

Minutes 9/23/10 Ex-Board meeting

The meeting of the Exec. Board of the BHSEC PTA was held in the Ambac Conference Room, 1 State Street. It commenced at 6:30 pm.

Attending: Susan Yohn, Michelle Fuchs, Annie Leung, Carol Suchman, Suzanne Rauffenbart, Maureen Marlow, Eileen McColgan, Abe Suleiman, Linnae Hamilton, Eleanor Campbell, Michael Duddy, Florence Nash, Carol Turitz, Colleen Tannis.

Minutes from last ex-bd meeting were not immediately available. Florence Nash will forward them to the ex board via email.

The meeting was opened by Linnae and Abe. The terms for the \$250,000 challenge grant secured by the Friends of Bard were discussed. Thus far Friends of Bard have raised \$120,000 toward the \$250,000 from four families. The goal for the PTA annual fund is \$100,000. Abe suggested that this grant changes the game, giving parents an incentive to give more than they might normally.

Asked about past performance, Eileen M. recalled that on average 300 families (or 50%) of families had participated in the Annual Fund, giving an average of \$260. She continued that the agreement between Friends of Bard (FOB) and BHSEC PTA to separate fundraising with FOB concentrating on soliciting alumni, corporations, and foundations leaving the PTA to solicit parents should make the Annual Fund appeal more straightforward and less confusing to families. This way they will know to whom they should write checks.

Abe and Linnae reported that they would be meeting with Michael Lerner and Martha Olsen to discuss budget issues and how it might be adjusted should additional funds be raised. They will attempt to clarify what the additional money will go toward.

Linnae said that she would like to see extra funds used for teacher overtime and professional development. Upon questioning she reiterated that the budget items already approved would be honored. Discussions with Lerner and Olson will address what additional items might be funded by the PTA.

The report from the Phone-a-thon Committee followed: This will be chaired by Eileen M and Abe S. A 9th grade parent with experience in this area has volunteered to aid the effort. Currently the phone-a-thon will take place later in October over a three day period, after the fundraising letter has gone out. In the past the union has allowed us to use their phones but this is not possible this year because of the upcoming election. There will be a script written for parents calling on behalf of BHSEC.

Linnae H, Abe S., Susan Y. and Ellen G will work on drafting the letter.

Abe S. reported that we raised \$2200 at the first PTA meeting on 9/16. This is a good beginning and bodes well for the upcoming appeal. Linnae announced that the 9th grade parent representative is Nancy Orenstein.

Discussion turned to future PTA programs:

- The October 23rd meeting will be focus on adjusting to BHSEC, aimed primarily at 9th grade and transfer students and parents.
- The PTA will encourage Michael Lerner to hold a Breakfast with the Principal earlier in October. Here he can address parent concerns about overcrowding and scheduling problems.
- The November meeting -- Planning Ahead/Financial Planning. This session will be pitched to 9th, 10th, and Year 1 families.
- The December PTA meeting will feature the International and Exchange Programs.
- There will be a second meeting in December, cosponsored with the College Transfer Office and will feature Tom Marlow discussing the nitty gritty of applying for financial aid. This session is aimed primarily at Year 1 and Year 2 families.

The Board reviewed the PTA Committees. Carol Suchman will update the descriptions. A Translation Committee was proposed and agreed to. Linnae will follow up with several people who might be interested in chairing such a committee. Annie L. said that such a committee would be an asset to parents who do not speak or are proficient in English. There was also agreement that the Knowledge College would be listed as a separate committee. Abe proposed that under the "Volunteering" section of the web site we post any specific skills we require.

Carol Turitz recommended that we fine tune the Pink Sheet. The school would benefit from a volunteer database (Excel file), updated annually based on information gathered from parents, that we could access as needed. It was agreed that the Corresponding Secretary would take on this job.

A request from a parent for morning meetings was discussed and discarded. By laws mandate evening PTA meetings.

Abe briefly introduced a new fundraising ideas -- one called "Scrips" which would allow parents to buy discount gift cards. A percentage would then be returned to the PTA. There was general agreement that he pursue this. Carol T. will check to see if DOE allows this kind of fundraising.

Linnae will turn her attention to planning the Holiday Gift Fair, to be held in early Nov. during parent teacher conferences. This was followed by a discussion of the pros and cons of sponsoring a student run flea market. No consensus was reached on this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Minutes submitted by recording secretary Susan Yohn