



Hilton Head Island High School
HHI Seahawks PTSO, Inc.
November 14, 2023

Call to Order, Welcome & Sign In- 12:30pm

Attendance: Kelly Ruckno, Tina Rohr, Angie Greenfield, Rebecca Mastrorocco, Elizabeth Ott, Audrey Clayton, Jessica Howard, Klinton Aites

Principal's Report- *Mr. Aites (Mr. Schidrich was absent)*

Recent Student Deaths: Last week, there were 2 deaths involving Seahawks. The first was a current student, whose family wanted to keep the news as private as possible. The mother did not give permission to the school to disclose any information. Attempts were made from the Guidance Department to contact her, but she asked that they not call her anymore. Grief counselors have been made available for students who do know about the incident, although the school has not been able to discuss it. The obituary has now been published and the funeral is set for this Saturday. We will try to clarify, via family friends, whether the mother is ready for the school to announce details. The second death was that of a recent (2023) graduate who was in her home asleep at night when a car drove up and opened fire on the house. The student was struck and died. Her family did give permission to disclose information. There has been an independent movement to collect money to help with funeral costs.

Student Competition: Our Cheer Team will be competing at States this Saturday in Columbia. There will be a Parade of Champions this Friday prior to their departure.

Facility Improvements: The Weight Room has received some new equipment.

Homecoming Dance: We sold over 500 tickets, whereas usually we sell around 300. The PTSO had been asked to supply refreshments, which we had already stocked (\$250) for 300 guests, so we needed more, which Rebecca purchased at the last minute (\$167). Thank you, Rebecca! Despite the fact that we had record ticket sales, actual attendance was around the usual 300. Some students came for a brief time and then left.

This led to questions about funding. Tickets were \$10/student, so where does that money go to? There was confusion as to who pays for this dance. And furthermore, which classes pay for which events? And what exactly are the Class Dues (which we can pay for at Back to School Day) used for? Mr Aites returned with answers. Class Dues follow that class from year to year. So money paid this year by freshmen are dog-eared for the "Class of 2027." This will ultimately cover graduation events, like the Senior Breakfast, Senior t-shirt, etc. The honor cords are paid for by the school's general fund, so that does not come out of the Class Dues. Another event is the Powder Puff Games during Homecoming. Ticket sales from the games go to benefit the senior class of that year. The Homecoming Dance is a Freshman Class fundraiser. Prom is funded by prom ticket sales. The school tries to spend all senior funds by graduation. After graduation, sometimes there is money left over in a Class's account. However, the Class of 2023 had a negative balance after graduation.

Referendum: We are so excited that the Referendum passed with last week's vote! The planners are already working on alternatives for the issue of parking spots which have to be commandeered. This could affect about 300 spots in the front lot. Initially, the groundbreaking was going to occur in March or April of 2024. However, there is a possibility that it may be delayed until as late as June. In the meantime, some students have been parking at the church across the street. Reportedly, the church does not have a problem with this because they aren't using the lot during the school days. The new Middle School lot was supposed to be paved by this time, but it is yet unfinished. Audrey suggested to have Dual Enrollment students share one spot, in order to conserve needed space.

President's Report –*Kelly Ruckno*

Approval of October Minutes: Jessica's name was inadvertently left off the first draft of the minutes. Also, we've learned that the stipend which the teachers are given at the beginning of each school year is currently \$450/yr, instead of \$300. Tina will correct those, prior to posting on the website. Motion for the corrected minutes was made by Elizabeth, seconded by Jessica. Minutes approved.

Teacher support

- a. Parent-Teacher Conferences on 10/17 went well. The teachers were pleasantly surprised.
- b. Provided gift cards for prizes for Homecoming Door Decorating and for the Sunshine Fund.
- c. Upcoming Teacher Cookie Exchange. Date will be 12/15, immediately after dismissal.
- d. Teacher Stipend- Found out that the District actually gives each teacher a \$450 stipend at the beginning of the school year for classroom supplies. These funds have to be used by 3/15. In light of this fact, we have decided not to offer a stipend to teachers for the second semester, but if any teacher has an immediate need, they should ask.
- e. Can consider having a Teacher Wish List. This was one of the goals of Pizza Lunch with the Principal, so teachers could have face time to express their needs. Community donors like to donate tangible items. Can also consider starting a Teacher Grant to focus on assisting non-traditional classes, like in the CTE field. If we take this on, we would need explicit criteria and a clear deadline (January was suggested). Audrey will draft a flyer for the teacher mailboxes.
- f. The Music Dept. was able to self-fund the purchase of a bassoon.

Student support

- a. Provided building materials for making of birdhouses that were then donated to a retirement home. (Shared photos.)
- b. Discussed ideas for leftover funds from Class Dues. Suggestions included start a scholarship, use for reunion needs, or purchase cap&gowns for students in need.
- c. Honor Roll program was restarted, with a total of 617 students qualifying. There were 234 Principal's List students who made all As. They received an ice cream dessert, coupon for 10% off in the School Store, and a Giuseppe's coupon for a free slice of pizza. There were 383 Distinguished Honor Roll students who made all As or Bs for the 1st quarter. Those students received an ice cream dessert.

Seahawk Support Circle (SSC) Report- *Audrey Clayton*

Holiday Survival Bags: The packing date will be Sunday, Dec. 17. We have asked All Saints Church for new backpacks, large jars of peanut butter, large boxes of cereal, laundry pods, and \$25 Walmart gift cards. They will be delivering on 12/6, probably around 1pm. The PTO will have a SignUp page for school parents to help with other donation items, and these need to be brought in by 12/6. We will purchase anything missing. Tina will get the tote bags. Rebecca will get toothbrushes from ROC Dental.

Congregation Beth Yam will also contribute gift cards again this year. Rebecca will also talk to Charlotte about the store stock, make sure we have enough t-shirts and sweatshirts to give out. Then we'll get new stock in January for when the students return from break. Audrey will get numbers and sizes from Mrs Lopez.

School Store- *Rebecca Mastrorocco*

The Store is doing great. Ashley Best has taken on opening the store on Fridays. Sometimes she doesn't have a partner but she's very capable of handling that. Thanks to the Square app, it's so easy to pull the financials. We've made \$13,000 in profit so far this year. Since business usually slows second semester, we will decrease the number of volunteers to 2 people beginning in January.

Treasurer's Report– *Ellen Simmons*

Bank Balance: No report, Ellen was unable to attend.

Bargain Box Grant: Our annual report to the Bargain Box on how monies were spent will be due soon. Please remember to turn in all Support Circle shopping receipts to Ellen.

Tax-free Status: Someone asked if the paperwork to maintain our tax status had been filed on time. It was due on November 1st. We do have an accountant who should have taken care of that. Need to check with Ellen.

Calendar:

Next SIC meeting: Thursday, November 16th, 5:30 p.m.

Next PTSO meeting: Tuesday, December 12th, 12:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn made by Rebecca, seconded by Audrey. Meeting adjourned.

CHR