

ROE PTO Board Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2011

**Charla Carroll
Francis Davidson
Amie Canfield
Liz Palmer
Teri Gerber
Shenequa Animashaun
Maria Onofrow
Michele Dahlquist
Holly Shilstone
Leslie Gisi
Sandra Ahlhorn
Susan Shenker
Diane Cimino**

**Tina Salem
Robert Woelfel
Paul Heyburn
Debra Kenna
Ann Guerra
Janann Pittman
Meredith Maierson
Melissa Morris
Monique Baumann
Beth Rivera
Stephanie Moll
Christine Rodriguez**

Meeting Brought to Order @ 6:03 p.m.

Secretary's Report

Sponsor: Charla Carroll

Before the motion, Diane Cimino asked if we have a quorum yet as more board members entered the room and the quorum was achieved. Charla Carroll made the motion to pass the January Meeting Minutes as presented. All in favor no opposed. Motion carries and minutes pass.

President's Report

Sponsor: Frances Davidson

Frances thanked everyone for carrying the load for the last month while she was out of pocket. She noted that some have been working on some fun things like the Book fair and some have been working on not-so-fun things like the budget cuts. She thanked everyone, especially Holly for all her hard work.

The March meeting has been adjusted to Tuesday March 8th because it conflicts with the Holiday. Holly Shilstone will present the slate for the new board at this meeting.

The April General meeting will be on Wed April 13th at 5:30 in the cafeteria. 2011-2012 board members will be introduced at this meeting.

The Board discussed at length timing of General Meeting, noting that 5:30 p.m. is too early and 7:00 pm. is too late. A compromise of 6:30 p.m. was suggested for best attendance. The Board noted that at least 11 members need to be present for a quorum. Holly and Frances will get back to the Board on the April General meeting time and if PTO Board will need to meet beforehand. We are requested to have two General Meetings (one in the Spring and one in the Fall) per the bylaws.

Revision of PTO Board Structure and bylaws

Sponsor: Holly Shilstone

Frances Davidson gave the introduction to the revisions and turned the floor over to Holly Shilstone, our incoming president. Frances explained that Holly has reviewed our bylaws and our board positions to make it work better so that we're sharing the load to make it better for all the parents who are volunteering.

Holly explained that these changes have come from a lot of collaboration from reviewing other PTO presidents and their PTO Boards and collaboration from past and current PTO Board members. As we go through the bylaws, Holly will make a note "as amended" to anything that's changed so we will vote on things as amended.

Holly began an in-depth description of the changes in the bylaws, answering questions and making changes, as needed to the proposed bylaws.

Ann Guerra made a motion to pass the bylaws as presented and amended. **Frances Davidson** seconded. All in favor (total 17 Voting Board members). None opposed. Motion carries.

Principal's report

Sponsor: Susan Shenker

Susan noted that her staff is going through some budget scenarios per unit allocation (per student more or less) one at 600 or one at 800, and she has begun conversations and meetings with staff. She highlighted the uncertainty surrounding the pending budget cuts, but stressed that there will be cuts and it will affect the school budget. Questions and discussed occurred. The budget will not be finalized until right before school starts, but the district must project the budget ahead of time so that staffing decisions can be made. Questions about magnet funding arose, as the loss of magnet funding to the school would mean \$240,000 and 4 positions. Magnet funds are primarily used to fund teaching positions. Board member and representative Paul Heyburn noted that at recent HISD meetings, no trustee that said they would cut any magnet funding, and some plainly said they would not.

The Board members were encouraged to review Principal Shenker's budget presentation to the parents, held the previous day. The message was not just about ROE, but rather about all public education. There will not be any rallies or petitions on the ROE property. It is up to everyone to pick up the phone and reach out to their legislators.

Discussion continued about class size and enrollment. With the magnet report, state budget shortfall and the timing of magnet acceptance letters, the school is moving forward to add Kindergarten and first grade classes. There is a state mandate limiting class size to 22 for K-4th grade. There is already lobbying to take the waiver away. There is no way to do that without adding more kids to classroom.

Studies show that the magic number of children is 25. Much beyond that, teachers start twitching. But 22 to 23 is \$3,000 more dollars without any additional personnel. A variety of cuts in programs were discussed. These decisions are made through SDMC, which is the committee that approves the school budget.

Discussions included about what PTO may or may not fund. PTO may not fund teacher positions. Discussions also included about after-school program funds and these funds go back to the general ROE budget and may not fund teachers.

HISD Budget may not carry over to the next year, so the school needs to show expenditures as occurring otherwise they will be cut like any other companies would review in its operating budgets. However, PTO Budget does carry over each year and PTO may carry operating expenses and curriculum, etc.

Discussion also included that ROE is the 7th from the bottom of funding from HISD and that is important to note. The Board discussed that Teacher appreciation week is coming up and these are stressful and tough times. We need to help lift the spirit of our school. It was also discussed that these are adult conversations not to behave in front of our children. We do not want to cause anxiety among our teachers and our kids.

Tina Salem asked if anyone has any contacts or has anything they'd like to add to the week, raffles, coupons, anything we'd be happy to have it. These are given away as raffles at no cost to PTO and we are planning for a total of 69 staff.

Susan Shenker closed this discussion with a story about our 5th graders. They are heading into Exhibition, the culminating project for our kids. The PTO funded our laptop carts and our independent investigation method training and all of that has been leading up to this. Part of what the 5th Graders are asked to do is conduct research, come up with a presentation and take some sort of action. Principal Shenker has been inundated with requests from 5th graders.

- Participants in a "Green" project have convinced her to turn off the lights on Friday.
- One group has been Sharing Breast Cancer awareness information

- SPCA - the kids have raised funds, put out boxes for donations.
- High School Dropout Awareness. A group of our 5th graders will go to meet with Lamar students to tell them what they've learned about high school dropouts, to encourage them to stay in school and to ask them to sign a pledge to stay in school.

Charla Carroll brought up Rosetta Stone as another example. Susan Shenker agreed.

A question was posed about adding two classrooms and Susan Shenker explained that we currently have 5 Kinder and 5 first grades, so now we'll have 6 Kinder and 6 first.

Grade Reps were encouraged to send out the link to Ms. Shenker's website so parents will see the presentation.

Specialists Report

Janann Pittman updated the Board with the last stages of the science room. Next month the Board will tour the room. Then it will be time to coordinate move. The lab will contain low table tops for the younger kids, eye wash stations, several sinks, and two teaching walls. There will be plenty of space in which to spread out. Mr. Rainn has a challenge of teaching a first grade class after a 5th grade class so different stations will be helpful. The lab should be ready after spring break!

Discussion included about having the general meeting tour the Lab. Every last dollar has been spent that was donated for the science lab. There will be additional needs in the future.

The Board discussed posting a wish list of supplies and items needed for the science lab as a house warming.

Frances Davidson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Holly Shilstone** made a motion to adjourn. **Charla Carroll** seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.