

September 14, 2020, PTO Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting

Present: Randi Alberino, Marisa O’Leary, Sarah Peterson, Eric Rekada, Kristin Jarvis, Meghan Sheldon-Brungard, Mia Shervington, Jen Carbaugh, Heather Amabile, Branwen MacDonald, Isabel Pipolo, Margery Rossi, David Mauricio, Dan Callahan, Mary Foster

Welcome/Introductions:

- Marisa thanked everyone for attending the Zoom meeting.

President’s Report:

- The PTO has received \$1785 in donations for the Technology Equity Community Coalition. An additional \$5700 in funds from the Stop and Shop account was also allocated to this cause.
- The PTO also helped to fund the To-Go PE bags for elementary school students.
- Thank you to Kristin for talking to the River Journal for an article about her school experience during this time.
- The Journal News reached out to Marisa to see if any family would be interested in helping them profile a Peekskill family who is under-resourced at this time. Please let Marisa know if you know anyone who would be willing to participate.
- Congratulations to Dr. Mauricio for being named “2020 Superintendent to Watch” by the National Schools Public Relations Association (NSPRA).

Treasurer’s Report:

- Nothing new to report. Maintaining the status quo with regards to paying for operational costs. We have \$15,000 in the bank. We need to raise \$7850 to cover our costs for the year.
- Committee budgets are as follows: Advocacy \$200; Class Parents 0; Communications \$1000; Enrichment \$1500; Senior Gifts (photos) \$2000; operating costs \$3000.

Superintendent’s Update:

- Dr. Mauricio shared an update on reopening schools. The delayed opening was an opportunity for staff to “practice” the new protocols (cleaning etc.) before students arrive.
- Students will be welcomed into the buildings on Sept. 21st; everyone is looking forward to having them return.
- Girls’ soccer is allowed to start; details are still being worked out. Football will now start in the spring.
 - **Mary Foster gave an update on Elementary Schools.** They are still working on a balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning. They are looking for feedback from parents regarding both methods of learning. Parents are encouraged to contact their school principals to give feedback.
 - The dual-language program has been implemented and the American Reading Company is being utilized. It is very early in the program for data collection but the teachers see that progress is being made.
 - Professional Development continues regarding assessments of children using AIMSweb for reading and math. Teachers want to be able to demonstrate a student’s growth.
 - Other things being explored in the search for comprehensive programs are a Tier 3 reading program and Sunday Phonics Program for self-contained classes.

- They are testing Google Forms for benchmark assessments for math and ways to assess children.
- Principals are having virtual groups for parents, looking for feedback. This will start at “Meet the Teacher” nights.
- The younger students have dedicated virtual teachers for families that chose the full virtual model of learning.
- Uriah Hill will be a 5-day program.

- **Dan Callahan gave an update on secondary schools.** Thus far, there has been an 85% attendance rate for students, with the hope to have 100% soon.
- The Professional Development for online format teaching has proven to be valuable.
- There are now Promethium Boards (touch screen) in the middle school classrooms. Teachers are getting continuing ed. training on using them.
- There are new online curricula. 40+ new technological resources are being used by teachers. MusicFirst is an online platform to make music classes more engaging for virtual learning.
- There is about a 50/50 split between hybrid and full virtual learners.
- Once buildings open for the hybrid model, full virtual students will still log in as they are doing now, 4 days per week. Classes will be a little bit longer in duration. 60% of students will be at home on any given day.

- Between \$38-39,000 was raised for Wi-Fi tech initiatives. Wi-Fi hubs will be set up in Assumption Church, The Peekskill Youth Bureau and a church near Uriah Hill as schools will need to close their hubs when students return to the buildings.

BOE Update:

- Still working on goals that were set up last year.
- Thank you to the PTO and PEF for fundraising to meet the needs of families in our district.
- Working with a coalition of other school districts on advocacy. The school budgets may be cut.

PEF Update:

- PEF was able to present \$36,000 to the district with funds raised by the Technology Equity Community Coalition.
- Info will be coming out as to how to request a Wi-Fi unit.
- They are still working to reach their \$40,000 goal.
- They will keep working relationships with the community during non-pandemic times.

PTO Meetings for 2020 – 2021:

- Executive Committee Meetings: Dec 7th, Jan 4th, Mar 1st, May 3rd, and Jun 7th. Marisa brought up possibly adding a November meeting as things may come up due to the current situation. November 9th was added to the calendar as a contingency. This will be revisited.

- General Meetings: Oct 8th, Feb 11th, and Jun 10th. The first meeting will be held virtually. Announcements will be made as to election results for VP and Treasurer during this meeting.
- Some options were raised as to getting a Spanish translation of the meeting. **Dr. Mauricio will check with Alma** to if she can translate, and who will pay for translation as she currently contracts with the district. **Marisa will check with the PTO's usual translator** to see if she is available and willing.
- The February meeting is normally our Black History Celebration. We will decide in December what that will look like.

Fundraising:

- Picture day was postponed until the spring. We will re-evaluate the situation then.
- The direct appeal will go out after the 1st general meeting. We will highlight what we did/what we plan to do. Officers will get a draft and get feedback before it is sent out.
- **Isabel will reach out to Main Street Books** to see if there is a possibility of a virtual book fair for the spring.
- Marisa has asked **all Exec. Comm. Members** to research one catalog fundraiser to be presented at our December meeting.
- A vote was held and passed. The PTO will not commit to giving building allocations this year.

Succession Planning:

- The Nominations Committee has put forth Isabel Pipolo to continue in her position as VP and nominated Halle Chizmadia for the Treasurer position.
- Thank you to Jen Carbaugh for your 2 years of hard work in the Treasurer position.
- A Google Doc has been created to enable virtual voting. It will be active on Sept 21st and be open for 2 weeks to allow people to place their votes and have time for tabulation before our kick-off meeting.
- Marisa discussed the many duties of PTO President as her position will be up for reelection next year. The new President will require mentorship as there are many things required behind the scenes for this job to be done successfully. She asked for interested parties to contact her directly.

Committee/Activity Updates:

- **Advocacy:** Still working with AQE. Waiting for the district to advise how the committee can be supportive. Once they know what is needed they can ask for help from the Exec. Committee. A suggestion was made to ask the community alliances that have been made recently for help as well.
- **Communications:** Isabel will step down as Co-Chair. Heather and Kristin will take over as Co-Chairs. Isabel will still be available to help. Meredith with help as well. The committee will discuss how communications with Laura will commence in the future.
- **Class Parents/Class Ambassadors:** Sarah spoke to Principals as to how parents can be involved since they cannot enter buildings. Uriah Hill may be able to have parents read stories via video. A suggestion was made of having Parent Tech Volunteers per class to help with tech questions during class. Parents offer help from the "user" perspective since the teachers can't see what the student is seeing as issues arise.

New Business:

- none

Old Business:

- Margery advised that the Parks and Rec Department currently has no Director. They will not be taking on any new projects until a new one is in place. We will revisit this later in the year.

Adjournment: 8: 40 pm

- The next meeting will be held on Dec7th at 6:30 pm (Marisa will advise if the Nov 9th meeting will be happening)