

MINUTES

Horsemen PTA Minutes

April 14, 2021 | 8:00pm | Meeting called to order by Christina Grillo

In Attendance

Board Members in Attendance: Christina Grillo (President); Andrea Williamson (Secretary); Brianna Staudt (VP Website, 1st & 2nd Grade); Christina Papadopolous (VP 1st Grade); Lauren McBride (VP Fundraising, VP 2nd Grade & 4th Grade); Juliana Aloia (VP 4th Grade); Mechtild Steinert (VP 8th Grade); Maribel Correa (Treasurer); Sophia Rana (VP 5th Grade); Krista Barron (VP pre-K and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion); Alison Madrigal (Co-Vice President); Leslie Rosario (VP MS); Daphne Uviller (VP 6th Grade); Katy Lough (VP Kindergarten); Beth Provincher (Spiritwear Coordinator); Brenda Rodrigues (Vice President); Jessica Lake (VP Membership); Leanne Bloom (Heads-Up Committee Chair); Fay Serafica (Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Committee); Amanda Ferguson-Cradler (Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Committee);

General Hello's and Introductions

Christina welcomed board members as they joined, and formally kicked off at 7:35. Fay let the group know we have Leslie Rosario on tonight's call to provide Spanish translation if needed.

Executive Committee Slate Vote for 2021/2022 School Year

Christina announced the slate that the Nominating Committee presented at our last meeting, including Sophia Rana as President, Alison Madrigal and Brenda Rodriguez as Vice Presidents, Brianna Staudt as Treasurer, and Fay Serafica as Secretary. The slate was unanimously approved. Christina thanked the new Executive Committee for their commitment, and wished them a great school year in 2021/2022.

Elementary Outdoor Book Fair

Brianna sent out the book fair volunteer sign-up to the board earlier today, and asked the board to help out as they can on the fair dates of the 24th/25th of April and May 1st. She mentioned that Sunday May 2nd is being held as the rain date if needed. Family communications have started this week about the fair, including Jean O'Brien's Sunday email and a Facebook post. More to come on this front! There will be games such as the pencil pull at the event, to raise money for All For Books. The target is \$500. Andrea and Brianna have distributed \$5 vouchers to the Social Workers at the three elementary schools.

There is a google form to capture teacher input for their Wish Lists that was distributed to the teaching staff, who have already started to provide input. There will also be book fair celebrations per school in the evenings leading up to the fair. Andrea noted that it is proving difficult to find teachers to read to the students.

Christina offered further help to continue to promote the Elementary Book Fair to drive attendance.

By-Laws Approval, Update on Procedures and Board Roles

Andrea noted that the updated draft By-Laws were circulated last month following our last board meeting. One change that is not reflected is that our PTA classification was updated to K-12 PTA, vs K-8, and we will try to update it to pre-K - 12, at the suggestion of Brianna. Lauren asked for clarification on what a Standing Committee is, since the By-laws state that the Chair of a standing committee cannot hold that position for more than 2 years. Brianna clarified these are committees that are more or less permanent, including our Nominating Committee and Mini-Grants Committee. Brenda asked if we thought there should be term limits on some of our other positions, to ensure that our PTA volunteers feel able to do different things. Andrea noted that our Procedures can address term limits, if this is something that as a board we think we should instate.

Andrea then gave an update on the drafting of the new Horsemen PTA procedures. There is a draft started that is roughly 70% complete that is with the Procedures Committee for review and input. Once the committee members have had the chance to review and comment, they will re-group to discuss and revise the Procedures. Andrea shared that the goal is to have the Procedures drafted, distributed, reviewed, and voted on by our Executive Board before our last meeting of the year in June.

The Procedures committee also discussed a handful of changes to roles and responsibilities. One is that the Vice Presidents should lead a Committee, of which Mini Grants can be one. Additionally, the responsibility for the Summer Packets should move to the Secretary, and responsibility for Back To School volunteers and volunteer sign-up's should move to the Volunteer Coordinator. Christina also noted there will be changes to the roles of the Class Parent Coordinator, as a result of the DEI Roadmap action items reviewed in our March 2021 board meeting.

Andrea also presented proposed dates and times for next years' monthly PTA Board Meetings. She presented that meetings will return to Friday mornings in person at the Administration Building, with October and April Membership Meetings which will be held via Zoom in the evenings, with translation. She asked for Board input, given our collective experience over the last year with evening Zoom calls. A few members noted that they would not be able to attend meetings during the work/school day. Mechtild also thought in-person meetings during the day are not lending themselves to being open to spanish-speaking attendees. The board decided to move to alternating morning in-person meetings and evening zoom meetings. Spanish translation will be used at the two membership meetings. Additionally, we can always add spanish translations to our other zoom meetings during the public sessions if it sees a need next year.

Leanne raised a concern that the district calendar available on www.tufsd.org is not being updated, and that she and other parents are finding this confusing. Leanne was looking to this calendar to try to propose a date for a Heads-Up event. Christina thought this is due to the pandemic, where most events haven't been able to run, and that she thought most parents had stopped referring to the published calendar as a result. She also suggested that Leanne contact Nelly in the Superintendent's Office to check on the proposed dates for the Heads-Up event.

Community Wardrobe

Daphne shared that the community wardrobe is at an unfortunate impasse in finding a more permanent location. The group packed up all of the clothes, racks, and hangers, and they are currently being stored at 11 Dell, the house owned by the Reformed Church of the Tarrytowns. The building unfortunately does not have a Certificate of Occupancy, and the request for a temporary CO is not feasible due to timing, costs, and other complications. The group is now back to looking for a home, either temporary or permanent. One member suggested that there is a Community Coalition, which is a meeting of local non-profits, that may be able to help. Brenda added that Marymount Convent has empty space, so may be an option. They had not wanted the building occupied earlier in the past year due to Covid concerns, but this may be worth exploring. Daphne will follow up on both suggestions. She also shared that Diana with the Village of Sleepy Hollow has been

dedicated to finding a more permanent home for the Community Wardrobe as well, working with both the village of Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown.

WI Transportation for Families <0.8 Mile from School

Christina noted that following the Board of Education meeting last week, there has been a lot of parent discussion and concern regarding the lack of busing to students within 0.8th of a mile from Washington Irving, causing some students to not attend school and/or remain Remote. Lauren had the chance to discuss this with Mr. Holland at the WI VP meeting earlier in the day. Mr. Holland and MRs. O'Grady are working on a "walking bus" plan where district employees who are finger-printed will escort students to and from school. They are currently working on the logistics, and will be reaching out to the families of the ~280 students within the 0.8 mile radius to determine where the need and interest is in joining the walking bus. Families must opt-in, and if they opt-in, the students must join daily; attendance will be taken.

There is a referendum being included in this years' school budget vote on May 1st to move the bus limitation from 0.8 miles to 0.3 miles. Mr. Holland asked for help from parents to share the news of the referendum to the community so that the community is informed prior to the school budget vote.

Committee Updates

Heads Up: Heads Up Rivertowns will host an online free forum in May available to parents focused on screen time and screen use, presented by Columbia Doctors. Leanne noted that the group changed focus during the pandemic, due to how necessary screen time became for day-to-day learning and living. That focus is now reverting to helping families with strategies to limit their childrens' screen time.

DEI: The Roadmap that was reviewed in the March 2021 meeting was approved by the National PTA. The committee is now working to implement the action items. The National PTA has asked the Horsemen PTA if we could make a short video highlighting the Roadmap process, which would be public to all National PTA, to share our learnings in this area. Brenda gave an update on WhatsApp. She had initially been planning on establishing sub-groups by grade, but given how late in the year it is, and the need to re-work those grade levels in September, the launch will likely be with just one large WhatsApp group for the remainder of this year.

School Updates

JP: Katy had a parent raise a concern that children eating in classrooms (and thus unmasked) are not able to be spaced 6 feet apart per the latest guidelines. Katy reached out to Mrs. Barnett for input, but she hasn't yet responded. Lauren noted that she has had similar discussions with Mr. Walley and Mr. Holland regarding Morse and WI. At WI, the students have been having lunch outside and have been able to stagger lunch in the cafeteria (which is a larger space vs JP). For snack time, Mr. Holland also mentioned staggering snacks and having kids sit in hallways 6 feet apart for snack. Lauren thought the principals were using lots of creativity to meet the 6 foot distances when eating. It was noted that each school must work a different solution given their differing layouts and locations.

Morse: Christina P highlighted that today's meeting covered a few updates on scheduled events, and some housekeeping items on dates for next years' PTA events (photo days, book fairs, etc), but no topics that needed to be highlighted or discussed with the Board.

WI: Lauren noted much of the discussion with Mr. Holland and Mrs. O'Grady was focused on the Walking Bus, as well as calendaring items for this year and next year, and school supplies lists.

MS: Mechtild noted that their meeting with Mr. Whitham is tomorrow. She shared that some parents have complained that after-school clubs clash with after-school sports. However, after discussion, many clubs such as music take place in the first period, which is a compromise, and students have to make choices on what activities they can do. Coaches also try to accommodate students that have conflicts, allowing them to come to practices late as an example. In terms of the school supply fundraiser, Mr. Whitham thought teachers may need less items than in prior years due to the use of the chromebooks. Mr. Whitham also noted that the 8th grade trip to Washington DC is cancelled. Mechtild had thought of a couple of alternatives, such as a trip to Boundless Adventures (open just for the 8th grade class 7pm - 11pm, cost of \$40/student). Other ideas included a bike trip or hike. Maribel noted that there is \$2,000 in the PTA budget set aside for the DC trip that could be used towards this type of experience.

Meeting Adjourned

Christina closed the meeting at 9:50. The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 12th at 8:00pm.