

**Winooski PTO Meeting MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 21, 2020**

ATTENDEES: Kate Simone, Laura Lee, Sarah McGowan-Freije, Chris Freije, Amelie Thurston, Joe Smith, Jessica Audette, Lucy D'Aponte, Lydia Mongeon, Michelle DiSisto, Nicole Richling, Nikki Cabral, Amber Parrott, Tori Cleiland, Joy Yonan-Renold, Sarah Bissonnette, Jennifer Milizia, Arica Bronz, Amber Westcott

Welcome/Introductions

- Welcome everyone and introductions
 - Name, pronouns, anything else you'd like the group to know/returning
 - **Welcome to new/returning members!**

Secretary's Report

- **ACTION: Team approved September 2020 meeting minutes. Kate will finalize and send along to Emily Hecker for posting on the WSD website.**

Treasurer's Report

September 2020

Revenue

Interest \$0.53

TOTAL REVENUE

\$0.53

Expenses

Operating

Misc (new checks) \$16.78

Program Expenses

Funds Request (cleats) \$621.04

Teacher Grants (stipend from spring 2020) \$83.14

TOTAL EXPENSES

\$720.96

INCREASE/DECREASE IN CASH

(\$720.43)

CASH BALANCE AT END OF PERIOD

\$42,138.43

- Teacher grants expenses were teacher grant requests from spring 2020.
- Question from Sarah Bissonnette: Clarifying the difference between teacher stipend (limit of \$50) and funds request (the latter needs to be voted on by the group).
- **ACTION: The group approved September 2020 Treasurer's Report**

New Business

- **Goal setting:** As we can't do our normal set of activities, what do we want the year to look like? The group brainstormed the following four categories.
 - **TEACHER/STAFF SUPPORT:**

- We didn't get to do the traditional Teacher Appreciation for FY20/21. One idea is to put together 3 wellness basket/packets that we can "raffle" off to teachers in each school (no \$\$, just through a drawing of names).
 - How can we assess teachers' needs for this endeavor? Lynn Garcia can send out a survey for JFK teachers (and could extend to MS and HS). Massages and hand wax therapy have been a hit in the past. Sarah Bissonette mentioned soccer balls (recess time is limited) and suggested healthy snack and face masks (eye masks, not COVID masks).
 - Amelie Thurston has a massage contact who is willing to donate gift certificates for 2 massages. He also does discounts for health care workers that he is willing to extend to WSD teachers.
 - Is there anything special the school would like from us from afar?
 - **FUNDRAISING:** Continue fundraising somehow, despite limitations. Lydia explained PTO responsibilities to new attendees. The group clarified that we as a group can decide how we want to spend the money, but there have been expectations in the past on the part of the school (for example, JFK field trips). We do have flexibility with our \$\$ allocation. Note that while we can't do our traditional activities/fundraising THIS YEAR, we are still planning to go back to those things. See 2020/2021 budget for guidelines on the assumptions made for the year. One idea: silent auction.
 - **KID FUN:** Some kind of replacement for dances? Can we do a drive-in movie? Concerts? Talent Show options?
 - **COMMUNITY INCLUSION (see below)**
- **Heart of Winooski (HOW) Foundation**
 - **General update:** Last year Emily Hecker came to a PTO meeting and presented on the foundation. EH and Laura met 10/20 to discuss PTO/HOW going forward. There is one spot on the HOW board for a PTO member (Arica Bronz is willing to do this). Where is the overlap between the 2 groups (both have the same general goal [support the school])? HOW's fundraising is currently dedicated to capital funds project. HOW goals seem to be larger projects (e.g., a new library) than those of PTO.
 - Emily and Laura to meet once/month. EH could send grant options to PTO and help us with that. EH as Communications Officer also supports PTO by getting the word out about our events.
 - Could PTO request funds from HOW? Unclear but it's our understanding that probably not. Board makes decision. Maybe something to explore in the future (once the capital fund is no longer a priority)?
 - There may be some confusion in the community about the difference between the two groups: HOW: 12-members, need to apply. PTO: Open to everyone. Can we work with EH to clarify this?
 - **Liaison from PTO**
 - **Time commitments:** HOW holds meetings quarterly. These were supposed to start last year but go put on hold because of COVID.
 - **Expectations:**
 - Should the PTO position on the board be an officer? The group determined that wouldn't be necessary. This role is an advisory one, not necessarily one of identifying/applying for grant opportunities that might be appropriate to PTO (as opposed to HOW).

- How much reporting back to PTO is needed? Could this just be done at a monthly meeting? The grant applications could be handled by the PTO as a whole. Joy is willing to work with Arica to get more info (with Arica in the lead).
- **Outreach and inclusion:** Laura met with Kirsten Kollgaard 10/21 regarding reaching a broader audience. Sean MacMannon asked that the PTO continue efforts to include more diverse populations from our community.
 - *How to make meetings more accessible:* According to KK, a PTO meeting is not really something some families would feel comfortable attending (so the recent phone message wasn't translated). Liaisons are spread really thin, so having them attend Zoom meetings for interpretation services could be really challenging. It was suggested that we find a way to provide a general overview of the agenda and our procedures for new attendees (including for non-English speakers). Could we record meetings and/or include students to support their parents to translate? Jess has some contacts for translators. Should we budget for interpretive services?
 - *Next steps:* Laura to meet with liaisons (they're the ones we need to start with). Arica suggesting doing work on dismantling white supremacy. Can we take advantage of this time without our traditional activities? Note that this kind of work is going to take a long time and any committee members need to be prepared for the work to be not super efficient.
 - *Focus groups:* A suggestion was to conduct focus groups with groups to find out how best to connect.
- **Raffle (drawing) - wellness baskets for staff.** Should we have more baskets for JFK since there are more teachers? Suggested that we focus on three baskets initially and then draw from the survey results (above) for additional gift ideas? We have gift certificates from last year (\$20 for Price Chopper, \$25 for Home Brew Supply) that we could potentially use. It would be great if we can continue ahead with community donations. ***ACTION: The group approved spending up to \$300 on the first round of 3 baskets.***
- Boosters - separate budget line item?
- Pumpkin carving: ***Everyone is encouraged to carve pumpkins for the community.***
- Spirit wear update: ***We will get quarterly reports and a check. Amanda (our contact) is in the process of building a dashboard for schools. Stay tuned.***

Funds Requests

- 5 teacher stipend requests since our last meeting, no additional fund requests

Committees

- *Previous Committees:*
 - *Holiday Vendor Craft Fair Committee*
 - *Fundraising Committee*
 - *Dance Committee*
 - *Fun Fair Committee*
 - *Talent Show Committee*
 - *JFK Yearbook*
 - *Communications*
 - *Boosters Committee*
- *Potential New Committees for 2020/2021 school year:*

- *Community Inclusion and Engagement Committee*
 - *Teacher and Staff Support Committee*
- ***ACTION: Kate to send around sign-ups for committees for the year, focusing on the new (COVID-era) ones where appropriate.***

Upcoming PTO Events/Support

- ?? Remote Talent Show
- ?? Golf Tournament

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 18

ZOOM CHAT:

From Lucy D'Aponte to Everyone: 07:17 PM

I'm sorry I have to leave the meeting to pick up my child. Thank you all so much!

From Polestar USA to Everyone: 07:19 PM

aricaharmony23@yahoo.com

802.922.5090

From joyyonan-renold to Everyone: 07:20 PM

Got it!

From Jessica Audette to Everyone: 07:22 PM

Was your information call about PTO last night translated and sent out to other families in a separate call?

They need more information

From Lynn Garcia to Everyone: 07:27 PM

A possible touch point might be at the Veggie Van Go

On certain Wednesdays. Published on the district calendar.

From Jessica Audette to Everyone: 07:28 PM

Or tape our meetings and see if we can get the language translated.

From Sarah Bissonette to Everyone: 07:29 PM

Great idea... the challenge is there are so many languages represented in our school

Maybe the liaisons can take turns at the meetings?

From joyyonan-renold to Everyone: 07:30 PM

I'm wondering if the children of parents that want to be included would be willing to join the meetings, and/or if that could be presented as an option to them.

As the children usually speak English, or perhaps some of them will.

From Sarah Bissonette to Everyone: 07:31 PM

At least if we continue zoom meeting this can be done from home making it easier to get an older student to translate too

From joyyonan-renold to Everyone: 07:31 PM
Yes!

From Lynn Garcia to Everyone: 07:34 PM
Sorry, I have to leave the meeting. See you next time. Have a good evening.

From Taylor to Everyone: 07:39 PM
got to go pick up my child see ya all next meeting

From Joseph Smith to Everyone: 07:43 PM
Sorry I got to go. See you next month.

From joyyonan-renold to Everyone: 07:46 PM
Massages, gift certificates for alcohol, and candles to start with. IMO

From Tori Cleiland to Everyone: 07:57 PM
I have anohter meeting at 8. See you next month!

From Polestar USA to Everyone: 07:58 PM
Sorry y'all I have to sign off for the night. Thanks!

From chris to Everyone: 07:59 PM
I need to run too. I;ll be chairman of the craft fair again and be on the boosters committee. Chris will be on the boosters committee too