

## Ross PTA Executive Board Meeting – January 25, 2022

In attendance: Amanda, Holly, Alison, Brian, Kristen, Melissa, Liz, Jenny, Debbie (notetaker)

Regrets: Kate

Meeting started at 8:00pm

### Agenda Items

- Covid / Quarantine policies
  - Brief informal discussion at beginning of meeting.
- Next General Meeting - February 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Approve By-Laws
    - Amanda noted our major business would be approving the bylaws that we discussed at the last meeting, that there has been no pushback to changes, and anticipates they will go through. Will send out ahead of meeting.
  - LSAT Budget Season Discussion
    - Amanda noted at the LSAT meeting yesterday, they discussed the Budget Season. Recommendation from liaison is to poll community to get priorities from the school for the LSAT to have when making recommendations to the principal.
    - Kristen noted that we wanted to ensure that all voices were heard to help move forward with all stakeholders, especially when having difficult conversations (e.g., taking away something). They are drafting a survey for teachers (not extensive), but they also hope to get comprehensive and quick data from as many parents as possible.
    - Alison suggested education of parents about the budget.
    - Kristen explained in the LSAT, they do budget education and referenced Holly's note in the zoom chat that DCPS has a lot of resources and webinars, and to present basic budgeting in the PTA meeting.
    - Holly also stated that there might also be a sense of over communication, unless something is affecting you personally.
    - Alison and Amanda acknowledged that basic budgeting discussion at PTA would be helpful.
    - Holly said that collectively, her, Amit, and Kristen, could explain their roles in the LSAT, when having this discussion. Kristen will reach out to Amit. Amanda will include this item on the Agenda.
    - Melissa suggested people who don't know anything about the budget should review the survey prior to going out, to ensure the questions are clear.

- Timeline – Holly explained the sooner the better, and that usually they have 10 days to turn things around when they received info; if they are looking at situation of doing cuts, this can be tough, if there is not a lot of consideration ahead of time.
    - Recording - Melissa suggested for people not attending the PTA meeting, if we have a super short video, with Holly, Kristen, Amit, in a few minutes, that may help people for overall need for input. Holly offered a separate, standalone meeting, closer to the time. Amanda noted we record the meetings, and Alison offered to edit the portion to send it out. Holly noted they could push out the budget resources from DCPS.
  - Change in Report Cards
    - Holly noted that Principals have wanted to revise the report cards for years. Yesterday, she saw a presentation by presenters who offered to come and present and engage with families about what they are proposing. She also wants engagement with teachers. A separate meeting may be scheduled, as Holly does not know if they will be available during a General Meeting, but she will check with them. If they are not available, a separate meeting will be scheduled.
    - Holly explained the changes would not occur until next year, due to the process that includes public comments.
    - Amanda said we can also offer March 31<sup>st</sup> date but Holly will check when they want it to go public comment (maybe mid-February).
- Auction
  - Amanda explained that the Committee met for first time last week and are meeting again tomorrow.
  - Recruitment - we are working on recruiting more people, and Amanda has a Chair in mind.
  - Virtual versus in-person TBD.
  - Date - we are targeting early April, so we don't compete with a May fundraiser. This may be late enough that we can have it outdoors.
    - Alison noted that at end of March auction at Deal has changed to virtual.
  - Goal is to have a save the date, call for volunteers, and soliciting donations with March 13<sup>th</sup> cut-off.
  - Teacher Experiences - Kristen asked about timing of messaging about teacher experiences; and said if we send an email, she can send it to staff.
  - Amanda noted at LSAT a request for a special ask was raised, which Holly will follow-up with staff on preferences.
- Treasurer's Report
  - Brian showed the Excel spreadsheet for discussion.
  - Revenue

- Fall for Ross Drive – wanted to highlight that there was a push at the end of the year, 91 families total donating, projecting around 34K by end of the FY.
      - At general membership meeting in December, Tina’s estimate seemed low, and Brian asked her to take a second look, and the near 34K amount seemed closer.
    - Another recent Field Trip occurred.
    - We have raised about 90K, which is around 60% of the budgeted amount.
  - Expenditures
    - Discretionary Classroom Supplies – the second Amazon card payment of \$5700 to staff was made.
    - Community Support – some December purchases were made and mostly maxed out.
    - Field Trip – K-1 – occurred recently.
    - Slow accumulation of STEM and other expenditures.
    - School-to-School Initiative – payment will be made this week.
    - Overall, we’re at about 74K of budgeted 134K.
  - Net Revenue
    - We’re operating at net revenue of 17K. This number will go down because we’ll keep spending and not bringing in revenue for a while. We still plan to strive for a 25K surplus for the year.
  - Questions
    - Melissa – for community and PTA events lines, she asked if doing a couple more events that would involve booking school and graduation for 5<sup>th</sup> graders, when can we revise the budget, so we have flexibility?
    - Brian said we may not be able to revise the budget at this point, and it’s too late. The way the by-laws are currently written prohibits it. Other PTAs have within their by-laws to move small dollar amounts within expenditure categories, but any revisions to the by-laws need to be made by the general membership.
    - Amanda noted at her non-profit, there’s operational control that’s not binding. If we don’t expect to have a lot of expenses, and are committed to running in the black, budgets are not binding on an organization. Unless it says specifically that we can’t, it would be fine to overspend on events while we’re under-spending in other categories.
    - Holly noted there is some flexibility – example of moving money to custodial expenses that she received from an outside sources, and possibly wiggle room in technology. Suggested transparency.
    - Brian agreed it would be fine as long as there’s transparency.

- Melissa – thought maybe we could discuss the other events and then work on the budget.
    - Alison – we could have this discussion at the March meeting.
    - Jenny – thought maybe we could not be so specific, and note that we have some categories where we may want extra.
    - Brian thought maybe we could state the dollar amount we would be willing to shift, e.g., no more than a few thousand.
  - CPA submitted to the IRS our 990
    - Brian sent an email to the Board to notify the Board that this was completed, which included the CPA sending to Brian and Tina the draft 990. This process should be complete.
  - CPA
    - Brian noted we hired a CPA (last year, we had 990 filed without one). They did a perfectly fine and thorough job with Brian and Tina being satisfied. But, they were three weeks late (they applied for and received an extension from the IRS). Tina thought this was a little weird, since the PTA's finances are not that complicated. They were not that communicative. Should we include them for next year? Tina will provide more information about another CPA they use.
    - Melissa noted since we aren't super happy, we can shop around.
    - Brian will come back with information from Tina. Melissa offered to help as well.
  - Cash Box Log
    - Tina created a form to use for events where the Cash Box is in place that the person who is in charge of the Cash Box should fill-out.
  - Revisions
    - At March general membership meeting, Brian thought we could suggest revisions to finance and policy and procedures could be introduced and voted on in June.
  - Tea Collection fundraiser - \$180.70 was raised
- Other Events to Plan for In Spring
  - Movie Night
    - Melissa noted concerns, when pushed into spring, that it became later than usual.
    - Holly – we also want this earlier because of custodial staff needing to stay late.
    - We made quite a bit on popcorn and pizza on movie night.
    - Jenny noted in 2019 – it was in November and started at 5:30pm.
    - Mid-March date?
  - Picnic

- Melissa - to show diversity of school, we could have a potluck, highlighting dishes from various countries. It won't cost much, but we can have it early at Ross. This could be in April or May.
  - Amanda - our end of year meeting is June 4<sup>th</sup>, we could do elections and picnic and have a quick General Body meeting.
  - Holly - we can have a quick meeting inside, and then head down to the meeting.
- Graduation
  - Holly explained there is minimal lift.
- Play
  - Holly reached out to Keegan, and we have a partnership with Kennedy Center, which will include 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> ... grades.
  - No budget (\$8K for musical, which is what we had prior to Covid shutdown).
- Bingo Night
  - Jenny - said we have done this in the past; but can this be an outdoor event?
  - Holly - companies have done virtual bingo night. This could be fun community building. We used to work with Labyrinth Games that did in-person game night.
  - Online bingo? Melissa noted there are a lot of options.
  - Holly - suggested maybe Trivia night but Melissa noted, what if we ended up doing this for the auction.
  - Liz - this is not so complicated, e.g., Mr. Eickmeyer calling out numbers in the past.
    - For bingo, we may not need a vendor, but trivia we may need it.
    - We can send Bingo cards home with kids in the backpack.
  - Holly - in-person in March - noted we did this at Foundry before.
- Discussion of Movie Night versus Bingo
  - Amanda - suggested that we'd have to do a movie night before Daylight savings - early March - and we should do an in-person, separate event that's a fundraiser prior to the fundraiser.
  - Melissa - suggested them being different kinds of events - the movie night, people come with siblings ... but also hears concerns regarding the timing.
  - If we did Movie Night, we can maybe do it March 8<sup>th</sup> (a Tuesday).
  - Alison noted if we do this in March, we would get a discount because people are not doing outdoor movies in March.
  - Liz suggested we could do Bingo out in the field and use picnic tables, if needed.

- Melissa will summarize these suggested events, including budget, to help us determine how to proceed.
- Field Day in June
  - Typically Mr. Shegda has organized this.
  - Marie Reed field was used previously.
  - Some of the Nats showed up.
  - We need a lot of volunteers for this (Holly noted we don't have a lot of clearances).
- Fishing Trip – Mr. Shegda is planning a trip with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Ski Trip for older Kids – Mr. Shegda is also looking into it.

Meeting ended at 9:11pm.