

Minutes of the Mantua PTA
May 7, 2003
Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Present at the meeting were:

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

School Representatives: *Jan-Marie Fernandez, Tina Tingler, Elaine Wellner, Jan Pry, Janet Sottolano*

Board Members: *Allen Clark, Barb Suidikas, Bev Baughman, Cheryl Dickison, Cheryl May, Jennifer Cooper, Kristin Lahiff, Leanne Stynchula, Linda Halstead, Loren Brandman, Randi Kirkland*

General Membership: *Donna Cipicchio, Pam Pavord, Sarah Harrington, Martha Parsons*

Pam Promisel made a motion that the minutes of the April 2, 2003 meeting be approved. Beth McKeown seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Beth McKeown presented the **Treasurer's Report**. She provided two Income Statements – one for the ten months ending April 30, 2003 and one including the first few days in May. Some highlights include more than expected income for printer cartridges and restaurant contributions. Also included were expenses for items approved at meetings including money for headsets and gift certificates for TC volunteers.

Beth asked that the following statement be recorded so that there PTA policies are understood:

Re: Interpretation of Article IV(f) of Mantua Elementary PTA Bylaws

The Executive Committee made three decisions over the course of the year:

1. Gift certificates for parent volunteers of the drama program, although they were reimbursed this year, should no longer be allowed.
2. TC teachers and staff who volunteered their after school and evening free time in support of the ASL Family Class Program held on Wednesday evenings may receive gift certificates in appreciation of their service.
3. Interpreters will be provided airfare to attend a national training conference in Chicago, IL.

It was found that the purchasing of gift certificates for parent volunteers was a violation of Article IV(f) of the bylaws in that it inured a benefit to PTA members. Additionally, it did not meet the VA PTA criteria for suggested uses of PTA funds. Said gift certificates had already been purchased and distributed before the expense was submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement. Therefore, so as not to penalize the parent that had purchased said gift certificates, the Executive Committee decided to reimburse for the purchase with the stipulation that future purchases of this nature not be made with PTA funds. The VA PTA was consulted in making this decision and it supported the decision.

It was found that the purchasing of gift certificates for TC teachers and staff did not inure a benefit to PTA members even though some of these staff members may technically be members of our PTA. The Executive Committee decided that there is indeed a clear and obvious distinction between a parent that volunteers their time for PTA-sponsored activities and a staff member who does the same. Moreover, this purchase fit two of the VA PTA criteria for suggested use of PTA funds:

1. Curriculum enrichment
2. Funding for after school programs

Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, it encouraged future participation. Likewise, it was found that the purchase of airline tickets for the interpreters did not inure a benefit PTA members and the purchase met the following criteria for suggested uses of PTA funds: Curriculum enhancement. It also brings a value added benefit back to the school by enabling the interpreters to attend this unique national training opportunity.

Donna Cipicchio asked if this policy affected the ability for PTA member to have contract with PTA for reasonable services (e.g., workshop). Beth confirmed that such contracts were acceptable.

Laura Mead presented the **Announcements**:

- There is an important Mantua Citizens Association meeting on May 21 regarding VDOT and Mantua traffic calming. Several options being presented and MCA members can vote. Raised crosswalks, speed humps and raised curbs are among the options.
- There has been a request from the 6th grade musical for the PTA to provide additional support in the amount of \$500 for scenery, decorations, set and snack startup cash. They hope to reimburse PTA some portion from the snack sales.
- Donna Cipicchio made a motion to allocate \$500 to help defray the cost of production of the 6th grade play. This will also include money to purchase snacks to be sold at the play, proceeds of which will be reimbursed to the PTA. Linda Halstead seconded the motion. Loren Brandman asked how many 6th graders involved. Ms. Fernandez replied that virtually all 6th graders are involved in one way or another. The motion carried.
- Hannah Meddis has approached the PTA requesting we support the Odyssey of the Mind team that will be attending the World Championship competition. The Executive Board has met and has asked other PTA boards what has been done in similar situations. Traditionally, other schools give about \$100 per student participant and support fund raising. The Executive Board recommends that the PTA provide \$500 and support a longer term fundraising effort via the creation of a line item in the budget for ongoing fundraising for teams to facilitate participation in future World Championships.
- Donna Cipicchio made a motion that the PTA sponsor the Odyssey of the Mind team members at a rate of \$100 per member to assist in their attendance to the world competition in Iowa. Allen Clarke seconded the motion. Randy Kirkland provided some additional background, including the fact that there are 700 teams from 30 countries participating. There is very little time once a team make worlds to pay registration. A separate line item would help future teams. Beth McKeown stated that

this is clearly a legitimate (approved and suggested) use of PTA funds per state guidelines. Allen Clarke asked for information on the total costs incurred. Randy will research this. The motion carried.

- A parent who is a piano teacher would like to start an after-school group class, with a fee charged, similar to FLEX or HOS. She currently provides these classes as Fairhill. Ms. Fernandez will review this request.
- Teacher Wish List: Ms. Fernandez will provide the PTA with the list so funding decisions may be made in June. The whole PTA can vote, so Laura will determine best way to get word out. Ms. Fernandez mentioned that the largest item on the list would likely be the staff development of teachers. Much of this money goes towards substitute teachers while teachers work on staff development and attend meetings. During the summer, this supports teachers getting paid for time that they are not under contract. Also on list may be a push lawnmower, sound field systems for general ed classrooms, a gazebo for the garden, and technology purchases.

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

- New cafeteria tables are here.
- Cheryl Thompson is acting Asst. Principal. We have almost enough students to qualify for a full time third assistant principal. She will keep us posted.
- Thanks to the PTA for the parent-teacher basketball game.
- Awards – Three 6th graders won 2nd place at Fairfax video awards. There was a \$250 award for the school, which will go towards the distance learning center.
- The 6th grade awards assembly will be Thursday morning June 19. There will be an Ice cream social with teachers in the afternoon and chalk drawing in morning of 6/20.
- SOLs for various grade levels will continue until June 5.
- There will be several other events during the last two weeks of school including the SCA party, Field Day, and a Patrol party.
- Ms. Fernandez announced that a parent, Steve Camp, recently died and that a fund has been created for his two children. Laura mentioned that the PTA is providing a \$25 donation to the fund from the benevolent fund.

Ms. Tingler announced that two liaisons have been hired through a county grant. These liaisons will be responsible for assisting Spanish and Korean speaking families, providing translations, supporting teachers, assisting with conferences, putting together events and assisting with orientation.

Mrs. Wellner is reviewing SOL results. For more details, she is offering a separate meeting (sign up list provided). In regards to the most recent results, Mantua is above division in all areas. SOL math results were reviewed for grades 3 and 5 for the last three years to identify skills that need to be strengthened for individual students and grade levels.

Every year is a new group of students, so fluctuation is expected due to the variety of students. Test results are used to inform teaching and improve learning. Our goal is to prepare our students school-wide to be problem-solvers and critical thinkers in math for

life. We make this happen by utilizing a variety of instructional strategies: open ended math activities, varying instructional groupings in math based upon what students show us they know or don't know, strategy games, brain-teasers, hands-on equations, math kits, and enrichment activities, etc.

Teacher Representative Report: Janet Sottolano and Jan Fry reported that they are looking forward to the Teacher Appreciation lunch and appreciate the room coverage provided by the parents. Janet mentioned that the PTA provided \$150 for “warm fuzzies” this year and this program was so successful, she is hoping that this will be increased to \$300 for next year. This will be included in notes for this summer’s Budget Committee.

The following **Committee Reports** were filed:

Field Day – Volunteers Needed

Cheryl Dickison

Field Day – Pam Promisel reported for Cheryl. Field Day is June 11-13. Parents are encouraged to sign up. Details on are on the PTA website.

Kid’s Care Club

Jennifer Cooper

All signs point to another successful Raccoon Run, benefiting Life for Cancer. There are over 300 registered runners so far. We expect 400-500 runners total. The KCC also has been working on sprucing up the garden.

Hospitality – Luncheon

DeeAnn Jeremiah

Linda Halstead reported for DeeAnn. The Teacher Luncheon is tomorrow. There will also be a smaller event on Friday for teachers who will be away.

Principal’s Coffee

Barb Suidikas

The last Principal’s Coffee for the school year is May 29.

Parent Education

Pam Promisel

Pam mentioned the seminar that was held last week on Effective Communication. In the fall, we did a survey regarding a parent library. 65 people said that they would like to see library made more accessible and updated. Pam has priced out several books. Pam made a motion to spend up to \$300 for additional resources for the library to be made more accessible and available. Loren Brandman seconded the motion and it carried.

Auction

Carole Thomas

Carole mentioned the separate (from the carnival) auction in the fall. This seemed to be better for both the carnival and the auction. The consensus was to keep the two events separate.

New Business

Nominating Committee. Monica Romig reported several nominations for next year's Executive Board:

- President – Carole Thomas
- 1st VP – Pam Promisel
- 2nd VP – Kandy Barham
- Secretary – Robert Luftglass
- Treasurer – Beth McKeown

Linda Halstead asked about the feasibility of adding a hose and faucet for the garden. Ms. Fernandez will check with Facilities.

Donna Cipicchio asked about the calendar for next year. Ms. Fernandez indicated that any calendar requests should be made to Elaine Wellner who is heading this committee.

Motions Carried

A motion carried to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2003.

A motion carried to allocate \$500 to help defray the cost of production for the 6th grade play.

A motion carried for PTA to sponsor the Odyssey of the Mind team members at a rate of \$100 per member to assist in their attendance to the world competition in Iowa.

A motion carried to spend up to \$300 for additional resources for the Parents' Library to be made more accessible and available.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 pm. The next meeting is June 4, 2003.

Robert Luftglass
Secretary