

Jane Stenson PTA

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2016

Attendees: Priya Amin, Steph Azen, Carrie Butera, Taylor Crowley, Sevan Elmayan, Wannapa Eubanks, Wendy Gahm, Jim Harris, Michelle Harris, Peggy Hayes, Trina Janes, Jenny Kane, Karen Koehler-Davis, Julie Oh, Sue O'Neil, Jennifer Ruffner, Joe Ruffner and Cyndi Stevens.

1. **Call to Order:** Jen Ruffner opened the meeting in the Stenson School library at 6:49 p.m.
2. **Secretary's Report:** Trina Janes shared the minutes from the February 2016 meeting. Michelle Harris motioned for approval and Jim Harris seconded. The minutes were then adopted unanimously.
3. **Treasurer's Report:** Julie Oh presented the treasurer's report. There was discussion about ordering red folders in May or June to get a reduced rate. Michelle Harris motioned for approval and Steph Azen seconded. The report was approved unanimously.
4. **President's Report:** Jen shared the following:
 - a. We are in need of new committee chairs for the next school year. Several committee chairs have children graduating from Stenson. Let Jen know if you are interested in a role or know people who may be interested.
 - b. She and Steph Azen spoke about the PTA to the parents attending the recent kindergarten orientation. An impressive 50 parents expressed interest and 20 volunteered to be room parents.
 - c. Superintendent Garwood has stated that afterschool enrichment programs will begin in the fall. Programs will be offered at all three D68 elementary schools. Garwood said he will send an email to all parents letting them know. The school district would like to offer affordable programs that are available for all families. There may be a role for the PTA in financially supporting these programs.
5. **Principal's Report:** Sue O'Neil provided her report.
 - a. Stenson has registered 52 kindergarteners already. This is up from 39 this year. Thanks to Jen and Steph for attending the recent kindergarten orientation.
 - b. There is a parent coffee on Thursday morning, March 20 after drop off. She will consider holding an evening event to provide an opportunity for parents who are not available during the morning.
 - c. Stenson is participating in the village wide SOAR art show for the first time. Art is on display during the month of March and a reception will be held on March 23 at 5 p.m. at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts. Thanks to Wannapa for hanging the Stenson students' art. District 68 will be doing its own art show in April.
 - d. ELL parent mentors graduated last week. This included four Stenson parents. She will invite them to attend the May PTA meeting.
 - e. The mobile dentist came to Stenson last week. 58 students participated.

- f. The Vision & Mission Statement Committee has met twice. They have one more meeting scheduled next week and are close to concluding their work. Participants include parents, students and teachers.
- g. The school board meeting next week will be primarily a closed session, so no staff will be attending.
6. **Committee Reports:**
- a. **Membership (Wendy Gahm, Chair):** We gained 2 member families in February, bringing our total to 112. She will review the silent auction donors and reach out to those parents who are not yet PTA members.
- b. **Room Parents (Steph Azen, Chair):** There are many potential kindergarten room parents for next year.
- c. **PrePack (Vanessa Schneider, Chair):** Kindergarten parents were given the pre-pack information at orientation. Flyers for all other grades will be distributed in April. Orders are due in early May.
- d. **Restaurant Night (Karen Lostaunau, Chair):** We received \$53.58 from Jason's Deli and \$184.28 from Father and Son Pizza. Upcoming restaurant nights are: Epic Burger on March 22, Gratziano's in April and Cici's Pizza in May. We need a new committee chair for this committee next year.
- e. **Book Fair (Rondell Merrill, Chair):** The February book fair generated \$543.10 in sales. Rondell gave Sue \$500 worth of Scholastic books.
- f. **Cultural Arts (Wannapa Eubanks, Chair):** We are still waiting to get reimbursement from the Village of Skokie's cultural arts grant for the \$500 Stenson paid towards the Brazilian samba group that performed in the fall. We hope to get the check in April.
- g. **Box Tops (Diana Dizon, Chair):** The winter box top contest raised \$326.60. The total raised this year is \$768.90 which is less than in previous years. Only 15 of the 19 classes participated. Ms. Crowley's class won and will have a pizza party tomorrow. Jen will try to get donated pizza, but there is money in the budget for pizza. Thanks to everyone who trimmed their box tops. This committee will need a new chairman for next year.
- h. **Board of Education (Michelle Harris, Chair):** Jen Ruffner attended the February D68 Board Meeting. Highlights include:
- There was a presentation on the strengths and challenges of the math programs at the different grade levels. The leadership team will be presenting recommendations soon.
 - There was a moment of silence for loss of the OOJH ELL coordinator. In the future, this position will change from a coordinator to a part time administrator.
 - The new D68 website will be rolled out in a few weeks. It will be available in multiple languages through Google Translate and easier to view on mobile devices. School websites will be more streamlined as well.
- i. **Silent Auction (Joe Ruffner, Chair):** The silent auction was a big success and raised a total of \$6652. The live auction raised \$4347 and the online auction raised \$2305. Another \$261 was raised from food sales. This exceeded the \$4000 goal. Several items are left over. Where possible, they will be included for next year's event. Thanks to everyone who volunteered and bid.

- j. **Savers (Trina Janes, Chair):** Please share information about the Savers donation drive with neighbors, family and friends. The truck will be in the Stenson parking lot on Saturday, March 19 from 12 to 2 p.m. The Savers truck will accept both soft and hard items. Tax receipts will be distributed to those donating.
 - k. **International Night (Priya Amin & Michelle Harris, Co-Chairs):** The event is on April 7. A pot luck dinner will be held in the multipurpose room followed by a program in the gym. People can come to one or both activities. They are still in need of students to perform. Teachers and parents are encouraged to help recruit performers. There will be a fashion show for those who would like to show off their international apparel. They will send home a flyer asking people to sign up to bring items for the pot luck. They are in need of many volunteers to assist with the event. There is a planning meeting at Priya's house on March 10 at 6 p.m.
 - l. **Teacher Appreciation (Vanessa Schneider, Stephanie Azen & Michelle Harris, Co-Chairs):** The co-chairs will be meeting to plan teacher appreciation.
7. **Unfinished Business**
- a. **Nominating Committee:** Trina read the bylaws to explain the procedures for establishing the Nominating Committee that will select a new treasurer. Wendy Gahm, Sevan Elmayan and Ana Bryant were nominated for the Nominating Committee. Jen moved and Jim Harris seconded to approve the nominees. This motion passed unanimously. Joe Ruffner and Michelle Harris were nominated as alternates to the Nominating Committee. This was approved unanimously. Wendy Gahm will serve as chair of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will present its recommendation for the new treasurer at the May meeting.
 - b. **PTA Funds:** There was discussion about how best to use the remaining PTA funds. There is extra money in the budget because it was not needed for field trips and the silent auction exceeded its goal.
 - Suggestions for these funds included purchasing storage containers for the indoor recess board games. Ms. Crowley will ask the teachers about their storage needs. Jen will measure the available storage area and get prices for storage bins and bags.
 - A motion was made and seconded to have a discussion about purchasing a touchless water bottle filler at an upcoming meeting/
 - There was discussion about using money for scholarships to support the afterschool programs that will be offered in the fall.
8. **Upcoming Events:** The following are key upcoming events.
- a. Parent Coffee: March 10
 - b. No school: March 15 (Election Day) and March 25 to April 1 (Spring Break)
 - c. Restaurant Night: March 22 at Epic Burger, Old Orchard
 - d. Savers at Stenson: March 19 from 12 to 2 p.m.
9. **Next Meeting:** The next PTA meeting will be held on Monday, April 4 at 6:45 p.m.
10. **Adjourn:** The meeting was formally adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Trina Janes.