

PTA Meeting, Monday, September 13, 2009

In Attendance: Christy Leutzinger, Bethany Campbell, Beckie Denio, Michelle Pratt-Yee, Cathy Bellanti, Sonia Coleman, Georgina Edwards, Laura Pedretti, Nancy Kawase, Krista Easton, Lucy Kirsch, David Roberts, Steven Gaffagan, Crystal Nie, Cheryl Cotton, Maya Arechiga, Christiane Brune, Ekeshia Woods, Patty Osorio-O'Dea, Mark Kane, Matt Reed, Mary Crabb, Molly Wahl, Mayra Gonzales, Karla Andrade, Liezel Martin, Shawn Oda, Judy Chin, Aileen Hackett, Mary Timar, Damani Mitchell, Bill Mitchell, Rula Craner, Laura Holdych, Joyce Mitchell, Helen Couture-Rodriguez, Carol Long, Kathie Gimla Carraher, Yolanda Alindos, Karen Robinson, Kathy Guarneri, Negar Souza, Ursula Schulze-Gahmen, Carolina Mejorada, Maria Bueno, Ameena Jandal, Jennifer Loughrey, David Miller, Linda Geiser, Aaron Lewis, Ms. Schooley, Mrs. Bjeldanes

Called to Order: 7:10pm

Approval of May 2010 Minutes: Laura Pedretti moved to approve the minutes with corrections and Lucy Kirsch seconded. The motion carried.

President's Report: Linda Geiser reported that the PTA Membership Drive is going well up to this point. We have about 200 members so far, which is great for the first week of school. Getting involved in the PTA is a way to support the school and the students. The library is the new meeting spot for these meetings. The computer room has been moved downstairs and computer classes will be starting by the end of September. We need to clean out the PTA closet in the computer lab and we'll be recruiting for it soon. We'll move everything to under the stage in the auditorium

Lucy Kirsch reported that she attended the Bayside PTA meeting (district level) and the main issue was Measure M. The measure is in place and is similar to Measure D, which was on the ballot last year. We are not supposed to endorse it here at the meeting, but we are encouraging everyone to vote. If Measure M passes, the money from it will help maintain what we already have in place and provide us a cushion for when more funding cuts occur. This is money for music, personnel, and maintaining smaller class sizes. The measure calls for \$110/household per year, which equals \$9.8 million in revenue. Bayside PTA voted to endorse it.

Principal's Report: Ms. Cotton announced that the first SSC meeting was this afternoon and she encouraged everyone to consider attending these meetings. The SSC is the decision-making body that approves our school site plan and other things that are going on in the school. There are three spots open on the SSC, which meets at 3:15 on the same day as PTA meetings. Ms. Cotton announced that this year's Madera test scores are at the top of the district, with our API score at 942. Wednesday night is a district board meeting and they will be acknowledging and recognizing schools who have met or exceeded their scores. Ms. Cotton acknowledged the teachers and their hard work. She also acknowledged Helen Couture-Rodriguez for all her work on Disaster Preparedness. Get your kits in soon and they will be going in to the storage container. She gave a

reminder about BTSN, which is this Thursday, 6:30-7 (Gr. K-2) 7-7:30 (Principal announcements in cafeteria) and 7:30-8 (Gr. 3-5).

Ms. Cotton opened up a time of sharing and brainstorming and asked that parents share their thoughts about what makes Madera special. Some of the thoughts shared were things like parental involvement (resources of time and money), the students themselves, teachers, diversity, academic reputation, PTA programs, that children feel a sense of ownership and belonging, etc. She also encouraged parents to think about what can we improve on, and parents shared things like wanting more of all the above, intentional community building, cleaner campus, more volunteers to make all things run smoothly, etc.

Ms. Cotton said that school funds have been cut dramatically and we need to make sure the basic needs are met in our school (paper, toner, etc.). We need good communication about what the needs are. Teachers need to be clear about what they need help with and the school needs to be clear about what resources are necessary. Ms. Cotton can be reached at the following email address: ccotton@wccusd.net

Treasurer's Report: Bank Statements have been reconciled through 9/12/10. As of this date, total PTA funds on hand are \$79,521.41. Total cash balance in our checking account is \$36,528.98. Since the last report (5/10/10), 45 checks have been issued for a total amount of \$22,802.38 per the attached transaction summary report. In total, we raised almost \$75,000 last year through fundraising efforts. Direct Appeal raised \$21,714.01 (almost \$9,000 more than we budgeted for). The Auction raised \$26,626.95, net of expenses – almost \$7,000 more than we budgeted for. To highlight just two of the many other fundraising sources: E-scrip raised almost \$2,000, and ice cream sales almost \$4,000. The budget committee met June 7th to develop budget plans for the 2010-2011 school year. The proposed budget will be reviewed and voted on tonight. We have received many warrants for reimbursement for summer and beginning of the year activities and we will process them immediately after the budget is approved. Thanks to the board and all of the volunteers who are working hard to coordinate events and get the year off to a running start – I can see your efforts already!

David Miller moved to accept the Treasurer's report and all disbursements made since the last meeting and Sonia Coleman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Old Business:

Audit Report: David Miller worked to reconcile items from our 2009 fiscal year. Audited with a clean balance through June 2009. Will be working on this last year's fiscal year now. Rula Craner moved to accept the audit report and Kathy Carraher seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Lower yard fence: David Miller explained that last spring, we put up the net fence to keep balls inside the newly renovated field. After the school year let out, a neighbor complained about his view obstruction, but didn't ask that anything be done. A month later his attorney called David. A district engineering person met with the neighbor and

the district offered to lower the fence 3 feet, but he said that wouldn't be enough and won't be happy until it's removed. David would like to gather the opinions of parents to offset the neighbor's opinion. Ms. Cotton wants to talk to the legal counsel first to find out if there's anything they want to propose.

New Business:

10-11 Budget Proposal: Aaron Lewis brought the proposed budget for approval. Aaron reviewed the budget with explanation. Proposed budget was discussed.

People asked for the actuals from last year. Aaron Lewis explained that some changes to point out are that we increased field trips and school supplies to \$22 per student. He explained the reserve is for things that come up during the year that haven't presented themselves yet. The bylaws suggest having a prudent reserve. We need money that's ready to go at the beginning of the year since we haven't raised any money yet for the current school year. We have spent down the reserve without blowing the entire amount, but we spend as we go.

Aileen Hackett asked if there is money for the band. There is 10K, which is a big increase because we needed time to get it up and started. The music program will be discussed in detail later in the meeting.

Ms. Schooley noted that the budget for P.E is not enough because all the classes seem to be low on equipment. Ms. Schooley moved to increase the P.E budget to 3K, and Steven Gaffagan seconded. The motion carried. Christy L. asked about yearbook expenses, which usually breaks even but last year we made a little bit of money. There was a question about the garden budget and about health and safety, as well as a question about classroom supplies. Linda explained that the PTA lets teachers use classroom supplies money to buy extra supplies they use for art, etc., but also for consumables.

Kathy G. moved to approve the proposed '10/'11 budget with the amendment, and Negar Souza seconded the motion. The motion carried.

PTA Calendar: The calendar went out in the Madera blue folder the first of week of school. Olympics are a little early this year. Math and Science Nights are spread out over the year. The teachers have a Science Fair committee and are trying to incorporate parent input and not have it interfere too much with other things going on in the classroom and school. The date is TBA.

Disaster Preparedness: A volunteer list is being passed out, especially for stay-at-home parents who can help be part of the work that needs to be done. Mr. Blake was the teacher liaison/lead on this project, but now that he is gone, Mrs. McCormick and Ms. Mekjian will be the liaisons between staff, students and parents to work on an emergency site plan. They've talked to the Fire Department and have a fire safety assembly scheduled. They are coordinating drills with them as well. September is national preparedness month and Helen is trying to send something home each week to inform families about being prepared for disasters. There is a "shakeout event" in October,

which happens statewide on 10/21 and has everyone doing a drill on the same day at the same time.

School Music Programs: David Miller said that the vocal music and instrumental music programs are in place for this year. The PTA funds both programs at Madera. Jan Jones does the Winter Sing-a-long and Spring Sing. She prefers not to perform at International Night, saying it creates too much anxiety for the kids to get the songs memorized. \$7500 is budgeted for her vocal music program. 10K is budgeted for the instrumental music program (grades 3-5) through MASEP. It's a 25-week series. It is an after school program, with sectionals held in the morning. There will be a fall semester and spring semester. We think there will be plenty of instruments for the students through the district. We do this with Harding and Kensington elementary. The students will pay \$5/week to participate and we may be able to offer scholarships for those who need help. It is scheduled to start the week of the 9/27. Mrs. Bjeldanes asked about where the instruction will happen. David said he thought it would be in the library. Aaron Lewis pointed out that this is a program coordinated from the ground up because the district program was cut. This takes time and coordination and money. The 10K provided by the PTA lowers the cost to students and pays the instructor.

6th Grade: David said he talked to Dr. Harter a couple weeks ago and Dr. Harter said he'd like to "take that up" this year, so David encouraged everyone to contact Dr. Harter with your support. There will also be a school board election this year, so it is a good time to let your voice be heard.

David proposed that we agendaize a 5th grade activities question about rolling the program under the umbrella of the PTA without any budget implications. Lucy asked him to present a proposal, including a small history.

Vice President Reports:

Sonia Coleman, 1st VP:

Spirit Week –Amy and Erik Hanson will be heading up the Olympic Rally again this year.

Red Ribbon week (drug awareness/prevention) - Sonia said we want to know what the teachers think about it. Ms. Schooley said many teachers address it in class and that the red ribbons around the school were the cheapest way to promote it. She said that made the most sense without adding too much "stuff" to the week. Christy Leutzinger said that when Red Ribbon week didn't happen in the past, teachers were upset but that only about half the teachers used the supplies, which cost more than \$200 dollars for whole week. Ms. Schooley said having the kids put the red ribbons somewhere they choose is a great idea.

Aileen Hackett, 2nd VP:

The kindergarten potluck is next week. Aileen sends out a general THANK YOU to charring volunteers, especially Anne Marie Soltero who is the chair of the K potluck and the Olympics. She needs a co-chair and anyone who has experience with how to help. We also need chairs for several other events.

Faculty Liason: The staff wants to formally thank Mrs. Bjeldanes, Ms. Davalos, and Ms. Snow for all the help they've done with the closet downstairs. Thanks also to the PTA for the really wonderful lunch on the teacher furlough day. Student council officer elections are coming up and information about that will be going home soon. Ms. Miller and Ms. Schooley have been coordinating assemblies for the year. A nationally known storyteller and puppeteer will be coming. The El Cerrito ballet will come to do Nutcracker, as well as many other assemblies.

Garden Coordinator: Molly Wahl feels that last year was successful. Thanks for the support and for making it a priority. She's developed partnerships with EC Natural Grocery and Berkeley Horticultural and she's hosted U-Picks. The money increase the PTA is providing for this year is for a retaining wall to take care of the erosion, a drip system/irrigation system, and step repair. We still need a chair for the garden committee. Also, Molly put together a new website – maderaschoolgarden.org. Go to it to check out the updates every month.

Site Council Report: There are three open positions and we want to put a ballot out in the blue folder on Friday.

Announcements: Pizza in the Park is Tuesday from 5-8. Spirit items will be sold at Pizza in the Park and it will be the last day to buy them.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:02 pm