

W.T. WOODSON PTSO GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
MINUTES - **APPROVED**  
October 17, 2016

**In attendance:**

Kristin Driscoll, Melissa French, Raquel Bishop, Dr. Poole, Michele Johnson, Mary Beth Quick, Denise Parker, Linda Vasquez, Bruce Waxman, Sue Taylor, Heather Villavicencio, Kristin Summers, Yo Zhang, Catherine Swanton, Jeannie Lee, Shannon Murphy, Joanne Ladino, Liza Cooley, Karen Moran

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Approve September, 2016 Minutes** - approved as amended to reflect that Graduation will be held on June 20, 2017 at George Mason University.

**III. President's Report – Raquel Bishop**

The president expressed gratitude to the PTSO board and member volunteers for the efforts the last couple months, particularly recognizing Sue Taylor for her efforts to publish the directory.

**IV. Principal's Report – Dr. Scott Poole**

Homecoming was celebrated the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in October and was a lot of fun: a festive parade, high attendance. No incidents were reported the entire weekend. The only challenge was the excessive heat during the dance Saturday night. The students put a lot into decorating.

New staff: They hired a new Physics teacher, Mr. Milligan and also hired Joan Brown as the school technology specialist.

In-service day: Staff will submit proposals on in-service topics that they can share with colleagues. Examples include how to tap into the power of Google Classroom and how to integrate literacy across areas. They will do another one in March; they are trying to ramp up professional development for the teachers.

Systems of interventions: Dr. Poole led a presentation during the recent Community of Solutions meeting; there was a positive dialogue and the meeting was live-streamed.

Open discussion with PTSO members in attendance:

A parent inquired about parent-teacher conferences, which until ~ 2 years ago were held on Veterans Day, asking whether there was any discussion about doing them on another day? Dr. Poole provided some background, explaining that there was a proposal made last year for a “Cav Connect” day, but it was denied by the school system. He recognized that it made sense to do on Veterans Day given the # of people who have that day off in our region since it is a government and military holiday. The school system did not approve the request, explaining that early closings are only permitted for certain things. It is an option to hold a Cav Connect/parent day on one of the allocated professional development days in the future but not this year. Another point of input into the decision last year to not hold the Cav Connect was the declining parent attendance. Lastly, with the new SIS reporting system, there seemed to be less of an impetus to create time for those parent-teacher meetings. He explained that they did discuss this at length, and ultimately it was a cost benefit analysis. The only way to do it now is to use a school-based professional development day to do it. They concluded that it is important for the teachers to get more training on Google Classroom and the latest technology, and that parents can access teachers upon direct request.

A suggestion was made to use the early release time on the day the PSAT is offered for teacher meetings. One downside noted is that the parents wouldn't have the day off. Dr. Poole will take it into consideration.

Meals Tax – Dr. Poole reminded those in attendance that there are facts about the meals tax on the FCPS website. Dr. Garza shared that in two years – the way the financing works – the big payments come due for the school system retirement plans, and for our health care providers, which are indexed. These are mandated expenses – we cannot conceivably cut them.

The 2018 school year will require a 3% increase in the transfer just to take care of those mandated expenses. So there will be a significant demand on budget in an era when we are trying to minimize the disparity in pay. Lost 8 staff members to Arlington County to \$10,000 – 15,000 raises.

Also trying to move to a “one-to-one” approach for electronic devices, which is a big investment also. The meals tax is proposed to supplement funding of the school system.

Aging population so more taxpayers without kids in the school systems makes it more political to pass. Anticipated will improve revenue by \$99 million per year with a 4% tax rate, with 70% going to the school system; 40% would go to county services, property tax relief and capital expenditures.

Our budget is \$2.7 billion with 24,000 employees and is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the nation (link: <http://www.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=AA4GWZ45B3F0>).

Graduation – will be held at George Mason University June 20, 2017. The seniors need to identify a speaker for graduation.

#### **V. Treasurer's Report – Kristin Driscoll**

A copy of the budget will be on the PTSO website.

We have collected 75% of our planned income.

More donations were collected than anticipated

Received \$3,225 in directory ad sales (also more than anticipated)

Membership is higher than anticipated.

Some SCRIP gift cards remain inventory

#### **VI. Vice Presidents Report – Melissa French**

Pleased with membership drive and sales of directories.

Solicited feedback about how we can increase membership.

Membership at end of September was 466 members (parents, students, and a handful of teachers); Melissa and Shawn Guth planned to attend the staff meeting to discuss the Grants program; unfortunately that meeting was cancelled.

Dr. Poole did communicate with the staff about the grant program. Deadline is Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>

They would like a copier if we have extra funding. Note there is a significant increase in the grant program.

Discussed need for a comprehensive calendar for student events. Right now it focuses primarily on tutoring and college visits. The school is in use from 5am to 11pm daily with activities / community events so it will be too cumbersome to cover all activities. The preference is to increase coverage of student-related activities on one calendar.

Discussed desire to increase use of Twitter for communications, particularly to reach the students.

Each class and activity has their own twitter feed; how can the main WHS feed be used more? Or can retweet each of the main tweets from the activity pages.

ESBIT – Ms. Brown

Shannon Murphy asked if the staff have access to Calendar Dude which is comprehensive. That is run through building use which is run by Mr. Paul. Discussed the value of having a week-at-a-glance. Similar challenge with morning announcements – run so long it runs into teaching time. Kids love it – want to know what is going on. So some restrictions in place. One video per day and the college visits will be on a running scroll in the cafeteria.

There is a sports calendar, so looking to add Booster meetings, Chorus and Band concerts, Community of Solutions meetings, etc.

Shannon Murphy – milk and cookies – Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>. Need volunteers to bake cookies and to hand them out. School will provide the milk. Will be a sign-up genius. Have an overall increase in student population. Should be home-made cookies. Intend to do 4-5 of these.

Joanne Ladino met with Mr. Entenberg for Special Ed. Focus is on what special needs kids need. Created a short survey for their review. What interests do the parents have, do they have any concerns about the program, what help do they need? Will meet with Lorraine this week, the outgoing Spec Ed liaison; trying to be inclusive.

Committee Chairs are asked to either attend PTSO meetings to give their report, or to send one in advance.

Mary Beth Quick – Stress Less Laugh More will be held in the spring, before the SOLs; New committee Staff Self Care – first event today. Big appreciation – bank of volunteers – only need one per day; Today was therapy dogs, massage therapist and chiropractor, mindfulness and seated chair yoga, healthy snacks; 50 people used it today (two hour period); Community of Solution – Ryan Brown (Eng Chair and head of intervention support team and Beth Lash lead counselor who addressed the social emotional side); will make that presentation available Was streamed so people were texting in questions;

Last Thursday co-sponsored a screening of Unmasked – a documentary created by students in Palo Alto community after a series of suicides; followed by a panel of students and parents; 50-60 attended which was lower than anticipated but very engaged; in the lobby there were wellness professionals to provide support if interested. Discussed feedback.

Our Minds Matter – an after school club – peer to peer club with nine-month curriculum; always psychologist present; have a staff sponsor; discussed a variety of mental illnesses;

Feedback during screening – positive culture change at WHS; health class is improving although room for more improvement;

Sue Taylor – Cav Cruise – met with committee chairs last week; very much on track; T-shirts are underway; Transportation volunteers needed and possibly for security; other advance jobs are all filled; will need “day of” volunteers; Note that the ticket price increases on December 1<sup>st</sup> – so buy early! Are selling at the same rate as last year; 53 sold as of last week; Decided to charge a little more in exchange for a lesser fund-raising requirement.

Linda Vasquez – Bricks – no report other than still taking orders – application is on the website; will take until April 15<sup>th</sup> for June installation; Scrip – on the last bit of inventory; Safeway, Bath & Body Works and Barnes & Noble and JC Penney; one iTunes for \$25; a few for Ross;

Theresa LeMair – Hospitality – not in attendance

Kim Waxman – We Mail –reminder to continue to submit announcement by 5pm on Friday; are published on Monday at 2pm

Other parent groups

Cathy Swanton – student driver magnets; did sell during Back to School Night (BTSN) and the first Parent Teen Driver event; \$344 sold so far – exceeded prior years at this time; probably more from BTSN when we could lump those sales in (21 sold that night - ~\$140); down to 34 magnets from prior order so will place another order which will last us a couple years

Student Reps – not in attendance

**Old business**

Question about MyOn – goal is to provide a 1:1 – match every student with an electronic device; broad goal – not immediate; laptop or tablet; ex. Franklin Middle School and Lees Corner – the Chantilly pyramid – put in an application to pilot this program with all kids; bring laptops home; the division paid for it – the school system; purchase in bulk so get a good rate; Schools in school handle maintenance and country takes on the risk and maintenance; better than BYOD because it ensures consistency and more you can do on a laptop than on a PDA; not yet in the budget so is in pilot stage.

**New business?** None

**Announcements?** None

**Meeting adjourned: 8:16pm**

**Next meeting:** Monday, November 14, 2016, 7:00pm in the library