

Terraset PTA Meeting Minutes 7pm, Tuesday March 31, 2009

The meeting opened at 7:05pm.

Members Present: Ellen Cury, Scott Logan, Renee Gilanshah, Marsha White, Stephanie Randall, Suzanne White, Dianne Rose, Kathy Somer, Heather Thomas, Laurie Hodge, Annette Bobby, Rachael Goldman, Traci Waller, Gary Powell, Liz Falcone, Joan Carter.

Apologies: Pam Sipher, Frank Sogandares, Kim Lowther.

1. *Renee Gilanshah opened the meeting* and welcomed all present.
2. *Minutes from March 3, 2009* were presented and reviewed. Marsha White moved that the minutes are an accurate record of the meeting, seconded Scott Logan. (*Point of Order:* Scott Logan was not present at March 3, 2009 meeting. March 3 minutes to be re-approved at May 5th meeting.)
3. *Matters arising from minutes:* none raised.
4. *Treasurer's Report* (Marsha White)
 - 4.1. Net income for March was \$5862.20, primarily from Lowes' Grant. Biggest expenses for the month were for after school programs.
 - 4.2. Three checks have bounced – one was written for over \$100. Twenty-eight checks have bounced YTD resulting in unplanned charges.
 - 4.3. Marsha has made some preliminary enquiries on options for alternative bank services. She will present a report at next meeting.
 - 4.4. Renee reported that Lowes have recommended applying for a Lowes Business Account to minimise the need for individuals to make large charges to personal credit cards. Account will also provide inbuilt reporting mechanism. Discussion followed regarding alternative options. Dianne Rose moved that Terraset PTA apply for an account, seconded Ellen Cury. Agreed.
5. *Principal's Report* (Ellen Cury)
 - 5.1. Ellen Cury presented her concerns regarding the impact of the proposed FCPS budget on Terraset. She reported that the School Board will present to the Board of Supervisors 3/31/09. Mrs. Cury said that things look extremely grim for Terraset. She anticipats the school will be more dependent on generosity of the PTA.

Mrs. Cury petitioned that Terraset become a Title I school. This classification would provide additional funds for staffing. Over 41% of Terraset's students have been determined as in poverty. Every year this percentage is getting higher which means the school has more needy families. Since Terraset services one of the few areas in Reston with subsidised housing, this number is incrementing rapidly. Indeed, the school is now supporting families that are homeless or living in shelters.

Mrs. Cury is determined that we meet the needs of every child in the school. She

went to see Dr. Richard Moniuszko – deputy to the division superintendent. Mrs. Cury presented historical data on poverty levels and mobility (13% in June, already 17% this year i.e about 70 children coming and going). This data indicates the difficulties faced by teachers who cannot be confident of a consistent foundation in each student. She discussed money and staffing in an effort to ensure Terraset is foremost in the superintendents’ minds. Dr Moniuszko indicated he would try to address her concerns, but reminded Mrs. Cury that Terraset is likely to lose a teacher, one office staff, and one custodian.

Mrs Cury has also emailed Dean Tistadt, Chief Operating Officer, Facilities and Transportation, but was advised that Betsy Goodman, Assistant Superintendent for Cluster VIII cannot do more, (Terraset’s part-time reading specialist funded by money from cluster office, four instructional assistants funded from instructional money.)

“Things are not going to get brighter” Mrs. Cury said. There will be a staffing meeting the week after spring break, at that time Mrs. Cury expects to find out how hard we will be hit with predicted cuts. Following that meeting, she is probably going to call on the Terraset community to make calls, write letters. Mrs. Cury wants to show everyone in the county that we have outstanding programs e.g. Terraset always has more kids getting recognition in art exhibitions, and our musical production is an amazing undertaking for such a small school.

Terrasets poverty numbers may be the only thing that will save the school from cuts. Any differences in funding comes from either the size and/or wealth (or lack there of) of school. Being a small school, the only way Mrs. Cury sees to get support is to ensure decisions makers are fully aware of the school’s profile. Title I status is not an option, but she is *hoping* for special funding.

The scheduled ground breaking for the butterfly garden on April 14th is another demonstration that Terraset shines.

- 5.2. Kindergarten information session will provide observation time for parents. No children. The school needs early registrations to help with funding.
- 5.3. Renee Waite will be requesting checks for fieldtrips and other funds committed by PTA
- 5.4. Assistant Principal, Laura Rungs, has decided not to return to work. Therefore, Joan Carter is no longer acting in her position. Mrs. Carter is now officially Assistant Principal.
6. *Teacher Appreciation Week* (Kathy Somer) Kathy sort ideas for Teacher Appreciation week, May 4-8, with Tuesday 5th being Teacher Appreciation Day. We prefer to celebrate **Staff Appreciation!** Would like to do something every day. Ideas include car wash, extended lunch break, food, flowers, popcorn for the staff. The meeting proposed one breakfast day, one flowers day, one luncheon. Kathy will wait until after the carnival to call for volunteers,
7. *Kindergarten Information Session* April 16th - no further discussion.
8. *School Musical (Annie Jr.)* (Rachael Goldman)
 - 8.1. Mrs. Goldman tabled information sheets detailing ideas for publicity, costume needs, and proposed costs for set.
 - 8.2. Mrs. Goldman reported that there is a rehearsal every day and that many teachers are volunteerig to help. She has been able to borrow a number of items including costumes and props from other schools that have previously produced the show. She has borrowed lights but is still looking for microphones. Dressing rooms have been determined: girls will use SACC, boys will use conference room. She commented that the students are

- very talented – the best she has seen in her 11 year career.
- 8.3. Steve Dueno, a parent and muralist, is designing and building the sets. Mrs. Goldman displayed his set design and reported that the costs will be dependent on the materials used to build them. Re-usable sets are estimated to cost \$680, one-time only construction estimated at \$473. Sets to be painted April 20-27.
 - 8.4. Jayne Sciaroni will manage props.
 - 8.5. Mrs. Goldman is planning to produce a program using sponsorship, e.g. shout-outs. Other cost offsets could include a bakesale at intermission and a gift basket raffle.
 - 8.6. Performance dates are May 13th 2pm, 7pm & 14th 7pm
 - 8.7. Mrs. Goldman is unable to anticipate the total production costs and hopes that the PTA will be able to assist in the event that there is a shortfall. She asked if an extra \$200-300 could be ear-marked.
 - 8.8. Traci Wall moved the approval of a mini-grant to supplement funding the production of Annie Jr., contingent on need, to a maximum of \$500. Seconded Kathy Somer. Agreed.
9. *Teachers' Wish List for fundraising focus* – Stephanie Randall suggested we need to provide a focus for fund raising and recommends we use the Teachers' Wish List for this purpose. Mrs. Cury advised that a notice recently went out to staff asking for wish lists. These are also used by the school in allocating funding. Stephanie re-stated her desire to work with Maureen Thompson in order to identify businesses with which to partner. Importantly, the PTA needs to determine what funds are available and how they should be distributed.
10. *Spring Carnival Planning Update* –
- 10.1. Traci Waller reported the preparation for the Carnival is proceeding well. There will be approximately 15 games and about four rides. A good number of commitments for the Cakewalk have been received. Information tables are likely to go ahead. There will likely be a tie-dye station. Both Langston Hughes Cheer Leading Squads and Herndon HS Step Team are expected to perform along with a jam session by Terraset students on instruments made from re-cycled materials.
 - 10.2. We still need more volunteers
 - 10.3. The carnival poster was presented and will be distributed primarily to sponsors, local supermarkets and businesses. Traci will promote Earth Day Green Friday during the week before the Carnival.
 - 10.4. Scott Logan asked how teachers can help. Advised that our greatest need is in managing games. If teachers could assume responsibility for one of the games, that would help immensely.
 - 10.5. Food will include water, soda, hotdogs, popcorn and burritos.
 - 10.6. Some prizes left over from previous years will be used this year
 - 10.7. Raffle basket donations coming in slowley, but not worried.
 - 10.8. Details of logisitics for slide ride need to be addressed.
 - 10.9. Stephanie Randall indicated Generous George Pizza may make a donation. It was suggested that we ask for five and buy five.
11. *Mark Waller Memorial Fun Run Update*
- 11.1. A report from Frank Sogandares was tabled
 - 11.2. Potomac Running will provide number bibs. Have requested two colors
 - 11.3. Stephanie will send flyers to Potomas Running
12. *Silent Auction Update* (Liz Falcone)
- 12.1. Have nearly 100 items to date with total value over \$7,500

- 12.2. Catalogue will go to printers this week and distributed via Tuesday Pack on Tuesday 14th April
- 12.3. Need more volunteers
- 13. *2009-2010 Board Election:*
 - 13.1. Nominations received: President, Stephanie Randall; Vice-President, Heather Thomas; Treasurer, Annette Bobby; Secretary, Liz Falcone.
 - 13.2. Any other nominations were called for
 - 13.3. Scott Logan moved to close nominations. Traci Waller seconded. Agreed
 - 13.4. Scott Logan moved to declare the 2009-2010 Board elected as given. Seconded Gary Powell. Agreed.
- 14. *New position for 2009-2010:* Volunteer Co-ordination Chair – Stephanie Randall suggested we postpone this discussion until May meeting
- 15. Other Business
 - 15.1. Scott Logan suggested GEMS be managed within PTA after school programs. Agreed.

The meeting closed at 8:55pm.