

October 16, 2008 – Montessori PTO Meeting

Minutes from September 18th meeting approved, with exception of correction of date.

Roberta Wagner moved to accept minutes – Dan Mello accepted.

Treasurer's report

- Dan Mello explained the budget report that was emailed to attendees of September's meeting
- Dan has calculated and proposed a per-student amount for allotments for teachers – meeting scheduled for budget committee on Monday, October 20th tentatively at Blue Tractor

- fundraising pie sale discussed – there were complaints received previously, but notices have already been sent home with students
 - Papa John's pizza day was intended to replace the pie sale, but now will take place in addition to the pie sale – Roberta Wagner should be informed of all future fundraising activities as chairperson of the fundraising committee

- there is now a PTO briefcase for PTO funds that are deposited in the Office
 - there are sheets that need to be filled out showing who is making deposit, how much is being deposited, and in what form (i.e., cash, check) the deposit is being made
 - requests for funding and reimbursement can also be obtained in PTO briefcase

- last year there were discretionary funds for certain groups

- we need to get under our own nonprofit number, not continuing to operate under the school's nonprofit number

- Anna Crain asked to be notified of when the PTO is rewarded with checks from rewards programs at grocery stores, box tops programs, and other UPC/receipt programs

- Angel and Rebecca need to ensure that address is changed for checking account – we need to decide who has check writing authority
 - Roberta Wagner suggested that it be a board decision as to who has check writing authority – Ellen Kohler stated that the bylaws do not read that way – there are concerns with checks being written without knowing what they are being written for

- discussion took place regarding who should have signing privileges with the checkbook, primarily whether or not the treasurer should have authority as a signature

- Roberta Wagner suggested that Dan's approval be required on a request form prior to a check being written – this approval could be done via email or phone
- Ellen Kohler moved that Dan Bellows be the physical keeper of the checkbook
 - the issues with forms not being filled out consistently was addressed and discussed
 - Motion seconded but opposed following discussion
 - Motion tabled until next meeting
- Ellen Kohler moved to have the form required for all check requests
 - Kathy seconded the motion
 - discussion held regarding budget committee's efforts to track the ins and outs of the funds
 - the motion was tabled to next meeting
- policy issues will be discussed at the budget and finance committee on Monday, October 20th

Angela Camp – principal's report

- well over 60 parents attended the field day on October 10th
- working on getting article in the paper and pictures
- general functions of PTO
 - first function is to strengthen the partnership between home and school
 - PTO is not designed to discuss student achievement, curriculum, and related issues (ex: homework issues)
 - School Improvement Team is venue for student achievement issues (meets once a month in the morning – goals are posted on the website)
 - school staff meetings are other venue for such issues
 - annual report can be viewed on the website and has information regarding goals and activities of other committees/groups
 - fundraising, partnership, communication
- Walking Bus update/safe routes to school
 - Rob Lowes did the legwork and has a map of where our current families live in the area and designated areas – maps were provided to all present at meeting
 - we need a few more parent volunteers to help set up routes
 - issue of liability for the school as organizer of walking school bus

- MEAP testing

- testing is only piece of data that is looked at for school improvement
- the State has mandated that all testing is done on the same days statewide
- some students for the third grade math MEAP were confused by ambiguous directions that appeared to state that they could not write in the book
 - staff will provide this input to the MEAP testing authorities
- the test has been simplified this year and is fewer days

Staff Presentation

- delayed until next meeting due to time constraints

Committee Reports

GROUNDS COMMITTEE – Amy McKean

- met on October 8th
- need someone with landscaping/design experience to put together a master plan to implement
- woodchips are still high on priority – cost estimates at this point are high - \$30 to \$50,000
- Meg Judd’s haircuts for trees fundraiser has raised \$200
- Tim Warner has found source for young saplings – possible mass planting in November
- city arborists looked at Oak Street trees – they are stressed due to draught through summer but are not diseased
- one tree does need to be removed and we are looking into easement issue, whether it will be the responsibility of the City or TCAPS

DINING UPDATE – Ellen Kohler

- first dining meeting was held
- biggest complaint from kids is that the cafeteria feels institutional
 - hang lamps from walls?
- there is flexibility on salad bar and on menu on Fridays
- next meeting at 8:15 a.m. on November 7th
- Tom Kachudurian looking into getting microwave
- kids do not like that the room gets messy by the end of the third lunch
- get ideas lined up, make full proposal for changes, instead of implementing change in pieces
- send your kids’ complaints to Ellen – put Ellen’s email address in minutes

FUNDRAISING – Roberta Wagner

- meeting on October 27th at 5:30 p.m. at the library
- our bank account is opened under the federal ID number for the school
- our bylaws expressly forbid us to operate under the number of the school
- partner with the Community Foundation – they would hold the fundraising money – they are an established non-profit

- donations are tax deductible
- we are doing a test/pilot program at this time – no permanent commitment – we will run separate fundraisers just through them
- Schwan's foods have contacted us regarding a Schwan's food day
 - the bring a truck on a day
 - the more is sold, the more of a kickback you get
- Volunteer sign-up list is being updated and will go out
- Melissa suggested a movie night that would be both a fundraiser and volunteer signup

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

- want to separate social events from fundraising
- social events would NOT BE fundraising efforts
- Rebecca is now social committee chairperson

New Business

ART TEACHER

- need allocation to pay the art teacher
- procedure for distribution of funds to art teacher needs to be determined (Angela Camp will determine)
- motion made by Traci _____ to approve the \$7,000 funding request for the art teacher
 - Ellen Kohler suggested monthly installments
 - discussion took place regarding how much to approve right now
 - Traci amended motion to approve \$1,000 approval until we can further research payment procedure

TRAC PHONES FOR OFFICE

- proposal for office to have two TRAC phones that can be used for field trips (Angela Stricker)
 - to have an emergency contact number for field trips
- prepaid cell phone
- discussion regarding who should have the number and poor coverage for TRAC phone

PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF POPCORN MACHINE

- there was popcorn at Central Grade School last year in Fridays
- \$1280 for 12 oz machine, including shipping, can be shipped within a week
 - Brand is Star Galaxy
- 8 oz machine is \$730
- there is a machine for sale on Ebay
- sales for the rest of the year can be used to pay for the machine
 - sales ranged from \$60-120 per week (entire Central Grade School)
- borrow Cherry Festival machine while researching options?

Public Comment

Amy McKean

- **Brownie troop wants to plant bulbs on the grounds for their service project**
- **motion to give troop up to \$50**
- **motion seconded by Roberta**

Dan moved to adjourn, Amy McKean seconded

- **motion passed**