

**McCarthy-Towne School PTSO
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 14, 2014**

Shelley Cole, PTSO Sr. Chair
Julie Weir, PTSO Jr. Chair
Chris Hanlon, PTSO Treasurer
David Krane, Principal
Matt McDowell, Asst. Principal
Kerry Lewis
Kathleen Guinee
Tracey Smith
Jen Nelson
Christine Russell

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 A.M. by Julie Weir, subbing for Shelley Cole who needs to leave for a fieldtrip at 9:55.

Auction Update

Julie Weir explained that as Christine Russell needs to (also) leave for the fieldtrip, the Auction part of the fundraising update will be going first.

Christine Russell introduced herself as one of the Auction Chairs. Sam Valente-Phillips is the other Chair. This year's theme is "007, James Bond." Christine said there are lots of great ideas to go with this theme: attendees can dress up glam, go retro, or be a "movie extra." They are short two committee chairs: Backroom and Pre-Raffle. Other than that, they are in a good place with business donations already rolling in.

Minutes

The September minutes were approved, pending forthcoming amendments from David Krane.

Principal's Report

David began his report by explaining that with the addition of two full day Thursdays per month, there will now be an additional Professional Development day during the school year. There will be one on January 16th, 2015 that is district-based and there will be one on November 4th that is building-based.

For the first half of the November PD day, the staff will be focused on Literacy and being part of a Teacher's College project school. A big part of the conversation will focus on

“conferring” which is another method of assessing student learning. Our reading instruction is differentiated and based on the child’s needs and where they are. Strategies are taught that the children will continue to use as they grow as readers and learners. One key question for the staff will be “How do we make the instruction practical without getting overloaded?”

The second half of Professional Day will focus on Portfolio assessment and what portfolios mean to our school. Are parents getting the information they need? Last year the staff developed an end-of-year summative assessment document, but we also need to show HOW kids grow. When parents have a clearer understanding, so do teachers and kids.

We will begin next week with the Teacher’s College staff coming to us, starting with grades K through 2. Projects like this are important because they can help determine what is effective.

Merrowvista is this week. David will be going on Wednesday and spending one night and Matt will be going on Thursday and spending one night. Merrowvista is a camp in New Hampshire that our fifth graders visit for a three-day, two-night trip. It focuses on team building and leadership training. Fifth graders rave about it.

Treasurer’s Report

After going through the Treasurer’s Report, there was a discussion about the money in the Parker Damon fund. This money is not being spent. David would like to bring it up at a Faculty meeting and discuss ways in which it could be used. The money needs to be used to honor Parker’s commitment to Process in the context of education. Kathleen Guinee suggested applying it in some way to the conversation around portfolios because what represents process better than portfolios.

Kathleen also asked about the Annual Appeal and whether our fundraising approach has changed. Chris explained how we have reduced the number of fundraisers down to just a few, as opposed to several years ago when we ran five to eight each year. Kathleen said that as a new parent, there were a lot of requests that came home at the very beginning of the year: t-shirts, gift wrap, and then the annual appeal. She said that it would have been nice to know what was coming instead of consecutive items just appearing. She went on to suggest the idea of sending home a timeline of the year’s fundraisers to better inform parents. David stressed the importance of parents knowing that the school is never disappointed in the amount that the PTSO raises.

Fundraisers

Activity Expo – Julie briefed on this and stated that there is already a returning business signed on for next year and that they are thinking of ways to make it bigger and better.

Gift Wrap – Julie read from an email from Christine Kobelski. Christine compared last year's gift wrap sale with this year's. Last year we used Genevieve's and this year we used Charleston Wrap. Numbers to consider:

Charleston Wrap:

Paper Form Sales (not profit): \$4,384

Internet Sales (not profit): \$3,547

Total Sales: \$7,931

Our profit will be approximately 45% (there's no shipping cost since we had over 300 items ordered)

Genevieve's (Last Year):

Paper Form Sales (not profit): \$5,426

Internet Sales (not profit): \$1,109

Total Sales: \$6,535

Our profit was \$3,058 less \$156 shipping cost

Overall we stand to make about \$600 more (profit) than we made last year. Christine stated that while she liked the Charleston Wraps products, she wasn't thrilled with their representative. The Genevieve's rep seemed more on top of things. Parent feedback was mixed: some enjoyed Charleston's larger offering of gift wrap, while others were disappointed that they didn't have a lot of gift wrap options aside from holiday (i.e. not a lot of birthday or all-occasion wrap).

It's not clear whether the larger sales this year were due to greater satisfaction with the product being offered or greater exposure to the sale via Facebook, Howler and the Bulletin. Christine also suggested using a different company next year as parents like to see other options and not the same thing each year.

Family Portraits – Julie presented for Shelley. Shelley photographed 12 families, earning \$440 for the PTSO.

Scrip – Chris Hanlon discussed Scrip in Christine Russell's absence. Scrip is still happening, but on a more scaled down level. The first paper forms went home with the Bulletin. While online ordering is still an option, there will be fewer paper forms sent home to families.

Fall Social – Jen Nelson as co-chair discussed plans for a cake walk in the cafeteria. Depending on the number who sign-up for it, there will be two stagings, to help avoid long waits. A flyer will be sent home in the next week or so about what a cake walk is. The cafeteria will also have tables with crafts for children to work on. The traditional dessert buffet will be replaced with chili and cornbread to make it healthier and to give parents an option beyond pizza. The climbing wall in the gymnasium will be open to all, along with some Minute To Win It games. The lobby will have tables for face painting and tattoos. Julie suggested asking for volunteers on the Facebook page. Tracey discussed the cookbook project and stated that a separate group of volunteers is currently working

on putting together some taste testings for the social and also having cookbooks on hand to sell.

Book Fair – Julie Weir is co-chairing this with Amy Stimac. This will be running during the Fall Social. It will also be open to classes on Wednesday-Friday, November 5th, 6th, and 7th. She discussed a cool CD put out by Scholastic which features popular authors talking about how they came up with the ideas for their book(s). She is hoping that Donna will be able to share this CD with some of the classes.

Annual Appeal – Kathleen asked if there was a due date or end date for the appeal. Chris suggested putting one on as people like to know these things.

Adjournment

Before adjourning, Julie noted that the date for the November meeting was changed due to a conflict with the Special Town Meeting. The new date is November 5th. Glenn Brand will be attending to speak for a bit and meet parents in attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Smith