

*JR Briggs PTA Meeting Minutes*  
September 16, 2015

*President:* Sarah Dorsey  
*Treasurer:* Myriah Zwicker

*Vice President:* Michelle Parkinson  
*Secretary:* Cathryn Bebeau-Smith

***Welcome & Introductions***

- President Sarah Dorsey opened the meeting at 6p; introductions completed
- Dr. Gary Mazzolla, the newly-appointed school district superintendent, had to cancel his appearance today, he will re-schedule

***Principal's Report***

- 546 students enrolled, three more joined today; this is an increase from last year (the difference is pre-school)
- Some parents have expressed concern about seeing a police cruiser with lights flashing on school grounds, it is one of two new officers who are *Juvenile Specialists* (formerly known as *School Resource Officers*); two officers are appointed for Ashburnham and two more are appointed to Westminster; one of the officers is part of the weekly running club that has just started
  - They will assist on Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> for *International Walk-to-School Day*; logistics are being worked out: the school will walk from *Oakmont* to *Briggs*, busses are needed to get students and teachers to *Oakmont*; all grades can participate except for pre-school
  - There is no parking available at *Oakmont*, so any participants will need to park elsewhere
  - There is a state *Walk-to-School Day* in May of next year
- Briggs will be participating in the town's parade on September 27<sup>th</sup>
  - 15 students and 20 staff will be walking and the school band will also participate
  - Staff are encouraged to purchase t-shirts if participating; Becky reported 208 t-shirts have been sold so far
  - The theme is *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*; there are various creations in the works for the parade float
- Over 105 students are participating in the weekly *Running Club* that meet on Mondays and Wednesdays
- *Open House* is tomorrow; it is a time for students to bring their family to show them their classrooms, art work etc.; there will be sign-up sheets for *Parent Conferences* in the fall and spring
- Miss Lilly discussed the *Parent Volunteer Program*
  - Information will be out at *Open House*
  - Volunteers need to be trained (next week) and then volunteering can begin
  - There will be emailings for opportunities, the number of volunteers needed etc. and a parent can respond when interested
- Becky Pilsbury and Tiffany Davis recently received grant money to purchase additional tech equipment
  - Becky Pilsbury introduced *Maker Space* – students are given a challenge and ideas are presented to solve the problem using various items such as popsicle sticks, *Lego's* etc.
    - For example, presenting the story of the *Three Little Pigs* to younger students and have them learn by building stronger houses; the idea is, even if you fail, you can continue and create success by problem-solving and working with others
- *Math-A-Thon* – theme will be *Superhero STEAM Night* with proceeds going toward a shade for the playground

***Secretary's Report***

- Membership forms are still being submitted and added to the computerized Membership list; last year there were approximately 80 members and it appears there will be even more this year; an exact number will be given at the next meeting

## ***Treasurer's Report***

- The *Treasurer's Report* from May 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 was handed out and reviewed
  - Motion was made to approve the *Treasurer's Report*, seconded and approved
  - It was noted, there is already approximately \$650 in a *Playground Fund Account* to be used toward the purchase of the shade

## ***Housekeeping***

- *School Supplies Initiative*
  - \$2,000 was used to purchase school supplies for teachers to help defer costs to parents; at the end of this year, if the budget allows, PTA would like to continue to make these purchases
- *Forms & Websites*
  - Work is being done to update forms, *By-Laws*, *Proposal Guidelines* etc., they need to be approved which will hopefully happen in the next couple of weeks
  - PTA Officers will no longer each be given a binder with all the paperwork needed, instead, the forms will all be computerized; one binder will be created and kept updated and housed in the library to use as a resource
  - It was proposed that the \$350 originally budgeted for these binders could now be used for office supplies such as envelopes, stamps, paper etc.; Motion was made to change the use of these funds which was seconded and approved
  - Check the website for information each week; the website is new and still under construction, there are some problems being worked out
    - Mrs McGrath reviewed the new *School Lunch Policy* – a student can “charge” up to three lunches, after that, the student will be given a cheese sandwich with fruit or whatever is offered for the day; the change is due to the large deficit from lunches that were not being paid for
- *Newsletter*
  - PTA has tried to communicate through *Facebook*, however, it does not seem to be effective enough; discussed a quarterly newsletter outlining calendar items, important information, a recipe or game etc. to be one-sided and sent home with students as well as electronically; if anyone wants to share any ideas, information or an article, feel free to email Sarah Dorsey
- *Fall Events*
  - *Fall Fest* is October 2<sup>nd</sup>; the cost is approximately \$200, the younger grades like to wear their costumes; currently there is no Chairperson for this event; weighed the pros and cons of keeping the event or cancelling it; Sarah can send out an email stating that the event will be cancelled for this year since there is no Chairperson for it; Motion was presented and approved
  - Yearbook – *Lifetouch* will be doing the yearbook, Sarah gathering information and costs; costs are being reviewed in relation to ensuring that every 5<sup>th</sup> grader obtain a yearbook, Sponsorships will continue for a minimal amount of yearbooks (typically it has been only about 10 books)
  - *Staff Appreciation* is October 15<sup>th</sup> – need ideas for gifts, soup + salad will be served, looking for volunteers to cook, serve, set-up etc.; Myriah Zwicker to create flyer and distribute
- *Programs Ed Initiative/Male Involvement Initiative* – PTA can receive an award for involvement by male PTA members, currently there are approximately 11 male members

## ***Budget Approval***

- *Fall Budget* reviewed; need about \$100 for *Movie Night*, \$500 for *Staff Appreciation*
- Some spending was increased due to needs or adjustment in costs; the *Worcester Sharks* are no longer in MA, therefore, this fundraiser will no longer be available
- There is a need for increased fundraising this year to cover important events

- There is strong commitment to gaining a better understanding of events and fundraising efforts versus costs (ie, there was a loss of about \$400 for the *Boys Event* last year)
- Motion to approve the budget; seconded and approved

***BJs Fundraiser***

- The school gets \$5 for every BJ Membership/Renewal; memberships are still coming in, total number to be reported next meeting

***Open Forum***

- Becky Pilsbury – *Schoolastic Book Fair* Oct 14 through 21<sup>st</sup>; Volunteers needed to cover some of the time, they will need training on how to use the cash register, a sign-up sheet is started

Meeting adjourned at 7:30p  
***Next PTA Meeting is October 14<sup>th</sup> @ 6p***