which will result in cost savings. Setup will take place after school on Thursday, October 17. Class and Teacher Previews will take place on Friday the 18th. Family Night will be Monday the 21st and shopping days will take place during the week of the 21st. Teachers have the option of bringing their whole class to the Fair or only sending students who wish to shop (some students attend Family Night and don't need to shop with their classes).

A Signup Genius link and post on our Facebook page have been shared to solicit volunteers for previews and shopping days.

A total of 15 Spartans have been hidden around school. Grades 3-5 are finding 5; K-2 finding 3. Students who complete the challenge will be entered into a raffle for Scholastic Dollars to use at the Fair.

All for Books coin collections started today and will run through the Fair. The winning class gets to pick a costume for Mr. Bookholdt for the Halloween Parade and lead the Parade with him. All for Books provides Scholastic Dollars so that all students can shop the Fair.

Trunk or Treat

Chair Sandy Gallucci reported that flyers were sent home last week. As of today we have five trunks registered. More are needed, ideally 20 to fill lot but we will not cancel if a threshold isn't reached.

The Not So Haunted Maze will again be in the Multipurpose Room. The kitchen will again be used to sell drinks and snacks. Flyers included a sign up to provide drinks or snacks.

15 National Honor Society students from Steinert will assist in the event. They will judge trunks and jack-o-lanterns, assemble the maze, sell drinks and snacks, direct cars, and more. Attendees agreed that we should note any NHS volunteers who are Alexander alumni for the Scholarship Committee.

The Fire Chief has agreed to supply a truck to light the parking lot during the event.

Sandy reported that volunteers are still needed to set up and tear down.

Prizes will be awarded for three jack-o-lanterns and three trunks. Jack-o-lanterns will be collected at the end of the night by the families that brought them.

Attendees discussed feedback that was received regarding a \$10 cost to participate with a trunk, which is in addition to the cost to create the trunk and the cost to provide candy (families creating trunks do not pay the \$3 admission). There was discussion as to whether families creating trunks should have to pay both a trunk fee and the cost of candy, or whether candy donations should be requested or candy should be provided by the PTA. Denise Wyers motioned to solicit candy donations. Jen Zoda seconded. This will be communicated via Facebook and Theresa will also share with Room Representatives. A box will be placed in the main office for class messengers to bring candy donations.

Kids in attendance will receive a map to be checked off at each trunk to prevent too much repetition. The goal is to keep from running out of candy too early because kids are repeating trunks.

Dance-a-Thon

The first Dance-a-Thon will be held November 22, during the school day. Students will be broken out by grade level. K and 1 will dance for 45 minutes; Grades 2 and 3 will dance for 1 hour; Grades 4 and 5 will dance for 90 minutes.

3rd and 5th grade prep periods have been switched so teachers can both have their prep and dance with their classes.

Local dance studio Dance It Up (on Route 33) offers a free assembly activity in schools to dance with students and then have a theme discussion with students based on the theme of the assembly

(character, bullying, etc.). They will send a dancer to the Dance-a-Thon to lead dances with kids. Should this go well, we can consider them for future assemblies.

Prizes for fundraising were discussed. The committee is considering feedback about the Apex prizes and also sourcing ideas or items for prizes. The team is planning more frequent smaller prizes in the beginning to keep kids motivated. They are considering personalizing Alexander items but the setup fee for printing may be prohibitive. Denise Wyers, who works for Hamilton YMCA, will look into whether a pool membership, camp fee or classes could be offered as prizes. Our teacher representatives will ask the teachers whether homework passes could be given as fundraising prizes. An “extra recess” reward will be given for the class with the highest average dollar amount raised per student as well as the highest overall fundraiser.

Donations are planned to be collected Monday – Thursday, then tallied, with prize distributions on Fridays. The leading class will be recognized in the morning announcements following each tally.

Flyer with prizes/prize levels to come home soon.

Ice skating

Kristine D’Ambrosio went to Mercer County Park on the morning of October 14 to obtain our ice skating date. Our date is January 26, from 4:30pm – 6:30pm. The PTA is hoping to maintain this as a free event for our families. Attendees will not pay admission but do need to pay for rented skates if they’re needed.

Kristine asked for volunteers to chair the event. Trish Patsaros volunteered. Kristine D’Ambrosio and Kim Jeanette offered to help. Kim will obtain the necessary insurance.

Tricky Tray

Hillary updated attendees on behalf of Lori Hutchins, Chair, who couldn’t attend.

At September’s meeting attendees voted to pull our deposit (penalty free) from Nottingham Ballroom. Hillary reported that the venue wanted to work with us and talk further, but after discussions with Nottingham Ballroom, the venue couldn’t get the price point down low enough to make profit on the tickets while keeping prices reasonable.

Our informal Facebook survey asked whether people would be willing to pay a 50 cost if that included food and cash bar; there were not a lot of votes but about 70/30 were in favor of higher price. We will need to charge \$55 at Nottingham to make what we’d make for a \$20 ticket at Steinert. As a result we will move forward with pulling the deposit.

Hillary requested any information that attendees may have on other possible venues. Please email her with information on potential locations, their offerings and costs. We do have a parent in our school who caters and will cater if we find a location that will allow us to bring catering.

Steinert is booked for our date in the event we don’t find a suitable alternative.

Research on baskets, prizes starting in November, particularly for long-lead prizes like Disney and to take advantage of Black Friday deals.

Amazon Account

Last month we discussed having Amazon Prime added to our account. Because we are nonprofit its 179/year. September attendees voted on \$120 and a motion is needed to approve the higher cost. Denise Wyers motioned; Sandy seconded. No opposition.

Fundraising & Committees

KidStuff:

Hillary McWhorter reported that current profit is \$1,525 profit (still a few more coming in). Missing about 14 books that haven't been returned. Teachers have sent reminders but the teachers and committee will not chase further at this point. There were questions about when app will work; Hillary will follow up. This is likely because full order hasn't been closed out yet.

Spirit Wear:

Hillary McWhorter reported that just over \$5,000 was sold. Profit was \$725.87. The pink and forest green hoodies and tie dye shirts were biggest sellers. We can sell as frequently as we'd like and will likely open again before the holidays and in the spring with warmer weather clothing. We will do another sale around the Kindergarten Tea so that incoming class can come in with Spirit Wear. The vendor will do Field Day shirts as well.

Two-week turnaround is estimated so delivery will likely be prior to Halloween. Paid about 30 cents per item to package orders for children/classrooms. Will also see if they can do something for holiday sale so items purchased as gifts won't be sent home with kids (gifts).

Overall the new vendor has been great to work with and the committee was pleased.

Mum Sale:

Sandy Gallucci reported that we sold 387 mums, with a profit of \$832.75. 91 more mums sold over the prior year.

Membership:

Membership Chair Sandy Gallucci reported that our total as of today is 198 members. We are hoping to get past 200 mark! Goal is 223 so we have 10 percent increase over prior year. Consider sending a

reminder through room reps that people can still join (and multiple members are allowed per household).

A&M Pies:

Kristine D'Ambrosio and the committee have chosen the pies we will offer and costs now need to be decided. Our costs for the pies are \$8.99 and \$11.99.

Forms will go home the first week of November with orders to close mid-November. Pies will be delivered to school at noon on the day before Thanksgiving. We will need volunteers to help sort following delivery.

Gertrude Hawk Holiday Candy Sale:

Orders will be taken November 1 – 18, for delivery in December. Renee Tisi requested volunteers to help sort/pack orders upon delivery.

Simple Greek Dining Day:

Our dining day will be November 15 from 2pm – 8pm. We will receive 25% of all sales (eat in and take out) with the flyer. Flyers to be sent home and will also be available in the store in case people forget them.

Barnes & Noble Night:

Third Grade performance is currently to be determined, and teacher readings are not supported by the attendees as they are difficult to hear. Attendees discussed considering delaying based on the uncertainty of the Third Grade performance.

Parents' Night Out:

Michelle Grinbaum reported that Parents' Night Out will be November 16 at Killarney's. Cost will be \$30 per person and include passed appetizers, buffet, and two drink tickets. Profit is \$15 per ticket. We will also offer a \$25 option for the same package with no drink tickets. Flyer to go home last week of October and RSVPs are due by November 11.

Pancake Breakfast:

Chrissy Trank reported that the Applebee's on Route 33 was not an option on the Applebee's website. Attendees discussed other options. Chrissy will check with PJ's Pancake House.

Sweetheart Dance:

The Sweetheart Dance will be Friday, February 7 from 6:30 – 8pm. This is not a drop off event. Next meeting will take volunteers for dance committee.

Movie Night:

No date yet. Dan Griffin, Chair, suggested that a possible class reward for fundraising could be to choose the movie for the winter event, and Field Day winner could choose the movie for a summer outdoor movie event. Winter Movie Night will be in Multipurpose Room (1st come 1st served due to space), and June could be outside.

Teachers Report:

Teachers provided great feedback on reptile assembly and Friendly's Scoop Night. Suggested for future events that the teachers have more interaction so they could talk to the kids rather than just scoop and not have interaction with them. Could they partner with a Friendly's server to take orders? Kristine D'Ambrosio shared that our Friendly's contact told her that other schools have the teachers scoop for a few minutes and then engage with kids, so this could be a future option.

Teachers also mentioned that there are a lot of children in their classes who aren't permitted to appear on social media, and with upcoming parties we will need to distinguish them when taking photos. Mr. Bookholdt suggested that we remind parents that they shouldn't post photos with other people's children from school events on social media. The guidance is different if it's an evening event (like Trunk or Treat). Theresa will remind parents in the room representative party emails.

Principal's Report:

Mr. Bookholdt gave great feedback on the Block Party and the reptile assembly. He mentioned that current 5th graders remembered the show from when they were in kindergarten and he heard great feedback from them. Overall kids were engaged and asking questions.

School is in full swing now and school year is off to very smooth start. Lots of positive interactions during lunches, recess, and during the day. We are still working on backboards for old yellow poles but facilities is backed up; some schools are still under construction so those are prioritized. Playground is up and running. There are some footprints from where children went on the rubberized flooring before it was set. He is working with the company to discuss possible replacement.

He has received reports of middle schoolers acting inappropriately on our playground after school (between 3 and 4). Parents have requested that teachers correct behavior if it occurs. Middle schoolers not allowed on property until after dismissal. If behavior is reported, Mr. Bookholdt will address.

Renee Tisi adjourned the meeting at 8:46 PM.

Next Meeting:

November 12, 2019, 7:15 PM

Submitted by Chrissy Trank, Recording Secretary