

Minutes
January 16, 2013
PTO Board Meeting
ROE Library – 6 p.m.

The Board of Directors (the “Board”) of the River Oaks Elementary School Parent-Teacher Organization (the "PTO") met on the 16th day of January, at 6:00 p.m., in the Library of River Oaks Elementary School. The following officers and members of the Board of Directors were present, thus constituting a quorum:

Liz Palmer – First VP
Charles Koerth – VP Finance/Treasurer
Kef Wilson – VP Public Relations
Meredith Maierson-VP Internal Relations
Holly Shilstone - Past-President
Lisa Thompson – Budget & Finance
Teri Gerber - Teacher Appreciation Director
Maria Onufrow - 5th grade Representative
Tina Salem - 4th grade Representative
Kathryn Hensey – 4th grade Representative
Case Knowles – 3rd grade Representative
Madhuri Chilakapati – 2nd grade Representative
Tiffany Hawkins – 1st grade Representative
Jacqualin Seely – 1st grade Representative
Jeannie Beebe – Kindergarten Representative
Liz Daniel – School Life Director
Jennifer Farnell – Volunteer Coordinator
Stefanie Moll – Volunteer Coordinator
Ruth Beery – Faculty Representative
Dr. Keri Fovargue – Head of School

Various members of the PTO including parents/guardians of ROE students, ROE faculty and ROE staff (collectively, “PTO Members”) were also present for the meeting.

Call to Order

Liz Palmer, First Vice President of the Board, called the meeting to order.

Minute Approval

Approval the December minutes was deferred until a quorum of the Board is present.

School Update

Dr. Fovargue provided an update to the Board. She noted that there are two subcommittees including the Traffic and Safety Committee and PAT Committee, which are non-decision making committees. She stated that Andy Williams leads the Traffic and Safety Committee and is present at tonight's Board meeting to bring an update. She further noted that the PAT Committee has been discussing the past fundraiser for the library, and that it has been brought to her attention by a past PTO President that there are approximately \$30,000 remaining as a result of the fundraising effort for the library. She explained that discussions continue regarding the use of these funds and whether such funds should be reallocated to ROE for other projects or continue to be maintained with trustees/chair of this original fundraising committee. It was noted that minutes for both subcommittees are posted on line.

Dr. Fovargue next referred to Andy Williams for the Safety and Traffic Subcommittee update. Andy gave a backup history regarding traffic and safety issues at ROE. She noted that, since November, there have been serious concerns regarding various parents' behavior at drop-off and pickup and how such behavior is threatening the safety of our children. She gave the following examples of some problematic behavior that has been repeatedly witnessed: (1) children being dropped off at the intersection of Kirby and Avalon Place, (2) children being dropped off at other areas in the middle of moving traffic and not in the designated locations like circle drive, Kirby, Avalon Place, San Felipe, and (3) children crossing streets inappropriately without adult supervision. She explained that, originally, the Traffic and Safety Subcommittee took the request for additional officer support to SDMC, and that, subsequently, SDMC asked for this request to go to the PTO Board. Ms. Williams noted that, after further discussion and review, the Subcommittee decided to withhold the request to the PTO for a second officer because the Subcommittee feels that PTO funds should not be requested to fund another officer and that such funding needs to be redirected for the school since the cost of such officer is approximately \$16,000. She noted that the Board needs to continue to serve as role models and support to the parent community to encourage redirecting inappropriate and unsafe practices of parent behavior. The Traffic and Safety Subcommittee is requesting that the PTO Board support next year's budget of one traffic officer, and the addition of an additional officer during the first 2 weeks of school and the last 2 weeks of school, as the PTO has approved such support in the past two years' PTO Budgets. The Subcommittee is also requesting that a wishlist item be added for the on-line auction, wherein donations may be collected for Traffic and Safety in the same manner as is offered for the Specialists. These restricted funds would be to support an additional officer as needed by the Subcommittee.

Next, a problem related to the school zone beacon in one area was noted, and Andy asked that such problems please be reported to the Front Office (either to Barbarita or herself) and they will notify the City. She also noted that parents also may report through the 311 system with the City.

Andy also updated the Board regarding the request for temporary blinds to provide all each classroom with the same type of window covering since currently each classroom uses a different means to cover the window. Dr. Fovargue offered to cover this cost with activity funds.

Holly Shilstone updated from the District VII meeting this week. She noted that the District has hired a security analysis person who will be specifically reviewing the safety and security at its campuses. It was expressed and agreed at this meeting that all schools need to be unilaterally reviewed and that District funds, rather than PTO funds, need to be provided to cover all schools. Holly reported that they also discussed the need for continual review by the District regarding ROE facility needs, especially with respect to its need for an appropriate library facility, noting that no other school's PTO or parent community has had to fund such capital campaigns at their schools. She noted that the ROE library is technically 2 classrooms which is inadequate compared to other schools, especially those in District VII. She stated that District officials will be in contact with Dr. Fovargue directly regarding the above as this is her role as Head of School as opposed to the role of the PTO or parent community. Holly further noted that officer support at elementary schools was discussed. She noted that Channel 2 did a piece regarding 14 elementary schools that received officer support from coverage that had been reassigned from middle schools and high schools, but noted that the schools were not identified. She explained that District has safety and security as a high priority after the tragedy in Newtown and that ROE representatives are speaking up on its behalf at these meetings.

The Board next discussed its support for important safety procedures including one entrance at dropoff of front entrance, key only entrances, badges by all visitors, locked gates including the back area, etc.. The Board noted that ROE is fortunate to have outstanding faculty and administration to ensure the safety of its campus.

Teri Gerber acknowledged Andy Williams and Dr. Keri Fovargue as a past member of Traffic and Safety. She noted that she attended the meeting the past couple of years and that, last year, the action items were addressed and resolved the month following each meeting where such issues were raised. The Board acknowledged and thanked both for their outstanding leadership and support of our school.

Andy Williams brought up one action item needed by the Committee which is a golf cart for the office staff and plant operator to move throughout the campus more easily and efficiently. Board members will look into the cost and possible donation of same.

Dr. Fovargue also mentioned a possible review of various options to further utilize the property and noted that these options are pending from the District. She stressed these are all ideas rather than action items at this time as the District continues to review and develop ideas to help with traffic flow.

Dr. Fovargue advised that the District repaired the track today.

Andy Williams thanked the Board for its unending support and commitment to the school and greatly appreciated remarks were made.

Book Fair/Book Buddies

Dr. Fovargue turned to Sandra Ahlhorn to give an update on the Book Fair/Book Buddies program. Sandra stated that the Book Buddy program name has been changed to “Books Between Friends”. She noted that flyers went home this week in folders, and many Board members acknowledged receipt of this flyer. She discussed the competition to get more than 8 books per student, gave details regarding the schedule of the Book Fair and stated that Colleen Morris will continue the Book Buddies program. She further noted that Molly Ward is co-chairing this year with Sandra Ahlhorn and will be co-chairing next year with another new co-chair who has yet to be identified. The Board thanked Sandra Ahlhorn for her amazing work throughout the past several years in chairing these two endeavors for ROE.

Spark Tree Leaves

Holly Shilstone and Dr. Keri Fovargue provided the history on the Spark Tree Leaf project from the past two years. They noted that, three years ago, this project came as an idea to the Board, but that no further information was brought to or discussed with the Board in 2009-2010. They further explained that, in the summer of 2010, they were advised that the Spark Park funded \$3K for an artist to do a mural with the 2010 graduating class leaves. The Spark Park calendar was passed around to show the mural to the Board. They explained that the 2010 graduating class did not fund this endeavor as they gave their donation to the science room and that the 2011 graduating class did not fund the project either as they gave their donation to the IB rug in the front entrance. They noted that the graduating class of 2012 has already collected its donations from its parents and that such funds are currently being allocated as needed for graduation at this time. Current 5th grade representation and last year’s graduating parents shared their thoughts as well. Dr. Fovargue shared that the artist requesting to install and continue the design of this mural gave a proposal of \$10,000 to complete such work. The Board concurred that it is not in favor of requesting further donations from this year’s graduating class to fund this project nor going back to previous graduates to request funding.

The Board discussed the wishlist donations from the Auction and concurred that the restricted funds were donated to support Art in the classroom rather than this individual project and that use of the funds for this project was not an appropriate use of such funds.

It was further noted that there is no cost for the mold or supplies as that donation was made in 2009, and that the remaining costs are for the installation of the mural and its artistic design.

The Board concurred to reach out to the parent community and the Dad's Club first to see if there is a tradesman that would like to take on this project and installation, and it was noted that the Board will be updated accordingly. Holly and Dr. Fovargue noted that it is a wonderful project that needs more planning before implementation.

Bylaws

Liz Palmer updated the Board and stated that Kara Richardson is leading the bylaws committee but that she was unable to attend to give an update. She noted that it was her understanding that the bylaws are not ready at this time for any vote but that preparation of proposed revisions are in progress. Liz next updated the Board on the Nominating Committee process and advised the Grade Reps and Volunteer Coordinators to be expecting an email inviting them to attend the upcoming Nominating Committee meeting. Liz explained the professional and inclusive process to the committee and stressed that such process will be continued. She noted that self-nominations were encouraged. Meredith Maierson stressed the important of attending these meetings in person rather than by email. Stefanie Moll also stressed the importance of attending and actively participating and noted that committee members who choose not to participate cannot complain about choices made by the committee.

Teacher Appreciation Week

Teri Gerber gave the update on the Teacher Appreciation week which has been moved from February to April 29th to May 3rd to coincide with National Teacher Appreciation Day. She noted that, this year, it will be simple and low cost for all classes, and that she greatly appreciates the Grade Reps communicating to the Room Parents about this aspect.

Development Update

Holly Shilstone read the following update from Ryan Dolibois: "Auction Wrap-Up: For those of you who couldn't attend the December meeting, we announced that the auction was an overwhelming success. Our goal was originally \$40k and we ended up raising over \$70,000 for our programs at ROE. Many of the great gathering events are happening in the next several weeks. We sent all of the hosts an email last week with instructions on how to follow up with the winning bidders. We are still refining this process and appreciate everyone's patience as we coordinate the communication. Special thanks to our co-chairs who are STILL working on this event to make sure everything finishes successfully—Heather and Adrienne (and Christine as well). Annual Fund: We have had roughly 50 contributions to the Annual Fund—which is FANTASTIC considering that is has largely been a quiet effort, with only one email going out to the whole community just before break. Momentum continues to build for this and we have received many appreciative emails and very generous gifts to support this campaign. We will be reconciling the books in the coming weeks to figure out where the annual fund stands and what additional work we want to do in this area. Thanks again for everyone's time and commitment!"

Holly turned to Liz Daniel for an update on the Spring Parent Social. Liz noted that the Spring Parent Social will take place on Friday, April 19 at the Gardens of Bammel Lane with a tentative start time of 7:00, and that it promises to be an awesome party. She encouraged strong parent participation and noted that there will be a planning meeting next Wednesday, January 23rd at 8:00am at Kara's office located at 3700 Buffalo Speedway, Suite 830. She noted that they are looking for a number of volunteers to support the various committees set up to support the party. The Board was encouraged to reach out to Liz Daniel and Kara Richardson for questions or to volunteer.

Other Business

Charles Koerth requested a motion to open a Brokerage Account with Compass Bank for those donors wishing to transfer stock options to the PTO. After a quorum was reviewed and verified, Charles made the motion to open a Brokerage Account with Compass Bank. Kef Wilson seconded the motion and which passed.

There being no other business to bring before the Board, Meredith Maierson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Stefanie Moll seconded said motion, which unanimously carried.