

PTO Meeting Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Attendees: Laura Lee, Kate Simone, Lynn Garcia, Jessica Audette, Jennifer Mizilia, Sarah McGowan-Freije, Joe Smith, Kate Cappleman Sinz, Tiffany Demore, Arica Bronz, Amelie Thurston, Joy Yonan Renold, Lucy D'Aponte, Lydia Mungeon

Welcome/Introductions

Timekeeper: Amelie

Land Acknowledgment

*The PTO would like to acknowledge that we meet in community on m landm. Our city of Winooski reminds us with its Abenaki name, "land of the wild onion" of the i mini people that lived and stewarded the land of Vermont long before the Europeans arrived in North America. It is with respect and gratitude that we work towards practices of cultural equity to benefit current and is future generations. **Joy read the land acknowledgement.***

Secretary's Report

- ***ACTION: The group approved the March meeting minutes.***

Treasurer's Report

Revenue:

Interest	\$0.04
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Expenses:

Funds requests:	\$300.00
MHS yearbooks:	\$200.00
Bank charges:	\$5.00

Cash balance at end of period: \$47,748.87

- ***ACTION: The group approved the March treasurer's report.***

New Business

- Iftar - May 4th. ***Kirsten Kollegaard reached out to Laura about students who want to host an Iftar after school and join a Zoom call at 8:30 that night. The students are applying for a community grant and also need help distributing meals. No info on exact timing yet (mid-afternoon). Volunteers to help out (somewhat depending on timing): Kate C-S, Arica, Kate S., Amelie, Joe Smith, Lucy, and Sarah (until 5).***

Funds Requests

- Family support - 5th grade student with leukemia, younger brother in kindergarten: **Sara Raabe spoke to Laura a couple of weeks ago. Every Friday, JFK sends home something for the 5th grader and his younger brother. Would the PTO be interested in taking a Friday? We have a family support fund we could tap. Laura will circle back to find out more. Lynn had some kids sign a fleece blanket to give to him this week. Restaurant gift certificates or Visa gift card? He's also into fishing. Tiffany says the kindergartener likes Legos, connects, drawing, chalk, and bubbles and will be playing baseball. Jess Audette recommends gift certificates, noting that family is also getting support from Baja hockey. Laura will talk to Sara R. about the plan going forward and will report back to the group. Lynn will also check with Jaycee Knapp to get her ideas.**
 - **ACTION: Group voted in favor of allocating \$500 to the family.**
- Dennis Barcomb (Boosters) (see below):
 - **Boosters money is recorded separately. This would come out of Boosters expenditures. Under normal circumstances we would track this with more data. ACTION: The group approved this funds request.**
- \$200 for Vermont Patriots Scholarships (see letter below) - Tiffany Demore (3rd grade) and Elizabeth Wood (**full disclosure: Sarah and Tiffany are coaches, Laura's kids ppp part of the program but wouldn't benefit from this benefit.**) **VT Patriots did a big push this year to include New American children and low-income families and went way overboard on their scholarships. The group is working with WMA and another program for transportation. Philosophy behind VT Patriots is that they don't turn anyone away. They have 130 kids this year. \$20 per child includes PPP pp, socks, and a ball for younger kids. There have been**
- **I p for gear. Jess Audette asked if this is something we'd be expected to chip in to on a regular basis? This isn't a city or a school program. Next year they're going to look into families sponsoring additional children. And the board didn't spur this request, Tiffany Demore was behind this. She's also sent funds requests to some other local organizations. Parents speak very highly of the organization, a lot of coaches! (Group held off the vote until the end. ACTION: The group approved the funds request of \$200 without requiring the 2 teachers to dip into their stipends.)**
- Iftar - \$1,000. **This is a "student-run initiative" from Caitlyn McCloud's pod are waiting for community grant. If they don't get that grant, would the PTO be able to support. HS teacher Caitlyn (last name?) is involved. This sounds like they're trying to feed anyone who is interested, which might be why the request is so large. The group noted that it's pretty short notice but a good way to support and engage with our community. Last day of Ramadan is May 12. Joe expressed hope that we reinforce how funds requests are supposed to happen. Jessica said if we're to provide the \$\$ could we ask that Winooski PTO is referenced. Lynn would like a bit more info on the details (amounts, recipients, etc.). The group agreed to vote by mail once we have more details. Jessica mentioned that we rarely have**

given this much money. ACTION: Laura to get more info and the group will vote by email.

HOW Update (Joy): Shared minutes from March 11 meeting. Nicole Mace presented the financial report. Raising \$1M by 2022 would allow for \$7M in tax savings in total. Looking for large donor. It was also suggested that they ask people to donate their stimulus checks. Working on mission statement. Group is brainstorming fundraising ideas, etc. How are notes shared, are they public? Kate and Joy to research and share with the group as possible.

Committee Updates

- Fundraising Committee
 - Dog Show May 22 (Jessica)
 - Update: **Jess got the go ahead with the event. Insurance is confirmed. She is meeting with the city next week.**
 - Sponsorship letter: **Who can help? Need to visit businesses to get \$100 sponsorship (3 gift certificates to be used for prizes for a specific category). Jess needs 10 people. Laura, Sarah, Joy, Kate, and Arica acn help. After confirming sponsors, Jess will work on the flyers/marketing.**
 - Funds request for Joe the DJ. :): **ACTION: The group approved \$200 for this.**
 - Bake sale: **Jess needs help researching COVID restrictions and buying from Costco. This will be more like a concession sale. Sarah can help.**
 - Fun Run (Chris):
 - 4/21: Zoom call scheduled with city event planning group
 - 5/3: Presentation to City Council for approval
 - Event will need to be pushed back until August or even September.
 - Golf Tournament (Chris):
 - August 21 at West Bolton Golf Course. The contact is Jeff Brown, and Chris is waiting to hear back about the meal package. **Same as last time 10AM start time. Need final #s to figure out what to charge people,.**
- Teacher and Staff Support Committee (Kate)
 - Checks for liaisons: **Thank you cards with checks were distributed this week.**
 - Teacher Appreciation Week, May 3-7, 2021
 - Card: **These will be going to the printer soon.**
 - Gift Certificate: **We are arranging final payment with Morning Light Bakery for \$10 gift certificates.**
 - Flower seeds? **This would push us over our budgeted limit, so we're going to remove this from the package.**

- Retiring teachers and staff. *(Still waiting on final numbers, Krista will get back to Laura after break). Maybe we could hit Michelle up for Claussen's discount? For JFK, Joan Benjamin is retiring. Proposed to approve up to \$15/person. If it's more than 10 people, we'll revisit with the group. ACTION: The group approved \$15 per retiring teacher or teacher/staff person moving on after at least 5 years.*
 - Video. *We had put together a video/slideshow with music last year to thank the school (posted to facebook) and Laura received feedback that teachers would really like to see something like this again. The committee encouraged all folks to help get the word out and get people to send in submissions. It's fine to send via text to Laura. Submission via email OK as well.*
- Community Engagement and Inclusion/Antiracism Committee (Arica)
 - We are meeting regularly and working diligently toward the goal of having more participation in the PTO by all stakeholders. There are no quick fixes for recruitment, particularly in this pandemic.
 - We are revisiting the name of this committee while staying committed to the work of antiracism as an organization while also focusing on inclusive recruitment
 - Our belief that anti racism work is crucial to the future success of the PTO and for the successful operation of the Winooski School District as a whole.
 - We are working on regular WSD newsletter presence (electronic and hard copy) to get the word out about what we've done this year as an organization and what events are coming up and to encourage folks to join us.
 - ***Arica read out the bullet items. Committee name discussion underway. We've also talked about splitting the committee into 2. Based on continued feedback on this, all PTO members will be invited to a special meeting outside of regular meetings to discuss this issue. Details to come.***
- Boosters Committee:
 - Dennis Barcomb is looking for Boosters to provide Home Depot buckets for the HS/MS baseball teams and HS/MS softball teams. He's looking for 30@ \$3.78= \$113.40. Due to social distancing, the players can't sit together in the dugout so he thinks they can use the buckets as seats. ***(The group voted on this above.)***
- Craft Fair Committee (Sarah):
 - WSD has approved this for November 2021 unless there are further state/CDC restrictions on gatherings.
 - ***ACTION: Sarah to reach out to crafters. Applications to go out next month.***
- Talent Show (Joe):

- The talent show was a success. We had about 20 viewers on Zoom. We had a wide range of students represented.
- Slideshow posted on PTO facebook page 4/13.

2021-2022 Officer Elections Candidates: *No new candidates have stepped forward. Laura, Kate, Lucy, and Amelie are willing to run again for the same positions.*

End-of-Year Survey (from Officers to Members): *Look for a survey from the group for constructive feedback.*

Next Meeting: May 19

March 28, 2021

Dear Winooski PTO,

First I want to thank you for all you are doing during this challenging time for our students. With that being said, I am writing this letter to ask for your support in helping us find the funds for some of our students to play organized soccer for the first time ever.

Vermont Patriots Integrative Soccer Academy provides an accessible, inclusive, high quality soccer program to children aged 3 - 12. The Vermont Patriots (VTP) is more than just a soccer team. As an integrative educational program, the team provides a framework that helps all participants develop into well adjusted, resilient, and productive community members. Educational/informational topics under three broad subject areas - healthy lifestyles, environmental and energy conservation, and financial literacy are embedded within the training sessions. The program seeks to teach more than soccer skills and allows children to gain more than the established social/emotional and physical benefits of youth team sports.

The cost per season is kept intentionally low - \$20 for Winooski residents and \$25 for residents of other towns - to ensure the program is available to all children regardless of cultural backgrounds, socio-economic circumstances, and family situations. We never want money to be a barrier to children playing soccer. The home pitch, lovingly named the Patch of Passion, is at Landry Park in Winooski. The program serves over 100 children per year with indoor and outdoor, competitive and recreational programs. It is currently run entirely by volunteers.

Now, more than ever before, children need to be physically active and have positive connections to supportive adults and healthy, compassionate communities.

Engaging in sports improves the quality and quantity of social interactions and has a positive effect on mental health. Sport teaches children how to deal with adversity by allowing them to experience making mistakes in very low stakes situations with no ongoing consequences. Playing organized sport instills confidence in children and gives them a sense of belonging. They are part of something bigger than themselves and can be seen that they matter. Not everyone is the star of the team but everyone can contribute something. We see this again and again every year during VTP practices, games, and off pitch interactions and activities.

As well as the health benefits, playing sports helps children develop cognitive and non cognitive skills. These include the problem solving and analytical skills that are

immediately beneficial in school and lay a firm foundation for employment in adulthood. Non-cognitive skills include motivation, collaboration, confidence, perceptions of self worth, time management, preparedness and social skills. These skills help children in school in the short term and positively impact employment opportunities and potential in the future.

Social connections, resilience and self confidence are key factors in preventing substance use disorder in later life. Building these protective factors is particularly important for children living in poverty or suffering from the effects of toxic stress caused by exposure to adverse childhood experiences, as is the case for many children in our home community of Winooski.

In thinking about all of these important factors for our community, I ask that you consider making a donation of \$200 to the Vermont Patriots to fund 10 students. I know this seems like a lot, but Elizabeth Wood and I do not plan on using our yearly \$50 stipend that you offer, we would be happy to have you use that to cover half of our request.

Again thank you for your time and all you do for not only the school but the great community.

Fondly,

Tiffany Demore and Elizabeth Wood