

MINUTES

Horsemen PTA Minutes

December 13 | 8:30am | Meeting called to order by Christina Grillo

In Attendance

Christina Grillo (President); Andrea Williamson (Secretary); Allie Scherich (Vice President); Julie Fiore (VP 1st Grade); Elissa Smith (VP 2nd Grade); Juliana Aloia (VP 3rd Grade); Brianna Staudt (VP K & 1st Grade); Lauren McBride (VP 1st & 3rd Grade); Mitch Sylves-Berry (Rivertown Parents); Daphne Uviller (MS VP); Brenda Rodriguez (MS VP); Angel Rafter (Membership & VP SHHS); Keri Mackiewicz (VP 5th Grade); Tara Scheller (MS VP)

Disney Ticket Live Facebook Drawing

Mr. Borsari drew the two winning tickets for the Disney Park Hopper tickets. Katy Ritz and Glenn Chernack were the lucky winners!

Financials to-date

Maribel (Treasurer) has updated the budget with actuals. Christina asked that event chairs and VP's review numbers to ensure accuracy; reviewing actuals throughout the year will reduce the burden at end of year when finalizing numbers and submitting tax returns.

Mini-Grants

Time to start organizing for PTA mini-grants. Last year, the PTA received a lot of grants. Each teacher received a hard copy of the application, along with a cover letter.

Application period is open through the month of January, with a suggested due date of Monday February 3rd.

Target grant allocation is \$12,000 to the Elementary schools (JP, Morse, WI), and \$3,000 to the Middle School. Christina is looking for volunteers to review mini-grants. The committee will include at least one VP from each school. A number of board members also volunteered to join the committee in the meeting and others are welcome to follow up with Christina offline.

Ice Skating Fundraiser

Brianna is running the Ice Skating event again, and will use a similar format from last years' event as last years' event was very successful. Brianna investigated including a food or hot chocolate pairing but was too complex given it's two separate vendors and we'd need to source the food ourselves... too complicated to combine into one ticket. Cost will be \$12 per person (includes a skate rental), with 50% going to the PTA. This is a discount from the regular fee of ~\$16. PTA board members to work the event at the tables, in two shifts allowing time to also skate with families too. Scheduled for Jan 26th from 1pm to 3pm. PTA volunteers to wear nametags to help families "put a face to the PTA". VP's to mention to principals, and flyers to come.

Spirit Wear Update

Allie is working with an external vendor (suggested by a community member who has researched and worked with spirit wear vendors in past), to provide Spirit Wear that the PTA can sell. The price point is higher than what our past Spirit Wear was priced at, but the items are more varied and stylish. The percentage that the PTA earns is based on the number of items sold. Versus prior vendors, we do not need to buy in advance in bulk. We will host a 2-week period launching on January 26th (same day as the Ice Skating fundraiser) where people can purchase online. We can decide if we want to buy a bulk purchase (potentially based on popular items), we could do that and have items on-hand to sell at future PTA events. Allie received some feedback from the board to take back to the vendor on the selection, including having an increased number of items for elementary-aged kids.

School Supplies Fundraiser

Daphne and Brianna are investigating a fundraiser (via the vendor “School Toolbox”) to provide school supplies (grades 1-8) that could be delivered to the school at the start of next year. Parents can purchase for their own children, and/or for other students. Purchases would need to be elected and purchased in the spring, with deliveries to the school by start of school. Pricing appears similar to in-store pricing, and there is some return to the PTA as well. It was noted that there is also an option with School Toolbox to allow parents to purchase supplies from the summer registration packets and have them delivered to their home before the start of school.

Summary of recent BOE Meetings

Brianna attended the BOE meeting where the Middle School Principal presented an update on the school. There were a number of asks that were presented that the Board took note of, including the need for additional Reading Teacher support (there used to be two and now there is only one who is very busy). Another ask was for lunch monitors – currently teachers take turns to cover this. Another point is regarding field trips. The school is limited on what field trips they can take given the buses need to be ready to begin dismissals. The middle school would like to use charter buses in certain instances to enable longer trips.

School Updates

Updates were provided by the VP’s from each respective school.

- **JP:** The National PTA School of Excellence Award will be formally presented to Mrs. Barnett at the Holiday Sing-along. A note went out to parents. Chris Borsari, Mimi Godwin, and regional rep from the PTA, and our grant writer are all attending. It was agreed the PTA should publicize the award and the celebration of the award at the sing-along and advertise amongst real estate agents as this designation is unique in the broader area. Angel has offered to deliver the prepared speech that Brianna has drafted.
- **Morse:** Drop-off safety was a topic of discussion; not much more that can be done to make this safer, but a continual area of concern. Mr. Walley is planning to write a note to families to encourage kids to take the bus or use other modes of transportation. The PTA would like to co-sign letter with Mr. Walley. Some parents want to encourage families to ride bikes and provide bike racks. The gates onto Beekman have been closed more frequently with greater focus from TA’s on ensuring it remains closed. Mr. Walley is speaking to the town to provide a latched gate and in the meantime can use a bungee

cord to keep the door closed. Angel asked the board if we should take this ourselves to the town advocating for a sign (similar to the parking lot sign) to patrons to not cut through during school hours, and change the gate such that it auto-closes. Christina suggested this topic should first be raised with Mr. Borsari, perhaps during the January Superintendent-PTA meeting. The PTA has approved funds towards library books; a cheque request was presented to the PTA, and Maribel will issue a cheque to the district. Mr. Walley will be able to purchase books against this. Picture Day update – retake day took place. Expect payment from January from Irving Simon (and know earnings). Working with Morse to schedule for next year.

- **WI:** No VP meeting last month due to a snow day. Amada, who is running the WI yearbook, is asking if the PTA can help to source sponsorships to bring down costs (while production costs are increasing), allowing the sponsor to have a page in the yearbook.
- **SHMS:** The book fair was last weekend, and was very successful, particularly compared to the past couple Scholastic fairs at the Middle School. The revenues were ~\$6,000 (a lot of that might have been with the café vs books!). PTA to receive 15% of in-store sales and 5% of online sales (which ended yesterday). The PTA was asked to use PTA Remind vs relying on the Principal to send Remind messages. A concern was raised with students hanging out in the announcer’s box at the sports field after-hours. Consideration to switch the location of movie night to the cafeteria to allow eating and drinking while watching the movie. There was discussion amongst the PTA board, suggesting that Movie Night should be co-hosted by staff, to help run events and manage situations with students (e.g. pro-longed and group trips to the bathrooms, ensuring all attendees are students, all students have permission slips, etc).

Sub-Group Updates

Rivertown Parents: The last presentation was in Irvington in November “In it Together Understanding our Childrens Emotional and Mental Well-Being”. Almost 100 people attended, showing the interest from parents on the topic of anxiety and stress management in school-aged children. The presentation touched on various resources in the county for parents helping kids manage stress and anxiety. They provided a video link to the presentation, which had ~125 hits within the first week of being posted.

Mitch asked the board for additional representation from the Horsemen PTA to join her. We need to host one event this year, and we are also responsible for communicating Rivertown Parents events to families in the district. Belonging to Rivertown Parents also provides cross-learning from other districts on events, programs, challenges, and other learnings. The next event is Tinker Night, a very popular event, on February 13th. Run by Curious on Hudson. Interested board members to reach out to Mitch; someone not on the board can also step in, and by doing so would thus join the PTA Board.

AOB

Meeting Adjourned at 10:15 am.

Next Meeting

January 17, 2020 | 8:30am, The Administration Building