

RHS PTO General Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2024

RHS Black Box, 5:30pm

In Attendance: Sara Whitehead, Eileen Fonseca, Aracelis Pèrez, Kate Quinn, Joseph MacNamara, Hallie Ambler, Roopa Anantareddy, Gretchen Gerrow, Julie Brennan, Suzanne Bowers, Vicki Browne, Lexie Katz, Larissa Console, Fran Munoz, Oksana Coyle

Sara Whitehead, PTO President, called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

SW welcomed everyone to the PTO meeting and those present introduced themselves.

President's Update – Sara Whitehead, President

SW reports that fundraising is going well, and the PTO is always looking for new ideas. The shoe fundraiser is underway and tonight's Takeout Tuesday is at Honeygrow. Dr MacNamara said he will send a reminder about the shoe collection to students and staff. SW hopes to open a new Spirit Gear shop on Monday, for delivery after Spring Break. The PTO raised \$367 from the last Spirit Gear fundraiser, and that check should arrive soon.

The PTO sponsored a Check-In Coffee this morning which was well attended.

The next ASK meeting is immediately after this meeting in the Black Box and via Zoom. There will be an open forum to ask questions; some have already been submitted anonymously.

SW reported that the Executive Board has been meeting monthly via Zoom. Meeting minutes from these meetings and the October General Meeting are available for review.

The PTO is looking to find candidates for next year to fill positions on the Executive Board and lead Committees. Please contact SW (or any member of the Executive Board) with interest or suggestions.

Dr. MacNamara commended SW for her work as PTO President and for appearing before the teachers earlier in the day. He also offered to get something out to parents to boost PTO involvement, as he believes strong parent groups, strong teacher groups and strong students all interrelate.

Treasurer's Update – Eileen Fonseca, Treasurer

EF distributed her Treasurer's Report and budget as it stands as of 2/5 at the start of the meeting. She highlighted that there is a \$45,180.02 balance and the fact that the PTO has raised \$11,294.98 so far this year. She noted that the flag and magnet sales have exceeded budget to date, and SW has a quote to purchase more flags (only 1 left). The PTO earned \$561.18 in interest on a CD that matured. EF noted that most expenses occur at the end of the year, and the donations to classes and organizations start in April.

Venmo

SW reported that there had been a lot of discussion in the Executive Board regarding use of Venmo, as it has been a very successful platform for receiving donations. However, using personal accounts for PTO business is tricky, and SW has had to keep very detailed records of all PTO transactions. She does not feel comfortable with this practice and the Executive Board agrees that the PTO should open its own account to make Venmo transactions more efficient and transparent. As Venmo requires a cellphone number to open an account, SW and RA explored getting the PTO an inexpensive cellphone plan; SW found a way to get a free phone number through GoogleTalk, but there are potential security issues with these numbers. Venmo offers a Non Profit account that can be linked to the PTO bank account, which comes with fees, but seems to be a cost of doing organization business via Venmo. The PTO will try to manage its use of Venmo to minimize fees (we do not foresee paying *out* via Venmo).

SW asked for a vote as to whether the PTO should open a Venmo Non Profit account linked to it as a charitable organization?

An anonymous ballot was collected by HA, secretary. HA announced at the end of the meeting that the vote was a unanimous "Yes".

District-Wide Gift Card Fundraiser – Vicki Browne, District-wide liaison

Vicki Browne thanked the PTO for its support of the gift card donations to students in need in December. The District-wide PTO distributed \$4,250 in gift cards to students.

CD Investment Recommendation – Eileen Fonseca, PTO Treasurer

EF reported that the PTO spends most of its money in April through June; she is expecting to pay out \$15,700 in that time frame. As a result, she recommends placing some of the cash in the bank account in tiered CDs to earn interest on the balance not being used. She proposes investing as follows:

- * \$10,300 in a 3-month CD (Feb 7-May 7) at 3%
- * \$16,000 in a 6-month CD (Feb 7-Aug 7) at 5%
- * \$8,600 in a 9-month CD (Feb 7-Nov 7) at 4%

With those investments, \$10,281.02 would remain in the account.

Discussion was had about these recommendations. There was a question about why the PTO would invest \$8,600 at 4% rather than add that amount to the \$16,000 at 5% for 6 months. EF advised that it is a strategy to hedge against the chance that interest rates go down in the longer term, but she's willing to combine the two lots into one larger 6 month CD. There was a question about what to do if organizations and classes want their money before May 7. EF feels that the \$10,281 left as cash in the account should cover those circumstances if they arise.

There was discussion about how to phrase the question to be voted on, and HA suggested that the PTO vote on whether to accept the proposal as set forth by the Treasurer, and if the vote did not pass, we could rephrase the question.

SW called for a vote on whether to accept the Treasurer's proposal for CD investments.

An anonymous ballot was collected by HA, secretary. HA announced at the end of the meeting that the vote result was 10 "Yes" votes, 3 in favor of combining the \$16,000 and \$8,600 into a 6 month CD, and 2 abstentions.

Lower Merion Week

Lexie Katz and Larissa Console organize the hallway decorations for LM Week and explained the size and scope of the effort. This celebration is not in the school's budget, despite assumptions to the contrary. They are looking for ways to find additional support – both in person and monetary – to help out next year. Specifically, water and snacks, as well as parents to supervise the work after school hours would be much appreciated. They also suggested help getting LM Week t-shirts to those students who might not otherwise get one would be nice.

Discussion was had about the signups that were distributed and how the PTO could help in that effort, as well as prompts to sponsor a student when LM T-shirt orders are taken. Discussion of the past fundraisers described a "Sneak Peek" of the LM Week hallways at \$10, which have been done for a number of years. Lexie and Larissa described their plans to try to get more of the district involved, i.e. selling LM Week t-shirts to middle schoolers and/or elementary students. It was suggested that they create a LM Week shirt targeted at parents, especially those of seniors. The teachers said they are always looking for new acts and talents!

SW suggested that the PTO could add a PTO group to support the staff's LM Week efforts. The group could be tasked with organizing snack sign-ups (or donations in lieu), paint party volunteers, and volunteers to watch the dance rehearsals. She will also discuss with the Executive Board adding a line item to the PTO budget.

Grant Request: Picnic Benches

Michele Wetzel, RHS Librarian, submitted a grant request for \$3,200 for two picnic benches for the courtyard across from the library. **This amount goes over the PTO's \$1,000 budget for annual grants, particularly after payout of other grants previously approved this year.** Julie Brennan reported that the junior class has submitted a similar request to the Radnor Education Foundation. SW said Katie Quigley, the REF liaison said REF is leaning toward the junior class's request.

Dr. MacNamara informed the group that all students want picnic benches outside and all students would benefit.

SW suggested that the PTO grant 10% of the request to show cooperation with REF to provide the benches within the PTO's budget.

There was discussion of the grant timing at REF, and at what stage the REF grants requests are. There was also talk of the grant requests being from different requestors, and if they were for the same products, etc.

SW concluded after the discussion that, while the PTO is supportive of the grant request and would be willing to partially fund it in conjunction with REF, more information needed before the PTO is in a position to vote on the grant. The discussion was tabled for this meeting.

By-Law Revision: Term Limits

SW reported that the Executive Board has been discussing revising the By-Laws. Time will not allow for review of all of the points up for revision, but adding a Term Limit has been discussed at length and is ready to be presented for consideration. There are no term limits in the current By-Laws and there has been discussion to change that to make sure there are new persons and ideas coming in, and people do not feel discouraged from signing up.

There was some concern that, if the PTO is having trouble finding people to volunteer, why the PTO would restrict its volunteer pool. SW suggested language *recommending* a two-year consecutive term limit rather than mandatory language to address those concerns. Specifically, she proposes adding the following language to the PTO By-Laws at Article VIII, new section K:

K. It is recommended that no one person hold the same position on the Executive Board (this does not include subcommittees) for more than two consecutive years. All attempts should be made to fill roles after the two year mark, or when the appointed person decides to step down prior to the two years. If no one volunteers for the role and the person currently holding the position would like to remain, the executive board will take a vote to keep that person in the role for one school year.

There was additional discussion on whether it was appropriate for the Executive Board to vote to keep someone on for more than two years, or if it would be more appropriate for the vote to be taken at a General Meeting. While the By-Laws give significant power to the Executive Board to fill vacancies and create new positions, the actual election of the Executive Board is at the General Meeting. **Some people believe that filling the slate prior to the election at the General Meeting is within the Executive Board's scope. This process may be something that can be reviewed in future By-Law revision.**

SW called for a vote on adding the above language to the PTO By-Laws at Article VIII, new section K.

An anonymous ballot was collected by HA, secretary. HA announced at the end of the meeting that the vote result was 8 "Yes" votes and 2 "No" votes, so the term limit language will be added to the By-Laws.

Additional revisions will be discussed by the Executive Board and presented in accordance with the By-Laws.

SW thanked everyone for coming and encouraged people stay after for the ASK meeting.

Meeting adjourned 7:05pm

Respectfully submitted,

Hallie Ambler, RHS PTO Secretary