

Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting, October 2, 2007

The meeting began at 6:30pm. All of the Executive Board members were present.

Kirsten Cowal distributed copies of the minutes from the previous month's Executive Board meeting for approval. The minutes were approved without revision.

After School Program budget issue

Judith Amaro spoke to the Board about the After School Program budget issues that were raised at the previous General Meeting. She indicated the following:

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 fiscal year, there was a balance of \$9,607.38 and the income for the July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007 period was \$33,497.50. The program expenses for the same period were \$48,863.32 leaving a deficit of \$5,758.44.

There is an outstanding balance of \$6,760.00 consisting of: a late payment of \$1,300 (for which Judith Amaro has worked a payment plan with the parent), payments for three children due to the Program from the city's welfare department (\$2,100, \$1,400 and \$1,400) and a bounced check for \$560.00. Judith Amaro is working to get the money from the city that is owed to the Program as well as trying to recover the money pertaining to the bounced check.

Judith Amaro announced that she will prepare a financial report for all PA activities for last year but that it will take her several weeks to do so.

Judith Amaro reiterated that the final financial report was signed by Ms. Chory and sent to the regional office according to regulation. **She agreed to make a brief presentation at the next general meeting to update the membership on this issue.**

Role of PA and SLT

The next topic of discussion was the question raised by some parents as to what the PA does. Marci Stringham pointed out a flyer that Cheryl Martin prepared last year that nicely outlines the membership characteristics, mission and function of the PA. Part of this text will be included in the next Backpack News.

Several board members pointed out that there is some confusion or lack of clarity about what issues fall under the purview of the PA as opposed to the SLT. It was generally agreed that curriculum issues should be handled by the SLT (a current and pertinent example being the recent discussion on the e-group about why children are not being taught cursive handwriting) and that fundraising and enrichment programs fall under the PA.

Francesca Di Mauro indicated that she would like for there to be an SLT report at every general meeting.

It was generally agreed that any parent should be able to come to the PA with any concern and that if the Board doesn't know or can't answer the question that it will find the answer or direct the parent to the right person or in the right direction.

Organization and agenda of upcoming general meeting

The upcoming meeting was discussed in terms of what went right on the first meeting and how to build on that success. The Board decided that it will:

- 1) meet at 6:00 with the administration to allow enough time to hold the meeting without undue distraction and to finish up any last minute preparations for the general meeting.
- 2) ask the hospitality committee to do any necessary set up and to organize some volunteers to be greeters and to hand out flyers, and direct parents to a table with sign in sheets
- 3) the members of the Executive Board will sit together to convey unity and reduce any visual confusion or distraction

Carlos Brito pointed out that parents have the right to ask about anything and that it is the Board's responsibility to be transparent and take such questions as a reflection of passion more than as an axe to grind. Stevie Ray Dallimore had a question about how to keep the meeting moving along when a PA member drags out an issue. Kirsten Cowal pointed out that it is her responsibility to keep the meeting moving and that she can and will be the one who closes discussion on items that are taking too much time.

Francesca Di Mauro pointed out that one of the main items on the agenda for the next meeting will be the **SLT expedited election**. Cheryl Martin is chairing the nomination committee and the nomination flyer will go out this Friday. The process will be as such: after the administration report roughly at 7:15, nominations will be taken from the floor until 7:30. After nominations are closed, the committee will prepare and make copies of the ballot during the Meet the Candidates session that will last until about 7:45. After the vote, the committee will count the vote while the rest of the agenda for the meeting is covered and the winner will be announced at the end of the meeting.

Backpack News

Marci Stringham announced that she hopes to get the next Backpack News out this Friday. The format has changed and there is more content, so bigger paper will have to be used – 9 x 14 – to avoid having to print the BPN on two sheets of paper and then deal with stapling. Marci Stringham had some question as to whether she could get the paper in time (the school orders the paper and the PA pays the school for it). Kathy Brito gave Marci Stringham the name of the secretary who would be able to help her and Carlos Brito mentioned that if she ran into problems that he could do the Xeroxing at work. There was a brief discussion about the content of the BPN. It will include a President's Message, What is the PA?, What is the SLT?, possibly a **Student Council blurb (Stevie Ray Dallimore will try to get this)**, local news and a 350 word recap of the last general meeting (**which Kirsten Cowal will provide to Marci Stringham**).

Discussion about bylaws and fundraising

Kathy Brito mentioned that Ms. Chory asked her about possibly setting up a committee to review the bylaws to enable certain fundraising activities that are not currently allowable or possible. It was agreed that Kathy Brito will get more information from Ms. Chory about the specific areas of the bylaws to which she is referring. A discussion ensued about the possibility and process of revising bylaws (to raise parent dues as one example). Francesca Di Mauro and Kirsten Cowal pointed out that bylaws cannot be revised in a piece meal fashion and that a committee needs to be established, bylaws need to be distributed to the entire parent body, there needs to be a process for soliciting and compiling proposed revisions and that this process takes several months. Francesca Di Mauro also pointed out that in the interest of transparency that any changes proposed by Ms. Chory would have to be announced at a general meeting as a first step.

Holly Gould, a member of the fundraising committee, came to speak to the Executive Board about some of her thoughts and ideas about raising money from parent dues. She pointed out that the PA donations/dues letter to parents should have already gone out. She asked if the Board could take any additional steps to increase the amount of money raised from dues (which she considered low), such as

setting up a table outside the school (pledge drive, dues week). Francesca Di Mauro pointed out that it may not be allowable to solicit money on school property. It was noted that other schools, such as Anderson and the Manhattan School for Children collect significant dues from parents and Holly Gould was asked if she could do some research to find out how the Parent Associations at these schools are set up to do this. She will do so. In the meantime, **Kathy will speak to Ms. Chory about whether sidewalk solicitations can be done and the bylaws need to be consulted about the parameters of and limitations on collecting parent dues. It was decided that the parent dues letter will not go out right away, or this week at least, because several flyers are going out on Friday and it would be useful to have more clarity about what steps if any the Board wishes to take with regard to the issue.**

Committee Chairs

Hospitality – Wilma Lopez

Environmental – Sharon Silber and Christopher Kapetanos

Fundraising – Denny Chern-Kelk, Ivelisse Suarez-Levine

Grant writing – Susan Saar and Jeanine McAdam

Community liaison – vacant

The names of the committee chairs will be announced in the Backpack News. With regard to Community Liaison, Francesca Di Mauro mentioned that Cheryl Martin, last year's chair, indicated that the duties have become quite light because the school is so well known at this point.

Upcoming tasks and events

Friday, October 5th – Backpack News, SLT nomination flyer and possibly Fall Fundraiser (Kathy Brito announced earlier that the fundraiser was approved) flyer to go out. **Kirsten Cowal will help out as needed with translation and other Board members will help Marci Stringham with Xeroxing.**

October 16 – breakfast for PA and SLT with school administration. **Kathy Brito will send information by email.**

October 20 – Office Appreciation Day. The aides receive flowers and members of the Board meet with aides to express appreciation. Funds for this come out of the Sunshine Fund. **Kathy Brito is investigating the details of this event.**

Tuesday, October 23 – Kindergarten fair at the Nagle Avenue Y. Two people need to be there to staff a table and hand out flyers and a school information packet provided by Ms. Chory. **Kathy will go and Al Boland will be contacted by Kirsten Cowal to solicit his participation** (as he signed up for the community liaison but did not come to the meeting tonight). **The flyer put together by Cheryl Martin needs to be updated (who is doing this)?**

October 24, 8:30am – School tour. **Wilma Lopez needs to be contacted about this.**

Kirsten Cowal will email to committee chairs the names and email addresses of parents who signed up for particular committees but did not attend the meeting tonight.

Final discussion items

The level of involvement of alternate UPA delegates was discussed. It was suggested and generally agreed that alternate delegates should be informed of activities and events but should not be included in discussions of issues having to do with setting the agenda for meetings.

Francesca Di Mauro is investigating whether there can or should be class parent representatives for Pre-K. It was decided or concluded that pre-k parents should be able to join the e-group and as per Ms. Chory at the last general meeting, pre-k parents can run for office.

The Board decided to not hold another meeting before the next general meeting. All outstanding issues will be ironed out by phone and email.