



PTO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – 10/04/23

I. CALL TO ORDER – 9:19 am

- a. In attendance: Kate Dominique, Brette, Kimberly, Amy, MaryAnne, Megan, Shefali, Patrick, Sharon
- b. Motion to approve 9/6 minutes – MaryAnne O’Keefe motion & Kimberly Newman second - passed

II. Presenter - Angela O’Rourke ([Proposal for School Garden/Food Forest/Horticultural Therapy Space at WJHS](#))

- a. She is currently village wide PTO for outdoor classrooms
- b. Developed this proposal – met with Peggy Prescott back in March – wanted to see what was happening at WJHS – went over therapy spaces redone a few years ago, but didn’t see any active gardening happening.
 - i. Elementary schools – 20 minutes of hands on instruction/week
 - ii. Highcrest – not allowed to food/vegetable gardening
 - iii. WJHS – no active opportunity – want to give kids a different skill set
- c. Got approval from Park District, Katie Lee, due to landownership issues – approved to use as gardening space if PD doesn’t have to maintain. Needs to be fenced in & protected to prevent vandalism – 190 ft of linear fence needed – approx. \$1,400 in cost
- d. Location – North East side of school behind cafeteria behind mulch in grass area – perfect location – enough sun.
- e. Proposing raised beds (similar to community garden). See Mozart Community Garden in proposal - \$1,300 to build three of the raised beds
- f. Sustainability – Angela has reached out to community members **who responsible for organizing going forward?? – Kate wants to staff internally as a stipend position
 - i. Community opportunity for residents to harvest & water
 - ii. Many different organizations in Wilmette that need community service hours
 - iii. Misericordia
 - iv. NT & Urban Autism Solution
 - v. Get teacher involvement – 5 reached out almost immediately
- g. Neuro-divergent learners – this garden helps to address all aspects of learning & creates different learning experiences (planning, construction, harvesting, etc.) Could be a lunch or after school club. Could also be a restorative space as well as a natural setting.
- h. Will follow the D-39 regulations for soil testing to ensure all items grown are safe for consumption

- i. NEED FUNDING FROM THE PTO - \$2,700?? This would only be 3 beds & fencing cost – how many teachers willing to commit to this?
- j. Who is responsible for upkeep? Katie Lee is looking into this question – if PTO gifts it, is district responsible for maintaining? Determined district would be responsible for hard surface maintenance/repair – does not do anything with maintenance of garden space, plantings, upkeep, etc. This garden would have exterior access for upkeep.
- k. PTO will discuss & get back to Angela with questions & follow up

III. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- a. Preparing for parent teacher conferences
- b. Still trying to get clubs off the ground – not supposed to be organized through the PTO in general
 - i. Outside clubs can go through PTO (Skyline, chess, debate)
 - ii. Clubs lead by students/staff should go through the district – should be free to student body – will continue with our programs for this year & reevaluate for next year based on volunteer potential.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- a. Tipping – is there a district policy? President's Council has been discussing this as well – seems as though it has been left to individual committees to tip minimally at their discretion. Will table the discussion until next meeting to try to get more info.
 - i. Is there/should there be a policy on tipping janitors? Does WJHS PTO ever get charged for janitorial time? What is the allotted amount covered by the district for the school?

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

- a. 2023–2024 [Budget](#) approved – Brette motioned to approve the budget for the 2023/24 school year, Amy Schuester second – passed unanimously
 - i. Will plan for budget planning in the spring of 2024 for the next school year to facilitate easier planning heading into the new school year.
 - ii. Teacher stipends were increased from \$80 to the requested \$85/hour rate in this new budget
 - iii. Will have to evaluate next year's budget if there is a change in the club program
 - iv. Increased student council budget as discussed & voted upon in the 9/6 exec meeting
 - v. Patrick will look into the yearbook stipend question – not accounted for in the budget, but should still be fine in covering it for the year. Will need to keep close tabs on the amount of extra yearbooks ordered for sale at the end of the year.
 - vi. Membership numbers no longer account for the print directory which was eliminated this year

- vii. Interest – projected to make \$6K with funds moved into a high yield savings account – previously, interest income was \$100-ish
- viii. Graduation party – budget increased due to inflation this year

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Ways & Means - Amy
 - i. Ignite – 267 contributions at an average donation of \$84/student
 - ii. Need to distribute magnets – in November
 - iii. Should webmaster add a “Donate Now” button to the PTO page? – Group agreed with this idea
 - iv. \$8,620 in teacher gifts so far – will do some larger pushes as it gets closer to the holidays
- b. Enrichment - Sharon
 - i. Lindsey Currey – 7th grade enrichment option – teachers proposed she come for one day instead of three days for a total cost of \$1,500.
 - ii. Kimberly Neuman motioned with MaryAnne O’Keefe with the 2nd – passed unanimously
 - iii. Mandarin may want a bit more money for enrichment – Kimberly mentioned to them that the PTO might be able to assist with their China Town trip if they had any admissions/ethnic meal experiences – currently, the PTO assists with the bus expenses
 - iv. Possibility of Maureen Madden starting a French Club with winter or spring – may have further enrichment opportunities this year in French
 - v. Kate will remind all language teachers about enrichment opportunities through the PTO

- c. Student Programs – MaryAnne

After School Clubs: Thanks to Joceyln Shook and the entire ASC committee for their hard work and dedication to coordinating the After School Clubs this year. Thank you to Patrick Parmentier and Denise Lam for their support and hard work with refunds, communication and updating attendee lists as needed. All of your work is so appreciated! The PTO is excited to assist with the following outside vendor led and teacher led After School Clubs: Latin Club, Aces Debate, Fantasy Football Club, Game of Strategies, Arts & Crafts, and Dungeons and Dragons to name a few. Make sure you check out the PTO website for more information!

Discussion ensued as to the Graduation Party planned for the 8th Graders. Thanks to the Graduation Party committee, including Jen Marzouk, for their dedication to planning the 8th Grade Graduation party. Mark your calendars for the "Kick Off to Graduation Week" party on Friday, May 31, 2024. More details to follow...

- d. Communications – Denise absent

- e. Volunteers – Shefali
 - i. Sub list for cafeteria service – great idea – currently trying for 2 cafeteria volunteers daily. Cafeteria is fully staffed through the school with four employees, but they still appreciate the parent help.
 - ii. Courtyard – no volunteer takers so far. Could be a last minute addition & an announcement can be made at lunch to let students know the courtyard is open for quiet time with adult supervision.
- f. Community Service – Casey absent but sent in report
 - i. Stock the shelves is live & volunteers are needed – check out the SUG link
 - ii. Curriculum night- great reception with the PTO table with treats & spiritwear – highly recommend offering this every year
 - iii. October 11 – donuts & cider for the staff will be provided
- g. Legislation – Traci absent

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Discussion about presentation by Angela. Further questions were raised. Kimberly will assemble a list of questions to go back to Angela with. Board will then consider the monetary ask & any associated responsibilities & vote in a timely manner. Overall concern is the ongoing maintenance of the space & better understanding the investment.

VIII. ADJOURN – 11:04 AM

PTO Mission Statement: *To support the students and staff through various activities and venues in the hope of providing the best educational environment and opportunity for all of our children.*

APPENDIX

(Please email your committee chairs and provide updates in your box below.)

COMMITTEE	CHAIR(S)	UPDATE
Legislation	Traci Knudson	● Post items here
Ways and Means - Ignite/Magnets - Spirit Wear - Yearbook Orders - School Supplies	Amy Schuster	● Post items here
Enrichment - Enviro Awareness - Recess Planning - Courtyards	Sharon Gertz	● Post items here
Communications	Denise Lam	● Post items here

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlights News - PTO Site - Directory - CRC - Pass 39 Rep - D39 Ed Found. 		
<p>Volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cafeteria - Courtyards - Planters 	Shefali Nathan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post items here
<p>Community Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitality - Orientation - Newcomers - Staff Appreciation - Civics & Safety 	Casey Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post items here
<p>Student Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After School Clubs - Graduation - 7th Grade Social 	MaryAnne O'Keefe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post items here