

Long Reach High School PTSA Executive Board Meeting Minutes Monday, October 11, 2011

In Attendance:

Alicia Slahetka, Lisa Jones, David Burton, Laurie Lerman, Khara Walker, Donna Tafuri, Natalie LaRoche, Marie Langford, Avis L. Earl, Jimmie Robinson, Edith St. Hilaire and guest Howard County Council member Calvin Ball

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm in the Guidance office by President, Alicia Slahetka. Alicia asked each attendee to begin with an introduction. Marie Langford, a freshman parent interested in the Vice President position, introduced herself and explained why she wanted to be involved. She wasn't able to stay for the entire meeting, but wanted to come in and introduce herself. Alicia proceeded with the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 13, 2010 meeting minutes approved as submitted.

Special Guest - Dr. Calvin Ball, Howard County Council Member, was in attendance to introduce himself, to give support to the PTSA and thank us for our service. Before leaving, Dr. Ball gave us a brief description as to what he does. He is our County Council representative and feels his most important job is constituent service. Whenever there is an issue or concern, such as trash not being picked up, or street light issues - we call him, as our community advocate. He meets quarterly with the Board of Education and his office approves the budget for the schools by making sure that certain programs or funding for the schools are not cut. Alicia stated that a few years ago, some students at Mayfield Woods Middle School were hit by cars on Mayfield Road and Dr. Ball was instrumental in helping to get speed humps in place.

OFFICER REPORTS

Presidents report:

- Alicia briefly went over the PTSA expectations for the new parents in attendance. Alicia went over the PTSA board member positions still open. We had 6 parents interested in the open positions. Alicia expressed how thrilled she was with the responses received from parents wanting to fill the vacant PTSA positions.
- Alicia asked those who have not completed a Roster form to please complete today. Alicia handed out a current roster and asked that we double check the information to ensure that the information is correct. She also asked if anyone had a problem with our personal information being given to the school office and made public.
- Bringing everyone up to speed with last month's meeting, Alicia explained the Child Abuse Education training program and asked to please make sure you complete it and turn the certificate into her.
- Energy forum originally scheduled for October 14th, has been pushed back to November 17th. Diane McCallister, GT Teacher has taken over the coordination of the event and needed to change the date to get more student involvement. She has a group of students who are part of the environmental club, and will have these students present at the beginning of the Forum, describing what they have been able to accomplish for Long Reach. They are reaching out to the elementary and middle schools that already have green schools and recycling programs implemented. They would like the kids to come and present displays/poster boards concerning

their school's green programs, similar to a science or GT fair. This is a way of reaching out to our feeder schools or other schools who are big in the green movement. The PTSA is supporting the event by promoting and advertising it as well as providing refreshments if needed. Dr. Ball spoke and said that his office is working on promotion by putting the information in his monthly e-newsletter and reaching out to different elected officials and those involved in the Office of Environmental Sustainability in Howard County. Alicia said that the theme is "Green is the New Purple." The overall goal is to reach out to the community and parents and is open to the entire county. There will be breakout sessions lasting 10-15 minutes long providing information on how to save money by weatherizing, home audits, changing light bulbs, and reading your bills. They are also plan on having community resources, and a vendor fair. Donna expressed a concern that many people do not understand how power is deregulated. Alicia said that this is one of the workshops being planned.

- At Back-to-School-Night we introduced a fundraising program called "Good Search and Good Shop." To date we have 326 searches and 2 people have shopped giving us a percentage of the purchases. We have \$26.49 in less than one month. We were not sure how this would go, but Alicia is feeling good about the program. Patricia is working on getting the toolbar on our website. We plan to send out an HCPSS News item regarding our grocery programs, as well as the Good Search program. She asked that we tell friends about the program.
- Alicia had a conversation with the Boosters regarding sharing our volunteer lists with each other. She reiterated that she is a big advocate for partnering with every parent group that we can, because we are all doing the same thing, but serving different areas. She wants to change the climate of the school so that volunteers do not feel that if they are on Boosters that they can't support and help the PTSA. The goal is to make sure that we share volunteers and resources. She asked everyone's opinion about sharing our volunteer lists with the boosters. Everyone agreed to do so and it would be a great help to both groups. Alicia also mentioned that the Boosters gave a \$500 donation last year for our After-Prom, which was a significant donation.
- For the purpose of the new PTSA attendees, Alicia mentioned that the PTSA meetings will not run over 2 hours. We try and keep the meeting to 1.5 hours.

Treasurer's Report:

Lourdes was not able to make it to the meeting, and was not able to provide a Treasurer's report at this time. Alicia said that we had roughly \$3,633.83 to start the year. We have since added about \$3000 for memberships and donations. Right now our account is about \$6,000. We will have a more accurate Treasurers Report next month.

PRINCIPALS REPORT:

Mr. Burton started by mentioning the theft incident that occurred at the school in the boy's & girl's locker rooms recently. He was asked to address the issue because Alicia had been contacted by parents who were concerned and wanted to know how this is going to be handled. He stated that:

- He will make sure that students staying after school are part of an activity or they should not be remaining on school grounds.
- Administration is planning to attend the coaches meeting on Friday to go over expectations and to make sure the coaches understand what is expected.
- He is increasing visibility of security at athletic events.
- He is in the process of getting a cost analysis for getting more cameras inside and outside of the building. Right now there are 8-9 that are working, which is not enough for a building our size.
- He is accepting bids right now for a roll-down security door to replace the old gate near the gym area. It's not very secure and it's dangerous.

- He is getting a cost analysis for locks for student athletes. Will try and figure out the funding for the locks. Will figure out if the school can obtain donations to make it happen or see if parents would be willing to pay for the cost of the lock.
- He will make sure that coaches keep the team rooms secure.
- Mentioned that a lot of people have master keys that do not need them. Getting them back is not something that can be done immediately. In order for any staff to keep the master keys, they would have to speak with Dave to explain why they need a Master Key.
- Also would like to implement a way of having students anonymously report incidents to school personnel, without feeling that they are ‘snitching.’

SIT Team: Mr. Burton went over the School Improvement Team (SIT). The sit team is all about school improvement and how it can improve as an entity. Currently, only school personnel is involved, but he would like to have students and parents involved by actively engaging with what is happening to improve the school. Having everyone involved, creates a synergy between the groups that are represented, but it also makes it transparent as to what is going on in the school. It’s a chance to talk freely about how to make the school better. He didn’t have the meeting dates, but said he would provide the dates and times at our next meeting. He requested for one or two parents to come and attend the meetings and help put together a mission and vision for the school. Usually, the meeting is held once a month during 6th period. He said that if the meeting has to be changed to after school, it could be considered.

Big Lots: Dave received a call from The Big Lots Corporation, re: the new store opening where Comp-USA used to be, next to Borders. We are the closest high school, and the store will donate \$2500, if we show up for the ribbon cutting. Dave plans on being there, and asked for parent and student support. It was suggested that we try and get as many parents there as possible. Ribbon cutting will be in November. Dave will get the information for the Ribbon cutting to us.

PTSA Meetings: Dave suggested that we consider opening up our PTSA meetings to students so that student organizations can give their opinions. Also, he suggested soliciting teachers to come out also. Alicia agreed that we haven’t had any students in the past few years, but is not opposed to it, and agrees that there should be student representatives in attendance.

PSAT being administered – Reminder to have our seniors go out and visit colleges.

Back-To School Night – Complimented the PTSA for the great job done during Back to School Night. Everyone was able to get to the classrooms and get out at a decent time. There were very positive comments all around.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

After Prom: We had our first after-prom meeting October 4th. After-prom meetings are held the first Monday of every month, so that there is information to report at the PTSA meeting on the 2nd Monday. We had a good meeting, here are highlights:

- No theme this year because we spend about \$200 on decorations for events that are themed, and felt that we could use that money on something else. After some research we found out that other schools do not have a theme.
- We will continue to have the After-Prom at AMC Movie Theatre. We found that attendance has tripled since we moved it to this venue. It’s a natural place for teens to hangout.
- Discussed types of activities to have at After-prom. Asked each attendee to ask their teens and their teens friends what types of activities they would like to have at After Prom. What will make them come.
- Activities we had before: Rock Band and Guitar Hero. Last year there was not enough interest in these games. It’s a lengthy process to set up, and you have to have someone monitor it at all times. We will be eliminating these next year.

- Other Activities suggested: Photo booth, Ping Pong table, Karaoke, money machine, Caricature Artist, Fuse ball table, Game show – Minute-to-Win-It. Alicia wanted all the meeting attendees if they could ask their teens for suggestions and report back at the next meeting.
- Looking at getting donated items from colleges around the U.S. The kids love getting things from various colleges.
- We recognize that there are a lot of parents that want to come and help at the event, but cannot be available for the day-to-day planning of the event. We value everyone's input. The more parents we have involved, the more activities we can offer, the more fun the students will have and the safer they will be.

Drivers Ed: Alicia reported on behalf of Sheree. She said that the first class began September 20th, and unfortunately, we only had 4 students enrolled. She asked if that was a normal enrollment for the beginning of the year, and was told that it was unusually low attendance. We will continue to promote our other classes schedule this school year. By the time we hit the classes in 2011, we usually have enrolled 35-40 students in each class.

Food Lion: Lisa Jones reported that for the 2nd period, we have \$105 that will be coming to the school. There are three distributions per year. They are April, August and December. We currently have 29 participants in the program. This program does not require us to sign up every year, as long as we have our 25 active participants.

Giant, Safeway and Target: Alicia reported on behalf of Lisa Ferryman and stated that we had about 50 participants signed up under the Giant program. An E-newsletter will go out and will be a push for the people to sign up for the store rebate programs. Alicia would also like to put flyers in the staff mailboxes.

Membership: Khara reported that we have approximately \$2,900 from membership sign-ups and donations. Total Members to date: 281, plus she had some additional membership forms at the meeting that need to be included. For the next meeting Alicia asked Khara to break out the numbers so that we have a better idea of who is joining and what we have receive in donations. As an incentive to join, all members who joined as a Bolt Donor was entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate from Mama Lucia's. Will do the drawing at the next meeting.

SAT Prep Class – The first class had to have at least 20 students, we ended up having 27. The feedback was good about the class. We have been told that when students take the class they typically see an increase in their overall scores by a few hundred points. The PTSA will receive approximately \$500 from enrollments. We would like to offer the class again in the spring and hope to repeat the high enrollment we had.

Website Coordinator: Alicia reported on behalf of Patricia and stated that our website is up for renewal. Patricia is working on getting it renewed and getting everything updated.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Marquee: Alicia asked Dave if there was any new information regarding the Marquee. He did not. We will remove this from unfinished business for now, as it is not a priority at this time.

Recycling cans – From the last meeting, Donna checked with Oakland Mills to find out if the cans were paid for, and she confirmed that they did pay for them. Dave stated that one of our students brought in 11 recycling cans that he paid for himself, so we do have some for now.

NEW BUSINESS:

PTSA vacant officer positions: We have two vacant Vice President positions.

We also need to fill several vacant committee positions as well. Alicia went through the basic job descriptions with everyone and then had each individual tell us a little bit about themselves and why they are interested in the positions. After this discussion, 2 parents withdrew their names from consideration for the VP position. Natalie LaRoche volunteered to fill the Co-Chair position for hospitality. Jimmy Robinson stated that he may be interested in the PTA Delegate Position as well as serving on the SIT team. The Nominees for the 2 open VP positions were Avis Earl, Edith St. Hilaire & Marie Langford.

A vote was taken by secret Ballot and the person with the highest number of votes will be 1st VP and the 2nd highest will be 2nd VP. The ballots will be counted after the meeting with President, Alicia & Secretary Lisa Jones officiating. Alicia will send out an email to the Board to announce winners.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 08, 2010 at 7:00 pm in the student services office.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM

Submitted by: Lisa Jones, Secretary