

**James W. Alexander PTA  
General Meeting – Minutes  
Tuesday, January 11, 2022, at 7:00 pm  
Virtual Meeting via Google Meet**

**Call to Order & Establish Quorum:** Renee Tisi called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm. Motion to establish quorum by Trish Patsaros, seconded by Hillary McWhorter.

**Approve November 2021 Minutes:** Motion by Valerie Zieniuk to approve minutes from the November meeting, as they exist online. Motion seconded by Trish Patsaros and approved.

**President's Report:** Renee Tisi shared that the cancelation of the December 2021 meeting was due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases, both in the district and locally. This month's meeting needed to be held virtually due to the nomination process beginning this month.

**Treasurer's Report:** Sophia Knapp reported \$16,204.87 in the main account, \$745.01 in the Games of Chance account, and \$500.00 in petty cash. Recent purchases for the school include a supply of new socks and underwear and a replenishment of the bottled water supply and snacks, all for Mrs. Minogue. The subscription for Brain Pop recently came up for renewal. Sophia spoke with a representative, who lowered the renewal fee to \$2,600, down from \$2,950 last year, and added an hour of free training for the teachers.

**Correspondence & Box Tops:** Renee Tisi read the latest correspondence delivered to her. There were several notes of gratitude for the recent Scholastic Book Fair from multiple faculty members and a letter of thanks for donating books to the library from Mrs. McCarthy. There was no update on the Box Tops program at this time.

**Annual Appeal:** Sophia Knapp shared that the Annual Appeal has raised \$1,101.51 to date. There was a discussion about sharing the Annual Appeal information and QR code on the Alexander PTA Facebook page and sending home another flyer. The inclination was not to send another mailing but to send a flyer home with students, perhaps in the spring.

**PTA Property & Storage:** Erin Andahazy stated that she has been gathering items and that someone donated some shelving for the storage unit. She hopes to move more things into the storage unit when it's not so cold outside.

**Gertrude Hawk Candy Sale:** Renee Tisi reported a \$2,942 profit, also disclosed at the November meeting.

**Scholastic Book Fair:** Hillary McWhorter shared that this event was successful, despite some restrictions on space and time. She also shared that she was thankful to have Debbie Galant as a Co-Chair. All of the kids were so happy to shop! Mrs. Reid noted that everyone loved the Book Fair, especially since some were still waiting on books from their October orders. Hillary stated that she would hold off on the Scholastic Dollars until we can compile better numbers, perhaps for the spring Book Fair or for teachers' summer orders.

**Gift Card Sales:** Theresa Timian reported the sale of 311 gift cards, totaling \$8,050. After shipping costs of \$15.25, there was a total profit of \$458.71.

**Cheesecake Sale:** Sophia Knapp reported for Michelle Grunbaum, who could not attend. We sold 60 items for a total of \$300 raised, as The Cheesecake Lady donates \$5 per item. Unfortunately, there was a hiccup with three families' orders not being received, perhaps due to the chaos of class quarantines in December. We received the paper forms a week after the sale concluded, and three families had their checks returned to them. We appreciate their understanding and apologize that they could not order any cheesecakes.

**Spirit Wear:** Hillary McWhorter shared that this sale went quite well, although it is smaller in size than the fall one. She reported \$385.66 in profit from this sale.

**Holiday Shop:** Erin Andahazy stated that it was a hectic sale, particularly as she could only have the help of Becky Andrews and Mrs. Burke. She reported that she spent \$2,271.68 on items for the shop and took in \$3,978 for a profit of \$1,706.32. They helped kids without spending money to purchase a few things at a reduced price and even helped a few students in quarantine do some virtual shopping. Erin noted that this event would need more volunteers next year. She also said she shopped at 18 different dollar stores and has some items leftover to sell next year. Several members in attendance thanked Erin for reopening the Holiday Shop for their children returning from quarantine.

**Room Representatives:** Theresa Timian expressed how thankful she was that they could have holiday parties for the students, even if the Room Representatives were unable to attend. Room Representatives also provided holiday gifts to the teachers. Theresa shared that we distributed the PTA holiday gift of Alexander logo gloves, but there had been an issue with the office and an increase in the number of students in the building. There are now extra gloves for next year, as we placed a minimum order of 200 to ensure everyone had a pair.

**Fifth Grade Committee:** Danielle Wiltsey shared that the Co-Chairs had a meeting on December 7, where they discussed the budget and started the planning process. Their work on the Yearbook is moving along, and they are getting students to answer questions for it via Google Form. Based on feedback from last year, Danielle noted that they might have the party and the awards ceremony on the same day. A member mentioned that another local school was

doing a fundraiser with Five Below; we should do fundraisers for the Fifth Grade Committee, as other schools in the district are doing it.

**Nominations for 2022-2024 Term:** Tara Sottong, as the Chair of this committee, reported that three positions would be open: President, First Vice President, and Treasurer. Paper forms will be going out this week to solicit nominations; electronic forms are an option, as nominations are supposed to be anonymous, per our bylaws. Tara noted that she was looking for about five committee members and wanted the nominees sorted out by the February meeting. Several members offered to help serve on this committee, including Debbie Galant, Kelly Fillinger, Kristine D'Ambrosio, Lori Hutchins, and Keri Carlton.

**Membership/Alumni Committee:** Elaine Griffin shared that she is currently reconciling physical records and MemberHub records for 2021-2022 memberships. Then, we can pay dues to both the state and national organizations. Elaine reminded everyone that it is crucial for our records for folks to turn in a physical membership form if they are not signing up on MemberHub.

**Dining Out Committee:** Elaine Griffin reported that the next Dining Out event might occur at the end of January. She was waiting for the participating restaurant to confirm the date. Denise Wyers shared that perhaps Chickie's and Pete's could be an option for a Dining Out event. Elaine noted that restaurants have been slow to get back to her and Dan Griffin on scheduling future events.

**Skate Night:** Trish Patsaros solicited opinions on whether people are still interested in going, despite the increase in COVID-19 cases. She noted that while the inside portion of the rink is closed, the outer part is still open. People can only go in to either use the bathroom or rent/return skates. Kristine D'Ambrosio suggested putting a poll on the Alexander PTA Facebook page, asking if people are still interested in attending such an event. Theresa Timian stated that she would set up the survey.

**Casino Night:** Renee Tisi reiterated that this event takes a lot to plan and needs its due diligence done in research, and we will not have it until the next school year. Hillary McWhorter has agreed to spearhead and chair a Casino Night Committee. We will start reaching out to form a committee and to recruit volunteers. Renee stressed that the PTA is not in dire straits and can provide for the school, and there continues to be money coming in from various fundraisers. We want to pull off a Casino Night and plan it the right way. Others noted that we still are looking for handouts from local businesses to help with prizes for Casino Night. There was further discussion about other types of big fundraisers to fill the void from Tricky Tray. Some potential options shared were Fun Runs with Apex, Super 50/50 (Denise Wyers stated she had a ticket printing hookup, and Hillary McWhorter and Erin Andahazy to Co-Chair), and Color Run (Elaine Griffin and Kristine D'Ambrosio to research.)

## **All Other Business**

**Scholarships:** Elaine Griffin stated they sent out scholarship applications ahead of schedule. The application is available to all local high schools. There will still be two (2) \$500 scholarships this year, with the potential for more, depending upon the caliber of applicants. Elaine is looking for volunteers to join this low-key committee that only meets once. A question arose concerning the availability of volunteer hours at Alexander for potential applicants; Elaine stated that since this has been another abnormal year, they would not exclude applicants who had not had the chance to volunteer.

**Rutgers Rain Garden:** Elaine Griffin shared notice of a contract extension, which runs through April, and the possibility of building during Spring Break. We will need volunteers at that time.

**Color Street Fundraiser:** Chrissy Trank noted that this is a current fundraiser, as the salesperson donates their commission back to the Alexander PTA. There is a link to the salesperson's fundraiser group on the PTA Facebook page.

**Teacher's Report:** Mrs. Burke provided the teacher's report, again thanking the PTA for the recent book fair, especially with how long regular orders were taking to arrive from Scholastic. She saw first-hand how busy the Holiday Shop could be and hopes to have more volunteers next year. Mrs. Burke also commented that Erin Andahazy did a great job and that the students loved it. She thanked the PTA for renewing the Brain Pop subscription, as all faculty makes use of it. Mrs. Burke expressed her gratitude to the PTA Executive Board for the treats delivered to the break room the week before Christmas, as the staff needed the pick-me-up. She also took a moment to talk about different PTA fundraisers she has seen over the years. There were comments on the high costs of having Apex conduct a Fun Run and how a Super 50/50 would be great, as people like those and other local ones have been very successful.

**Principal's Report:** Renee Tisi gave the Principal's Report on behalf of Mr. Bookholdt, who could not attend the meeting due to an unforeseen technical issue. District-wide Kindergarten registration will begin shortly, with an automated call and message going out to everyone. There was also a clarification and reiteration of the district's remote learning guidelines. Remote learning is solely for children who are quarantining due to COVID-19. There is no remote learning option if a student has an ear infection or dentist appointment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Zieniuk, Recording Secretary.