

Newton North High School PTSO
Board Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2021 (4:00-5:15 pm)

Present: Patty McCabe, John Oliver, Johanne Campbell, Karen Cutone, Janna Lacatell, April Stein, Kim Buckton, Ted Vahey, Shawna Slack, Henry Turner, Susannah Wardley, Alberta Chu, Dima Basha, Patty Eagan, Heather Pozen

Absent: Livia Aber

Call to Order (Patty) @ 4:03

- Welcome to new Co-Presidents for next year: Heather Pozen (one-year term) and Patty Eagan (two-year term).

Approval of the March 2 Minutes (Janna & Johanne)

- Meeting minutes approved unanimously.

Financials (April)

- EdEx campaign raised \$19,300; \$4-5K came in after Henry's last email. There was some discussion as to whether this was due to the timing and if that should influence how things are done going forward, but ultimately it is thought that it was due to the importance of the cause.
- \$11,000 has been raised from one email to the class of 2021 parents for prom/senior celebrations.
- Patty noted for recording in the minutes that at our last meeting we approved \$1000 for the teacher appreciation lunch, but after the meeting the executive board approved an additional \$500, so the budget total was \$1500.
- The budget for Be Kind Day in early May is \$300. The coordinators asked for an additional \$200. They will be getting wristbands and oreos (given out on different days). April motioned to approve, John seconded, none opposed. Kim asked if anything was being done for remote students. The giveaways are in-person, but there are some speakers that will be remote. It is not known if there are any other accommodations.
- Additional expenses for this year:
 - Amy Winston asked if we can fund masks for graduates. We can vote on this at our next meeting once we know the cost.
 - Signs on Comm. Ave. - senior class officers would prefer funds be put toward prom and graduation. Cost of signs was about \$5000 last year. Alberta wondered if we could find more affordable signs, or perhaps do banners again. We will see how things go over the next month and discuss again in May.
 - Celebration Lane: the main cost is police detail.
 - Newton South wants both signs and a celebration lane.
- Next year's budget
 - Revenues: April compared the budget with a normal year and made some adjustments. Most of our revenue comes from the early dues drive (over 90%). Normally when we

have an in-person Back to School Night we get about \$45,000. We got \$30K this year. Will budget \$40K. We also usually get \$5-8K in extra donations for the Principal's Student Assistance Fund and \$8-10K in extra PTO donations, but will budget \$5K and \$8K, respectively.

- Expenses: Fewer people request paper directories, so that has been reduced to \$4000. Planners are also reduced, as there is more widespread use of electronic calendars. College guides will still go to all sophomores, but the amount is TBD. There will still be a donation to Dover Legacy Scholars (DLS), even though they haven't spent any this year, to date. Henry anticipates spending at the end of the year, so Patty will touch base with Michelle later in the year about needs for next year. Likely a \$3500 benchmark. There will be some sort of welcome back events for classes in the fall.
- Susannah asked if Programs = program speakers. April confirmed yes, five per year.
- John brought up separating directories from the dues drive. He indicated some parents thought that they wouldn't appear in the directory if they didn't pay dues. Patty acknowledged the need to be more clear in our messaging: that everyone is in the PTO regardless of paying dues, and that everyone is in the directory, regardless of dues. The only caveat is that you don't get access to the directory, electronic or paper, unless you pay dues or indicate hardship. This will be discussed more at our next meeting. Janna suggested that the communications from last fall be distributed so that we can all review before discussing at our next meeting.

Programming (Shawna)

- Idea for next year: maybe something like a book club – books about parenting.

Other Events (Patty)

- Newton Serves on May 2: trash clean-up around the school. Susannah suggested cleaning up the area under the bleachers. Be on the lookout if interested in volunteering.
- Multicultural Night: would like to do something outside, but not sure if that will happen.
- Prom on June 5 (rain date June 6): there will be two tents, each can accommodate 150 people under current restrictions. If more than 300 people sign up there will have to be two times. There will be a DJ and food trucks with grab 'n go at the end. Henry mentioned that they are in touch with the state on the guidelines for prom and is hopeful that it will happen.

Principal Update (Henry)

- Following the tragic loss of Isabel Grinspoon, he is letting the family guide us in their needs. There will be support for students.
- School start time next year: 9:00-3:45.
- Grading Committee: David Fleishman has indicated that grades will be the traditional A-F next year, with +/-.
- Students will hopefully get their schedules for next year in early summer.
- Even though MCAS cancelled for juniors this year, a lot is happening this spring after break: AP exams, prom, graduation, etc.
- Shawna asked if teachers will continue to use electronic calendars next year. Her son found it very helpful this year. Henry indicated that these will not go away. There have been huge strides

in technology use during the pandemic, including widespread use of Schoology, Google Calendar, etc. There is a lot that we can keep from this year.

Nominating Committee (Patty)

- We have found two Co-Presidents: Patty Eagan and Heather Pozen.
- There are three open positions: Co-Secretary, Co-Director of Technology, and Co-Director of Programming. Co-Director of Communications has been filled by Gayatri Aryan.
- John could possibly move to the Co-Secretary position, thereby eliminating the need to create a new at-large position.
- Proposal: Create a Metco seat on the board. This received favorable responses all around and will be pursued. It will be a one-year term as all other positions are (except Co-President, which is two years).
- There is a Family Involvement Chair, who coordinates with Metco and ELL at NN. This person is normally introduced at Back to School Night, but that didn't happen this year.

Technology

- Do we want a subcommittee to document maintenance procedures for the web site? Ted indicated some of that has been happening as they go along. Patty, Ted and Kim will meet before our next meeting to document some basics.

Communications

- Should we survey parents about what social media they use?
- The new co-chair is well-versed in social media. Susannah would like a side meeting with Patty and Gayatri.

Other

- Shawna asked if future meetings will be on Zoom. Some will be – we modified the by-laws to allow for them. It would be nice to meet in person at least once a year.
- May 13 will be our Annual Meeting and we will vote on the new slate.

Meeting adjourned: 5:22 PM
Respectfully submitted by Johanne Campbell