

Minutes of the Mantua PTA
May 5, 2004
Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: *Carole Thomas, Pam Promisel, Beth McKeown, Laura Mead and Rob Luftglass.*

School Representatives: *Jan-Marie Fernandez, Tina Tingler, Cheryl Thompson, Janet Sottolano and Jan Pry.*

Board Members: *Peter Brandman, Kathy Frongello, Randi Kirkland, DeeAnn Jeremiah, Jennifer Cooper, Cheryl May, Cheryl Dickison, Loren Brandman, Nathan Merrells, Kate Marosek and Laura Samotshozo.*

General Membership: *Phyllis Payne, Elana Plotnick, Donna Yudkin and Linda Halkias.*

Pam Promisel made a **motion** that the minutes of the April 14, 2004 meeting be approved. Laura Mead seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Beth McKeown distributed an income statement through 5/5/04. Key points on the income statement include the Raccoon Run (including PayPal revenue) and a credit balance in Basketball (due to a removal of payment for old charges).

Carole Thomas presented the **Announcements:**

- Tonight's Topic is the school improvement plan presented by Mrs. Fernandez.
- The PTA has received thank you notes from:
 - The secretaries for the PTA treating them to lunch and providing flowers,
 - Michael Romais for our support of his Eagle Scout project, and
 - Miss Viletto's class for the PTA sponsoring the Joe Romano Magic assembly.
- Upcoming Meetings/Events include the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, a forum on VA College admissions, the Raccoon Run, a 6th grade celebration planning meeting, a Principal's coffee, Field Day, and the Band and Strings performance. Information on these items is on website.
- Carole passed around a sign up form for board positions for next year. Many positions were filled during the last month, but there are still some available spots.
- Volunteers are needed for the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, Field Day and the Raccoon Run.

Mrs. Fernandez made the **Principals' Report**:

- She thanked the PTA for the lunch and flowers for the secretaries.
- Literacy Night was a success.
- Kindergarten Orientation was a success
- Teacher Appreciation Week is this week.
- The Korean delegation was not able to visit Mantua as originally planned. .
- At a Volunteer reception, Jennifer Cooper was honored for her many school and community projects.

Tina Tingler announced that Deaf-eralla will be presented on May 10. Brother Michael (who is not a Monk, as previously announced, though he is from Sudan) visited the school to observe our use of technology and our TC program.

Cheryl Thompson discussed the Arbor Day celebration in which a dogwood tree was planted, the Einstein Live assembly that was 'wonderful', and SOL testing which begins May 18 and will last through June 2.

Teacher Representative Report: Janet Sottolano discussed what is being done for Ms. Yoon, a custodian who is retiring after 29 years at Mantua. The week of May 24 has been designated as Mrs. Yoon's Week. The staff and PTA will be giving her gifts, with many events planned that week, including a party on Monday May 24th.

Janet also discussed:

- A Volunteer Tea will be held on June 7 at 2pm. The theme is a garden party.
- Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Henris for the raised garden bed they built and to Cravens Nursery for their donation of soil.
- Thanks, in advance, for the Teacher Luncheon coming up on Friday.

The following **Committee Reports** were filed:

Parents' Education – Pam Promisel discussed the new parent's library. This is a great resource for parents with much information relevant to raising children. Pam also announced that the last Parent education seminar will be held on May 17 and will be about keeping child safe this summer.

Kids Care Club: Carole announced for Jennifer Cooper that Raccoon Run is this Saturday with packet pickup on Friday

Hospitality: DeeAnn Jeremiah announced teacher appreciation luncheon will be on May 7.

Traffic Committee: Carole discussed the traffic around school and that sidewalks are needed. Laura Mead made a **motion** for the PTA to send a letter to support a sidewalk on

Horner and Lido, with the goal of receiving a grant. Beth McKeown seconded the motion. It carried.

Old Business

PTA Sponsors/Advertising: Carole distributed a position paper that addressed many of the concerns brought up last month. Carole announced that the Executive Committee supports this initiative. Some reasons for this support include that it is projected that income will be down and spending up next year and this is an easy way to raise money. Carole conducted research and discovered that other schools and even the Mantua Citizens Association have implemented similar programs with no apparent problems

Pam Promisel made a **motion** that we implement the sponsorship program as defined in the position paper, subject to the constraints in the paper. Donna Yudkin seconded the motion. Kathy Frongello expressed her concerns, specifically internet safety through links to sponsors and the commercialization of the Alert News. After discussion, it was decided that we will keep links off the home page and limit them to sponsor page. Laura Mead requested a call to question, for the motion with the modification of keeping links off the home page. The motion carried.

Executive Board Nominations: Carole expressed her thanks to Donna Yudkin, Kate Marosek and Monica Romig for their work on the Nominating Committee. Donna indicated that the online process worked well, but most who were nominated did not know that they had been nominated. Next year, we will include information as to whether a nominee has been notified. Donna also recommends that it would be preferable to tell the person you are nominating that you are planning to nominate them. It is also recommended that information about the candidates is included with the nomination.

Nominations:

John Jennison – President
Nathan Merrells – 1st VP
Carole Thomas – 2nd VP
Cheryl May – Treasurer
Nancy Robinson – Secretary

The slate will be voted on at the next meeting.

New Business

SLEEP (Start Later for Excellence in Education Proposal): Phyllis Payne presented information on this organization that was started in January 2004. The goal is to promote later start for middle and high schools in Fairfax County. Sleep is a biological requirement and essential for proper growth and development, enhancing memory and the

ability to learn. Teenagers need 9.25 hours of sleep, but average 7.5 hours. This is further exacerbated by the early start time for middle and high schools.

Some consequences of sleep deprivation include:

- Lower cognitive, social, school and behavioral performance,
- Decreased ability to concentrate, pay attention, problem-solve, remember and control moods,
- Increased tardiness and absence from school, and
- Higher risk for accidents, injuries.

Overall, daytime sleepiness reduces enjoyment and quality of life.

Many schools around the country are changing start times, with favorable results. In the Minneapolis school system, attendance improved, the dropout rate decreased, teachers reported better behavior, there was a slight improvement in grades (not statistically significant). With later starting times, sleep increased one hour per school night. Parents were polled and 92% of them were pleased with the change.

The biggest issue with making a change to start times is the bus schedules. The reason middle and high schools start so early is to balance out bus schedules with the elementary schools. Another concern is that this could lead to less time for extra-curricular activities.

SLEEP is meeting with the Fairfax communities to promote this cause. The SLEEP website is www.sleepinfairfax.org, where there is also a petition. A Pyramid Coordinator is needed for the Woodson pyramid.

Monthly Topic

This month's topic the school improvement plan (SIP), presented by Mrs. Fernandez. The SIP is put together every year by a large committee representing different parts of the school. Every grade level focuses on a goal and there are goals in all four areas: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies. A major focus this year is Language Arts, with all but 5th grade focusing on Language Arts (the 5th grade is focusing on science). Most goals are for improvements in writing. The SIP also includes a work-plan on how we are going to meet each goal.

Motions Carried

A motion carried to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2004.

A motion carried for the PTA to send a letter to support a sidewalk on Horner and Lido, with the goal of receiving a grant.

A modified motion carried that the PTA implement the sponsorship program as defined in the distributed position paper, subject to the constraints in the paper. The modification was that we will keep links off the home page and limit them to sponsor page.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm. The next meeting will be June 2, 2004.

Robert Luftglass
Secretary