

Executive Board Meeting, February 4, 2008

Present: Kathy Brito, Stevie Ray Dallimore. Marci Stringham, Carlos Brito, Luisa Diorio, Kirsten Cowal, Denny Chern-Kelk, Elise Kagan, Tory Frye and Michael Lacombe and Judith Michael (as observers and by special request by the Board).

The minutes from the previous Executive Board meeting were reviewed and approved. Marci Stringham noted apropos that Ms. Chory has given the go ahead on advertising in the Backpack News. The next step will be to draw up a plan (how much space, prices, etc.) and present it to Ms. Chory.

An extended discussion of the bylaws followed. The question of whether to pursue a process to revise certain provisions of the bylaws was debated. The primary concerns are:

Date of general meetings

The date of the general meeting and the fact that it conflicts with the monthly meeting the community Education Council (CEC). No one from P.S./I.S. 187 has been attending the meeting and this has, to some extent, reflected badly upon the school. The options that were discussed were that of changing the general meetings to the second Thursday of every month or sending the UPA delegate or one of the alternates to the meetings and then having them report to the general membership at the following meeting. Kathy Brito indicated that she has heard that the date of the CEC meetings will likely be changed because it presents a conflict for a number of other schools aside from ours.

The consensus that eventually emerged was that the date of the general meetings should remain unchanged and that the UPA delegate and the alternates should attend the CEC meetings on a rotating basis. Parents who are concerned about the conflict between the dates of the PA general meetings and the CEC meetings will be informed that the dates of the CEC meetings have a high probability of changing.

The question of how to deal with PA general meeting dates in the future, starting with the upcoming school year, was discussed. One possibility that was mentioned was that of revising the language in the bylaws to state that the incoming Board will set the schedule of meetings at the beginning of the year. Michael Lacombe noted later in the meeting, however, that Roberts' Rules of Order probably dictate that meeting dates need to be specified in the bylaws so a general provision such as the one envisioned would not pass muster.

Breaking up the Communications Secretary position to make it more manageable

The issue of how to divide and reallocate the responsibilities of the Communications Secretary and how to do so with regard to the bylaws was also discussed. The position, as it currently stands, has 3 components, each of which is almost a position unto itself: 1) the Backpack News, 2) the Web site and e-group (maintaining the Web site and moderating the e-group) and 3) flyers (designing them, getting them approved, Xeroxed and distributed).

The question as to whether new Executive Board positions needed to be created in the bylaws was discussed. Michael Lacombe and Judith Michael were invited to speak on this question as the most knowledgeable members of the PA on the bylaws and the process through which they can be revised. Judith Michael stated that the Board cannot decide what the bylaws are and that a committee needs to be established. Michael Lacombe differed and pointed to the A660 and the bylaws themselves which are vague on the subject and only specify that any proposed changes need to be read at a meeting and then voted on at a subsequent meeting. He noted that this means that the proposed revisions from last year could be voted on at the next meeting (since it is not specifically stated that the meetings have to be consecutive) but that this would be politically unwise if not impossible.

Michael Lacombe suggested that the Board could make proposals for some limited revisions. Such process might involve announcing at the upcoming general meeting in February that some revisions proposals would be read at the March meeting for a vote at the following meeting in April. Parents would be invited to make any proposals for revisions in writing within a given time period.

The question as to whether a mass mailing would be required or advisable was then discussed. A solution that was proposed by Judith Michael was that of including in the next general meeting announcement flyer an additional announcement of the upcoming bylaws revisions proposals. The flyer could include a tear off section with instructions on how to make suggestions and to whom to direct them. This approach would eliminate the need to send out an additional mass mailing.

The question of whether to revise the bylaws at all was then discussed. Michael Lacombe spoke in defense of not making any changes - noting that the bylaws contain enough flexibility already (for example, the President is already empowered to appoint new and additional members to the Board) and that there is a pool of parents who are willing to help out with narrowly circumscribed tasks as long as they don't have to attend meetings. Judith Michael, on the other hand, argues that it might be a good idea to create a new position or positions since a person who agrees to take on a significant amount of work for the PA might want to have voting rights. In addition, a person who volunteers for a Board position will be more likely to follow through on said commitment than someone who simply volunteers to perform a task. It was noted by other Board members that it has been hard to get enough volunteer labor on a timely basis for the various needs that arise.

It was decided that for the time being the bylaws would not be revised and that Kathy Brito could use her appointment powers if and when suitable volunteers were identified. One particular individual was mentioned by Elise Kagan and Denny Chern-Kelk and they will follow up with this person to ascertain her level of interest.

Other business

Kathy Brito announced that she has received two checks – one for \$2,550 and the other for \$450 from the Center for Arts Education to pay for the Daniel Gewirtzman dance program for the 2nd and 3rd grades (Ms. Marrero is to confirm the grades).

A representative from the Office for Family Engagement and Advocacy in District 6 will be coming to the school on February 14th at 9:30am to talk about Title I. She asked that someone from the Executive Board attend, if possible. Marci Stringham and Luisa Diorio indicated that they might be able to attend.

Kirsten Cowal pointed out that the Board would need to call for a nominating committee at the next general meeting for the PA elections for next year. Luisa Diorio indicated that she would also call for a budget committee to begin the process of preparing a budget for the next school year.

The discussion about elections reopened the question of whether the bylaws should be revised since it was noted that it perhaps would not make sense to elect new UPA delegates if the position has become obsolete. Kirsten Cowal indicated that she would follow up on this question and make some suggestions as quickly as possible.

Kathy Brito mentioned that Frank's (supermarket) will match up to \$1,000 or thereabouts the amount that has been raised this year from pie sales. Last year, about \$700 was raised and the amount is lower this year.

It was noted that the Intermediate School's Movie Night earned \$531 - \$430 in ticket sales and \$101 in treats. The poor weather on the evening of the event along with high ticket prices were cited as the probably reasons for the modest take.

Ms. Chory has asked for a bake sale at the Talent Show on February 7th at 6:30pm. The Board decided that there would be an attempt to sell the drinks and edibles that are left over from previous events and that it would not be called a bake sale. Stevie Ray Dallimore suggested contacting Wilma Lopez for assistance in making this sale happen and indicated that he would contact her. It was also decided that the "refreshments" sale at the Talent Show would not be advertised in the Backpack News but that the Bake Sale during the Science Fair would.

Responding to an inquiry from a Board member about the status of the dues letter, a quick tabulation was performed and it showed that at least \$2,675 has been raised so far and that 22 letters have been returned. Luisa Diorio noted that this is close to the full amount that was raised last year in dues.

Carlos Brito inquired about the status of the lap top that is still in Judy Amaro's possession and it was agreed that Ms. Amaro would be asked to bring it to the retreat on Saturday since she has indicated that she will be attending. Carlos Brito will contact her in this regard.