



**Minutes of  
The Merchantville School PTA  
General Membership Meeting**

**September 2018**

*President Felicia Dunsmuir called the meeting called to order at 7:00 pm*

May minutes approved by general membership

**Introductions**

Felecia welcomes new members as well as room parent attendees

Attendance Sheet sent around

**CSA Report - Mr. Strong**

- Welcome back to all parents and students
- Very smooth opening of school for students and teachers as well as a successful Back to School night
- Picture day today (9/19/18)
- Introduced the “No Place for Hate” initiative – Merchantville School will be participating; the theme will be discussed all year with the school having to meet certain criteria to be designated as a “No Place for Hate” school.
  - o Mr. Dailey introduced the topic to all students in gym class, students receiving stickers and taking an oath to abide by the “No Place for Hate” objectives. A signed banner will be displayed in the hallway (forthcoming).
- Assessments are underway for current school year.
  - o DRA reading level assessments for 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade (will be repeated in the spring).
  - o **Link It** assessments for language arts baseline for 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Mentioned that he has an open-door policy for all parents to reach out regarding questions and issues. Prefer if the issue pertains to class matters, that a discussion take place with teacher first. Email is the best way to get in touch with Mr. Strong.

**Correspondence**

Thank you note from MEA for Teacher Welcome Back to School Breakfast.

**Introductions – PTA Board 2018-19 School Year**

- President – Felicia Dunsmuir
- Treasurer – Diana Pell
- Secretary – Denise Wackes
- VP Ways and Means – Amanda Tennant
- VP Ongoing Programs – Stephanie Bendel
- Membership Chair – Julie Cuneo
- VP Programs – Carrie Rupnow-Kidd
- VP Public Relations – Mariaelena Beauchamp
- Room Parent Chairperson – Monica Ruilova



## Treasurer Report – Diana Pell

- Diana explained the budget process - we do audit each year of bank accounts (3 bank accounts) to show income, expenses and what we spend. Budget year is July 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30.
- Budget was audited by committee in July
  - o Approved by general membership tonight (9/19/18)
  - o See current budget numbers below
- Some successful events last year included Spirit Wear, Book Fair, Charleston Wrap, Holiday shop and Kentucky Derby
- Re-introduced Amazon Smile initiative
- Some expenses to incur this year include 8<sup>th</sup> grade events, haunted house, 2 skating parties, teacher appreciation week, take your family to school week
- There will be no fee charged for the talent show this year

### *Treasurer Account Balances*

#### Beginning Balance (as of 7/1/18)

- o General \$6,887.66
- o Gaming \$1,810.01

Deposits totaled \$470.26

Withdrawals totaled \$852.78

#### Ending Balance (as of 9/19/18)

- o General \$6,505.14
- o Gaming \$1,810.01

## Programs and Fundraisers

- Spirit Wear report by Regina Lovelidge. Spirit Wear store is currently open until October 5<sup>th</sup>. (Store will open again before the December holidays and at the end of the school year). Open *discussion regarding adding new items such coffee mugs, insulated mugs, visors, gym shorts, drawstring bags, winter hats etc.* Other suggested items included Merchantville Parent or Mom or Dad options as well as a holiday ornament. Regina will consider pricing of new items.
- Pumpkin Patch report by Carrie Rupnow-Kidd. *Event will be held on Saturday, Oct 27<sup>th</sup> (10am-2pm).* Event will be held the same time as the farmers market however the location has been moved across Centre Street near the gazebo for better visibility.
  - o She has a strong committee which includes Amanda Tennant, the Bendels, Angela Bristow and Angela Waldron. Event options include pumpkins to purchase (paint and decorate), fall food, games, free contests, mummy me contest for kids and costume parade. This year a costume donation bin will be available, all donations will go to the Center for Family Services (Judyann McCarthy).
  - o Need for many parent volunteers, paper sign-up sheet sent around at the meeting. Sign up will be added to Konstella also. Student Ambassadors and NJEA students will help.
- Book Fair report by Amanda Tennant. *There will be only one Fall book fair this year (10/1-10/3).* The theme is Enchanted Forest. Parent volunteers needed (especially for Family night – Tuesday), sign up is currently on Konstella.
- Winter/Spring Program in Need of Chairperson

Take Your Family to School Week (Feb 11-15) – Summer Freeman volunteered to chair

Teacher Appreciation Week (Date TBD) – Caroline Waters volunteered to chair



## Communications

- Announcement Reminder by Mariaelena Beauchamp. Please send all weekly announcement postings to Mariaelena by Monday night to publish in Wednesday newsletter, preferred method is PDF format. She also handles the PTA website. All board members email addresses are listed on the Merchantville website.
- Konstella Reminders by Denise Wackes. Encourage all parents to use. Sign up via invite link, fill out paperwork or send email to PTA requesting an invite. Reminder to attach your child to a classroom in Konstella to get updates, all room parents that are currently in Konstella have been assigned to their classrooms as Leads (Room Parents). Email Denise for any Konstella postings, chair persons can request access to set up their own postings, sign-up sheets etc.

## New Business

- Summer Freeman was asking if the middle school dance can be moved closer to Halloween so the middle school students can dress up and be part of the holiday. The concern from Mr. Strong is the conflict with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Haunted House, two weekends prior to the holiday are reserved for this event in case of a rain postponement. Mr. Strong mentioned that he is considering some ideas to involve the middle school students in the Halloween holiday, more information to follow.
- Request to bring back the Science Stem night during Take your Parents to School week.
- Mr. Strong mentioned new streamlined way to reserve the use of facilities such as room reservations, tents, school items etc. You can now fill and request Use of Facilities online, see Merchantville school website. The PTA has a unique request code to use if you oversee specific events.
- New PTA member Marie has former PTA experience in Cherry Hill and offered some fundraising ideas such as a Krispy Kreme fundraiser. Due to time constraints, it was suggested that she send an email to the PTA with fundraising ideas.

## Appreciation

- Felecia
  - o Thank you to Mariaelena and Denise for the Welcome Back to School teacher breakfast as well as all the parents who donated food for the event.
  - o Thank you to Regina for getting the Spirit Wear shop up and running so quickly at start of school year.
  - o Thank you to Diana for all her hard work on the budget over the summer.
  - o Thank you for turnout of new and returning parents to tonight's meeting as well as the room parent attendees. Invite to come back every month!
- Diana
  - o Thank you to Merchantville School and the camp teachers (including Ms. Nemerofsky) for Camp Invention over the summer, it was huge success with 75 kids attending the camp.

## Upcoming/Current events

- Sprit Wear Store Open: 9/17 – 10/5
- Charleston Wrap Fundraiser: 9/25-10/10
- Book Fair: 10/1-10/3
- Next General PTA Meeting: 10/17, 7pm
- Pumpkin Patch Fall Fundraiser: 10/27, 10am-2pm

*Meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm. (Room parent meeting immediately followed)*