



Minutes of  
The Merchantville School PTA  
General Membership Meeting

January 18, 2017

PTA President Ingrid Juliano call the meeting to order at 7:06 pm

November minutes approved

Marisa read communication from Mrs. Brill thanking us for support for junior high dance

Mr. Strong

- Trimester #1 – Trimester ended and conferences took place. Looking for feedback on report cards and conference scheduling. Marisa likes cafeteria conferences for Junior High. Ingrid asked how much time the teachers get for conferences and asked if the teachers felt that they could fit all the parents in. Mr. Strong said there is an actual 3 week period for scheduled conferences if necessary. Caroline Waters likes being able to schedule younger children and go to cafeteria after for older children.
- Trimester #2 will end March 10
- NJHS Induction ceremony is Thursday, Jan 26 at 7pm.
- New DARE program is called LEA Drugs. It has started for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders and there will be 10 lessons. Concepts are the same as DARE. LEA stands for Law Enforcement Against Drugs.
- STEM Evening – teachers met to schedule a Math evening that will be scheduled on 2/23 in conjunction with Take Your Family to School Week (TYFTSW). The night will include math games and STEM activities geared toward K-5. Carrie Rupnow-Kidd asked why the switch from STEM to Math. Mr. Strong said that there was some concern about time preparation. Miss Tsypanyuk said there will still be STEM activities and that the teachers agreed on having math focuses for classroom activities and STEM activities for cafeteria.

Treasurer's report

- Beginning
  - o General \$5,787.01
  - o Gaming \$2,578.95
  - o Savings \$2,635.78
  - o Playground \$3,743.75
- Deposits totaled \$911.44
- Withdrawals totaled \$857.90
- Ending



- General                   \$5,840.55
  - Gaming                   \$2,578.95
  - Savings                  \$2,635.78
  - Playground             \$3,743.75
- Spirit Wear estimate was \$300, we made \$262.
  - Silver Diner estimate is \$600, we made \$319 so far.
  - Book Fair estimate was \$1200, we made \$1235.
  - Genevieve's estimate was \$1400, we made \$1400.
  - Holiday Shoppe estimate was \$1000, we made approximately \$1550, still have to subtract withdrawals

#### Programs/Fundraisers

- Take Your Family to School Week is 2/21 to 2/24. Summer Freeman is chairing. Wednesday is the parent visit. Thursday is STEM night. Friday Night is Spirit After Dark. Summer will reach out to Mr. Dailey to support Ami. Wants to see if radio station can come out and DJ for Spirit After Dark. Tuesday is the family meal. It will be a multi-cultural night where family fun finger foods from beyond the world will be served (meals donated by Merchantville families). Summer would like to get some meals as well, not just finger foods. Represent your family with Merchantville Cook Book or making a flag for each family. Multi-Cultural part of the NJPTA website said we could have storytelling (Merchantville faculty or family). They also recommended dancing but Summer would like to stay with the photograph or flag or family recipe. If we run the dinner this way we don't have to offer more than one seating. Dinner will be from 6p to 8p. Friday may be a drive through line at drop off where we give away cider donuts. Ingrid said we have the car magnets in and can give them away in the line. Hopefully we have good weather. Summer would like to incorporate SLAM poetry in support of literacy. We would send home a lyric and ask families to get together and write next lyric. Can we have Student Ambassadors for family fun finger food night and have them report at 5pm? Yes. Do we have access to the Real Time system to send out messages? Mr. Strong will help any way he can. Christina - Do we want the car magnet to be a part of the invitation that is being sent home to each family? We have the agenda on the invitation and Mr. Strong will make sure it is distributed. That way we make sure every family gets a magnet and has the agenda. The TYFTSW committee is Summer, Rebecca Onkar, Caroline Waters, Helen Vervelakis-Lopez, Angela Waldron, Christina Hunter.
- Author Day – Mary Noelle. Jerry Pinkney was lined up to come. Things are not looking promising. His assistant was going to get back to us with agreement and good dates. Mary reached back out 6 times and hasn't received response. Mary tried to see if there is another way to get in touch with him but hasn't found any contact info. She sent 5 additional requests out to other authors. If we shift our focus, we may be able to find someone a little more local that has a more flexible schedule. Mary found other interesting visiting artists, but not necessarily authors. Some of the artists are



illustrators of children's books, poets. Local authors tend to be less expensive than Pinkney. Lisa asked if we could get an illustrator for younger kids and a spoken word poet for older kids? Ingrid said she is ok with Mary narrowing down on her own if she hears back from the 5 she reached out to.

- Guitar – Marisa gave a brief update that the first session has ended and the second session has started. The first session seemed to go very well. Rebecca Onkar's daughter did session one and really enjoyed it. She is now practicing at home.
- Carrie Kidd – Playground stencils. Hopscotch, 4 square, maze. We purchased the stencils in the fall. It was recommended to have the black top cure for a year prior to painting on it. Most groups that purchase the stencils gather people to self-paint/apply rather than having it professionally painted. Carrie is getting quotes from painting companies. Once we get the quotes back, we need to discuss whether or not we want to paint ourselves. Instructions are step by step. Ingrid thinks it would be fun to do ourselves and that we could handle it. We will follow up after quotes are received.
- PreK/Kindergarten tricycles – Ingrid gave an update. There are currently 8 tricycles for the sandy playground, and they are an expensive type of tricycle. They are in rough shape, missing handlebars and pedals. Ingrid took one of the tricycles to some local bike shops to see if we can get them repaired. No one said yes. We can get 8 new ones for \$1,500.58. We only have \$400 left in that item of the budget. If we don't have money leftover in the main playground account that can be voted to transfer, we will budget in to next year's PTA budget.
- New Handbag Bingo date is 3/3/17. Nicole Kipp – Christina Hunter won't be here. Mariaelena Beauchamp volunteered to help. It's on a Friday. Felicia can do centerpieces and can help out. All bags are purchased.
- Science Expo was changed to 3/16.
- Skate party canceled and rescheduled for 3/11.
- Tea Party – Diana Pell. Date is 4/2. First tea party meeting is Sunday, January 29 at 6pm at the station for anyone who wants to help. Mary Poppins is the theme. Caroline Waters asked what is involved in Tea Party. Diana said ticket sales, decorations, food.

#### Technology

- Possible Konstella – Marisa explained Amazon opportunity for fundraising. Families can go to a smile or associate account through the Konstella website and we will get 4-8% back on their purchases. Several questions were asked that Marisa needs the answer to: Can we use on the app or do we have to do through the website? What does Konstella get out of it? What determines percentage amount? How do we create an associate account? Marisa also asked if Mr. Strong would like us to come in and go over Konstella with the teachers. He has a committee that is looking into streamlining communication. Ingrid asked Miss Tsypenyuk her opinion. Ingrid thinks it will grow.



#### New business

- Summer Freeman – Halloween. Could there be a costume party for older kids at night? Mr. Strong said that the Police had a curfew last year all of Halloween week and asked the school not to plan any events surrounding Halloween that would cause kids to be out after curfew.
- Summer Freeman – When incidents happen in school, is there an opportunity for parents to ask questions? During previous incidents, she got piece meal info from her daughter. Would it be easier to have a group setting for parents to ask questions? Mr. Strong said a group setting is very difficult because he is restricted from getting into specifics. Parents are welcome to contact Mr. Strong directly. Ingrid asked if there are other drills that are not fire drills? Yes, 4 different drills throughout the year.
- Caroline Waters – Silver diner Night on February 7, 2017 for 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### Appreciation

- Ingrid - Christina Hunter for Holiday Shoppe and Felicia for Holiday Parade

#### Upcoming events

- NJHS Induction ceremony – 1/26
- LEGO Club 2/4 for next 4 Saturdays
- Next PTA Meeting February 8

Meeting adjourned 8:10 p.m.

Prepared by Marisa Tkachuk  
Recording Secretary