

Memorial PTO General Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/13/2021	Location: Memorial Elementary Library
Called by: Stephanie Freeman	Time: 6:35 PM

Attendance:

Erin Valcourt, Hong Ho, Melissa Morse, Kristen Sanville, Victoria Wilkinson, Stephanie Freeman, Wendy Bell, Jessica Tilley, Melissa LaMotte, Kevin Vaillancourt, Renee Archie, David Archie, Jasmine Duffy, Crystal Maloney, Vanessa Urban, Ashley O'Connor, Chavi Gupta, Maureen Cohen

Call to Order

Approve Minutes (Recording Secretary) : 09/08/2021

Opening Reports

President, Stephanie Freeman (report given by Jessica Tilley in Stephanie's absence)

- Welcome and introductions
- We have already hosted several successful events. Thanks to all of those who helped with the book fair, kindergarten playdate, and other activities.
- The PTO has 100 free student tickets to the Worcester Railers on 10/23, details will be shared on social media.

Treasurer, Kristen Sanville

- Our current balance is \$37,704.03. Of that, \$22,416.46 is allocated for the outdoor classroom project.
- Scholastic book fair money has come in, but we still have to pay their invoice.
- Our raffle permit has been filed with the town.
- We have purchased an assortment of small student incentive prizes to offer the teachers during the holiday cookie swap event.
- Accountant search
 - We paid \$265 last year, but the accountant has been unresponsive and has made errors. Others are more expensive, but probably worth it.
 - Members voted to approve an amount of up to \$750.

Principal, Wendy Bell

- Mrs. Bell is excited about the school's literacy instruction programs. Memorial teachers have been ramping up small group instruction and using authentic texts at all levels. The PTO has been instrumental in this effort by funding the purchase of leveled readers. Leah Hagen is organizing a book room where teachers can check out what they need. It's been a great resource. Erin asked what resources exist for Spanish Immersion literacy instruction, and the PTO will look into purchasing more books in Spanish.

Interim Superintendent, Maureen Cohen

- Dr. Cohen is a former PTO board member herself, and has a great appreciation for the work Memorial PTO is doing. She is grateful for the hard work, time, and energy that

everyone is putting in. These organizations are key to the culture of our school system and keeping parents connected.

- This is Dr. Cohen's 9th year with MURSD. She was formerly the Assistant Superintendent.
- She is keen on listening to everything going on in the building. She is happy to publicize our events and activities in her district newsletters. We can email her details to share.

Agenda

Old Business - Unfinished

1. Job openings and volunteer opportunities (Hong)
 - a. We have filled up many of the committees, but more members are always welcome.
 - b. Setup, clean up, trunks are still needed for the Spooktacular.
 - c. Fundraising committee could use more members to divide up the work. Fundraising Chair Victoria Wilkinson would love someone to step into a fundraising leadership role so she can mentor that person through next school year. Her youngest child is in 3rd grade now.
 - d. We need a sign changer for next week. Hong will contact those volunteers.
2. Calendar raffle update (Victoria)
 - a. Calendars went out during the first week of October.
 - b. We are off to a great start! 181 calendars have been sold already, and Kristen collected another batch today.
 - c. The PTO will continue to accept purchases until the end of October to qualify for the top seller prizes, and we will collect them through November as well (late entrants may miss the first few raffles).
 - d. There will be another restaurant fundraiser at Galliford's on Dec. 4, 11-4pm. You have to mention the PTO for us to receive the percentage.
3. Cultural arts update (Erin)
 - a. Erin has confirmed a presentation with Sheryl Faye as Sally Ride for March 2 (tentative). The cost is \$790 for an in person event (double what a Zoom event would be). The entire school will be divided into 3 groups. The presentation is 35-45 minutes with time for Q&A at the end. She also gives some materials in advance to prepare the kids.
 - i. Stephanie and Erin are applying for a grant from the Upton Cultural Council (due 10/15), which may offset some of the expense.
 - ii. PTO voted to approve the full amount, with an understanding that it could be less if MPTO is awarded the grant.
 - b. Wendy will check in with teachers to see what other programs they would like for this school year. Erin also welcomes ideas from PTO members.
4. Outdoor classroom update (Melissa)
 - a. Six new tables are up on the hill. That area should be raked and checked periodically for trash.
 - b. Melissa, Vicky, and Stephanie met with Maureen Cohen and Wendy Bell to discuss plans. Maureen fully supports the project and has prepared a letter designating Melissa as a point of contact on the project.
 - c. Melissa will attend the next Upton Board of Selectmen meeting on 10/19 and present the project for their approval.
 - d. We also need approval from the School Committee. Victoria will present at the meeting on 10/18.

- e. We are still in the process of collecting estimates and hope to get one or two more before choosing a contractor.
- 5. Spirit wear (Stephanie)
 - a. Sale is open until tomorrow night (10/14). There are 50 orders so far, and \$3 per item sold is donated to MPTO.
 - b. Stephanie would like to form a committee to work on this going forward.
 - c. Wendy can ask the student council to collaborate on a new design. They can also think about a mascot.
- 6. Spooktacular (Kristen)
 - a. The event will be held on 10/22.
 - b. There is another committee meeting tomorrow night (10/14).
 - c. There are 14 confirmed trunks. Memorial staff will do one with Wendy, making 15.
 - d. We need to publicize for people to bring cash for the raffles, Venmo will be too difficult.
 - e. 110 Grill has donated a \$100 gift card that we will present to the winner of the best decorated trunk.
 - f. Wendy will advertise the event in her next S'more newsletter. Someone will need to send her a little write up to include.
 - g. Sports teams and the after school program will need to be consulted regarding parking and access. We need to block off the back lot early.
 - h. Members voted to raffle off the Bose speaker that we received as a gift with the Uline order for tables.

New Business - Ideas, motions, announcements

- 1. Book fair summary and financials (Crystal)
 - a. Financials are still open so we can decide what percentage to take as cash vs. scholastic dollars. We receive 50% back as Scholastic Dollars or 25% as cash, and we can also take some of each.
 - i. Members voted to approve taking the full proceeds as Scholastic Dollars.
 - b. We made \$12,425, but we have to subtract the amount we spent on donations to the school (about \$2300).
 - c. Mrs. Bell has requested the purchase of more leveled readers. The cost would be \$6,754 if we complete the set of leveled readers in English, and we should look into the purchase of SI leveled readers too.
 - i. Members voted to approve spending the entire balance of Scholastic Dollars on leveled readers including SI, as well as any organizational tools (book bins, etc.) needed to furnish the book room.
 - ii. Mrs. Bell has contacted Leah Hagen to see what is most needed.
 - d. Crystal is seeking volunteers to take over the book fair while she is still around to mentor.
 - e. Crystal needs the dates of the specialist nights in order to book our spring fair. It's usually held during the 2 weeks before Memorial Day.
 - f. Crystal will forward an invoice to Kristen.
- 2. Teacher requests (Stephanie)
 - a. Leveled readers, Wendy Bell
 - i. Approved as outlined above
 - b. Number racks, Molly Smith
 - i. \$69 to support Bridges math program
 - ii. Voted to approve

- c. The PTO still needs to reach out directly to teachers to remind them of what we do and how we can help. We can provide our teacher request form (as well as the Google Form version).
3. School supply kits for 2022-2023 (Stephanie)
 - a. We received mixed reviews on the quality of the kits for this school year. The vendor was EPI.
 - b. Stephanie has sample kits from 2 other vendors to compare quality. Teacher Tailored offers significantly better packaging and organization, but a price increase compared to EPI. Part of that increase is due to supply issues, costs will be higher everywhere.
 - c. There is an early signing bonus regardless of which company we choose, so it's best to decide early (by the end of October).
 - d. Stephanie will reach out to the School Supply Kit committee for input.
4. Open to the members or guests to share an idea or make a motion
 - a. Square 1 Art is well under way with Mrs. Fowler. Stephanie will collect the art and send it in to the company. Catalogs should come back by November 10, with a deadline to order of November 24. Purchased items should be received by December 16.
 - b. We are thinking about ways to be more inclusive and encourage rotating leadership and mentoring.
 - c. Victoria will try to organize a group of honors students we can ask to volunteer at events and meetings for service hours.

Announcements

1. Remember to check for updates on our Facebook page (Memorial Elementary School PTO), Twitter (@PtoUpton), and website (www.memorialpto.org).
2. Sign up to receive our newsletter and announcements by sending us an email: MemorialPTOUpton@gmail.com
3. Next meeting will be November 10 at 6:30pm in the Memorial Library, stay in touch via email for details.

Adjournment