

Orchard Home and School Association November 2022 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order : 9:14AM

Attendees (Principal and Board Members): Mary Ferreri; Co-President: Patty Leung; Co-President: Tia Ly; Vice President: Becky Chin; Treasurer: Bonita Shimpfky; Corresponding Secretary: Sarah McCourt; Recording Secretary: Jen Zolcinski

Absent: Assistant Treasurer: Shweta Dixit

Other Attendees: Ms. Saglimbeni; Marya Larkin; Liz Suri; Melanie Amores; Ashley Laub; Suzette dela Rama; Jimmy Judge; Britt Tunick

Via Zoom: Segametsi Moatlhaping

Patty requested approval of October Minutes and Jimmy Judge approved said minutes.

Co-President's Welcome (Patty Leung):

Patty thanked Jenna and Mrs. LaBarr for both author visits, including the upcoming one that includes a Ridgewood resident as the author. Participating are Kindergarten, along with their 5th grade buddies, and 1st Grade.

Treasurer's Report:

Bonita - There is a current balance of \$91,912.90. Year-to-date Net Income is \$3,173.12. Year-to-date Gross Profit is \$6,780.12. HSA member dues of \$2,879 have been collected, which represents 72% of the school families. Friends of Orchard campaign is starting soon. LY received \$7,432.82.

Orchard wear netted around \$500-\$600. There is an outstanding check from last year's Orchard wear of \$1,200, so it will hit the current line item. So for next year, we should keep this in mind for budget that we

will have this payment. For the Jingle Bell Jog, we cut a check to Ridgewood Social Services in the amount of \$1,856. There is \$8k with the BOE for flex seating and \$14k field trips.

Bonita and Shweta ask that when making a payment, write what the payment is for and the student's name, whether you pay via PayPal or check.

Vice President's Report:

Becky received a response regarding her request for DEI volunteers and will reach out to those volunteers. If there are any other committees that need more help, please let her know.

Corresponding Secretary's Report:

Sarah will correct the calendar to show that there is school on 1/2/23 (even though it is a federal holiday).

Committee Reports:

Group Spot

Given by Patty in Tia's absence: 162 families have paid dues. They will put out a last call to submit dues. They have a template and will send out soon. If any errors are noted in Group Spot, please inform Tia, as the dates were entered a while back. The posts are getting viewed, and there has even been some correspondence (for example, comments on the greens sales). Some people have submitted more fund for dues, since we can't do friends and family anymore (i.e., to cover the PayPal fees). If you want directory, don't forget to actually download group spot. The staff list is to be updated.

Author Visit

Given by Patty in Jenna's absence: as noted during the welcome, the new one is upcoming.

Fifth Grade Fundraisers

Last day to order T-shirts for the 5th grade fundraising is Friday, 11/18. Cards have been delivered from the card fundraiser and will be distributed over the next day or so. The Goffle Brook Farms greens sales has begun and you can purchase through the school, and they will be delivered right after Thanksgiving, or purchase in store and mention the Orchard School Fundraiser.

Co-President's Report (Patty Leung):

Patty discussed the November Federated HSA meeting. The Late Start conversation is being revived. The search for the new superintendent is ongoing. There are opportunities to voice your thoughts regarding the characteristics of a good superintendent. The survey sent out just closed on Monday. There is a lot of aide staffing activities happening. There was a job fair to fulfill those needs. Orchard doesn't have those specific needs at the moment. There is a second job fair this morning. Dr. Fitz informed them that going forward, aides will be referred to as paraprofessionals. Dr. Fitz and the President of the BOE are doing coffee and conversation as an offline meet and greet if you have questions. The last one was this past Monday and another one is coming up Dec. 12th during the day. They will alternate daytime and evening.

The Wizards game fundraiser tends to raise a lot of money, approximately \$25k last year. Federated VPs worked together to decide what to do with those funds and decided on a mental health initiative. They will ask the administrators to see what they think would be helpful for this initiative, such as having special speakers, etc. This year's game will be held on Wednesday, January 25th, 2023 and Thursday, January 26th, 2023. Tickets usually go on sale in December.

With regard to insurance for events, there is a new contact and there should be a faster turnaround time. We basically need insurance for all instances. For example, if a DJ is on property, or a Food truck, etc., they should have insurance and they not be charging us for it.

Patty sat in meeting with the Interim Superintendent, all HSA presidents in the district, and the company hired to recruit a new superintendent. They are listening to what we are saying, such as please involve the parents, the principals, etc. The representative that ran this meeting left with an extensive list of what we think will make a good superintendent to use for questions in their interviews. They are doing a great job trying to get a good picture of what the stakeholders thing we need.

Teachers' Report:

Mary Saglimbeni, 3rd Grade Teacher - The teachers thank you for all the support from home, such as the snacks, the homework, the activities, etc. The book fair was wonderful, the teachers thank you for the wishlist items and the Scholastic dollars. It's very nice to add more to their libraries. They also enjoyed the author visit from Jason Patterson, noting that the kids love graphic novels now. They also thank us for the flex seating. The teachers collaborated and shared what they think would work. Each teacher came up with their own way, and it's been very positive. They also really like the story walk outside. The kids say they read it during recess, look at the pictures, etc.

Last tip - please don't think the teachers do not remind the kids about their coats, sweatshirts, etc. They do ask them to make sure they have them. Please add their names on inside tags. Mary noted the school puts out lost and found items before school events. Bonita suggested sending pictures to the parents of lost and found items so they can be claimed.

Principal's Report:

Mrs. Ferreri thanked us again for the flex seating. She will send an email with pictures and a thank you. She gave a plug for concert season - the Kindergarten one is soon and will be for just them and their families. A letter about the concerts for the year was in 11/8 e-news email and included a one-sheeter with all the dates. Please save the dates, the whole school can attend this year and grandparents are welcome.

1st Grade is in February, 2nd Grade is in December, 3rd Grade is in March. They will have musicals, with lines, parts, and instruments.

4th and 5th Grades will have a winter concert and a spring concert.

Kindergarten will have another one in June called See How We've Grown.

Mrs. Ferreri thanked Marya Larkin for assisting the school to become qualified for bronze certification, 1 of 6 schools to receive qualifications. On Monday, the BOE and someone from Sustainable Education will be there to present the award.

Mrs. Woods is the person collecting plastics for Trex. The school collects clean plastic in the bin near the front entrance. The bin is not left outside because if food gets in the bin, the whole thing is contaminated and can no longer be submitted. They will add a plug in e-news for this.

Question from the group - is the buddy bench back? They have pieces from their art garden that they had to remove for remediation. They have had an architect here, as they have to dig to bring these items back, so it has to be documented for remediation purposes. Also, they are hoping the concrete pouring can be done before it gets too cold. There are two pieces to the soil remediation that are not finished. The art garden and the landscaping pieces in the Spring. The BOE and office of the superintendent have the list of items we want replaced, so we are just waiting. Landscaping replacement in the back does not include trees because they were removed as they were dead. The new cement sidewalk installed to widen the sidewalk was for the snow plows to pass through, as they were not wide enough and created mud pits.

Marya Larkin noted that the outside classrooms to be build could help with silver certification if we can 1) incorporate natural material and 2) have a specific curriculum attached to it and 3) include some plantings. Per Mary, the hope is to finish before June.

Question from the group - what is the status of the Kindergarten swing-set? Per Mary, they could still be on the table when the outdoor classroom is finally done, if there is any money left over. As a not-for-profit, you don't carry over funds and keep building up. In the past, if too much money was left, we put it out to vote.

Jimmy Judge noted that there is a new town tree ordinance - depending on the diameter of the bark, you have to pay a fee to the town to cut it down.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00AM.