

**PTA Meeting Minutes**  
**September 15, 2011**  
**8:45 am**  
**RSS Cafeteria**

**Present:**

Kelly Lieberman  
Cheryl Artabane  
Robyn Dogus  
Hedy Cardozo  
Debbie Handler  
Peggy Reed  
Jennifer Belew  
Sonia Katz  
Jaime Coffey  
Julie Goldstein  
Lori Levitan  
Michele Goldberg  
Sarin Bachmann

Kim Palumbo  
Patti Davis  
Marilyn Tokayer  
Wendy Corbin  
Patty Chernick  
Cristiane Bourtiur  
Maureen Braren  
Jen Kitchin  
Jennifer Starr  
Shizue Cohen  
Jill Wilson  
Valery Schwartz  
Elizabeth Grill

Robin Gould  
Susan Rosson  
Bonnie Ackerman  
Grace Zell  
Nancy Barr  
Pat Lambert  
Bill Stark  
Tracy Taylor  
Gina Healy  
Jen Schlactus  
Felicia DePaola

**Jen Schlactus:** Welcome to our 1<sup>st</sup> PTA meeting of the school year. Glad to see so many new faces. We are a K-12 PTA.

Motion to accept June minutes: Debbie Handler; second: Maureen Braren

**Gina Healy, HS Principal**

We had a smooth and orderly beginning to the start of school. We've had two parent meetings:

- Parents of 11<sup>th</sup> graders about college
- Parents of 9<sup>th</sup> graders about transition to HS

**Tracy Taylor, RSS Principal**

- Great opening to school.
- Principal's Coffee last night went well. We will post agendas/minutes to meetings on the website
- Thank you to the PTA for bringing the Lice Treatment Center on the first day of school. They were phenomenal.

**Pat Lambert, MS Principal**

- Great to be here. We're off to a great start for the year.
- We're looking for a new office secretary.
- Locker changes/schedule changes all done. Modified sports underway.
- Back to School night is Oct 6. We're looking at parking and shuttling options to get everyone to the school in a safe and timely manner.

**Bill Stark, Superintendent**

- We had a great opening for all school buildings.
- This Monday at the BOE meeting I'm making a presentation on district's goals (financial, educational, administrative, etc...).
- Two other 'critical' meetings coming up on Oct 17 and Nov 7 on the impact of the new 2% tax cap on our district.
  - With a rollover budget (no new expenses except for those contractually mandated), we are at a 4.5% increase. We need to make preparations on how to handle this.
  - BOE needs to get a sense from the community about their philosophical position. We need feedback from parents. This will determine what type of budget I propose, and what budget the BOE accepts. We need to do this ASAP, because there will be an impact on programs.
  - On our \$40 million budget, the 4.5% is \$1.8 million. At 2%, we only get \$800,000. Where will the money come from?
  - For the last three years we've been cutting everywhere but the classroom, and dipping into our contingency fund to allow for 1% tax increases.
  - Next we'll have to go into the classroom and make cuts there. It's time for hard decisions, and we need to know what the community wants.
- Community Conversations will be starting up again. This year meetings will alternate between day and evenings. First one is next Thursday at 9am.

Parent Question: Has the 2% cap become law yet?

A: Yes, it is now the law in NYS. You can pass a budget over 2% with a vote of 60+%. If the budget is voted down twice, however, the third time it must be presented at 0%, so we need to be careful about what we propose.

**Nancy Barr, BOE**

- Mr. Stark said it well: We're up against something new this year. We were able to keep tax increases low for the last three years, but this year will be different.
- Part of the problem continues to be unfunded mandates, such as pensions, bussing, special ed., and the new APPR (a new way of evaluating teachers). These items alone could bring us to the 2%.
- I am the PTA board liaison this year. It would be helpful if there were a PTA liaison to the BOE meetings.
- Please contact the BOE at any time if you have questions or concerns.

### **Adele Saunders, Treasurer**

- The PTA executive board met this summer and reviewed the projections for the coming year.
- There is no school store this year, and no Lord & Taylor fundraiser.
- Network for Special Programs needs \$1500, not \$500; low expenses last year were due to getting a free speaker.
- School store was problematic, but holiday sale would be missed. Presume \$1000 profit for holiday sale (money can cover Network for Special Programs expenses).
- Sarin Bachmann has a source for scented pens with school logos. Contact her if interested.

Motion to accept the budget: Jen Schlactus. Second: Maureen Braren

### **Patty Chernick, Ways and Means**

- After school activities starting soon. Sports classes will be offered by Corbin's Crusaders. They will also do 1-on-1 or small group instruction after the PTA class.
- Pumpkin Fair date TBD (Oct 14?). Patty and Robin chairing the event. Volunteers needed (Jen will send out an email blast). Lydia Nioras and Robyn Weintraub will do the food.
- Book Fair (Dec.) Debbie Handler looking for new people to run the event. It takes one week of full-time work to run.

### **Susan Rosson, Programming**

- Ice Cream Social went well.
- Most Programming events are in the spring. Next upcoming event is Science Night in January.
- Young Writers' Conference was abandoned last year because no one wanted to run it. Start looking for volunteers soon. Jen will send out a targeted email to grades 3-5.

Parent Q: Why weren't the kindergarten teachers at the Ice Cream Social? The kids were upset that they didn't meet their teachers, and didn't do anything with their classes. They just hung around their preschool friends.

A: The kindergarten teachers are never there. We've asked in the past. We can manage expectations better next year by letting the parents know in advance that the teachers won't be there.

### **Cheryl Artabane, Membership**

- Dial-a-Friend file finally finished. It will not be ready for Open House.
- The system is antiquated; it's done on an excel spreadsheet. Better technology must be available.

Parent Q: Why aren't emails included in the DAF?

A: We've discussed this a lot. Three reasons: email addresses change more often than phone numbers; we don't want people using the email addresses for soliciting; we don't want to make it too easy for cyberbullying.

The PTA has subsidized the cost of a new soundboard for the MS/HS auditorium. The Arts Committee asked last year for a PTA contribution.

Next meeting: Thursday, Oct. 20, 8:45am.

Motion to adjourn: Debbie Handler. Second: Hedy Cardozo