

President Debora Connor opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Motion to accept January PTO Minutes approved.

Ms. Loftus's Report

- The MCAS breakfasts will be held beginning on March 23. Traditionally the PTO has funded the breakfast. Will the PTO fund the breakfast again this year?
- The state deemed 35 schools statewide level 4. Two of the level 4 schools are in Worcester and the principals have been removed. It has yet to be determined how the vacant principal positions will be filled. To learn more about criteria for level ranking, visit the DOE website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/> and click on accountability.
- An HR person named Stacy Luster spoke about her experience finding her own way. She shared lots of information about her own successes and failures with the children. It was a very positive and inspirational talk.
- There is school on Friday, March 12. The original calendar listed March 12th as a staff development day, but the revised calendar lists it as a regular school day.
- We have a new custodian named Tony Ustimovich to replace Mr. Earl.
- Usually Mr. Kelley asks the PTO for money for teachers to use for classroom supplies. This year, he is not planning to ask the PTO for money for that purpose yet. He is waiting for the fall budget to be finalized.
- The Thomas Jefferson Award plaque needs to be updated. More names need to be added to the plaque and they won't fit, so additionally a new plaque is needed. Will the PTO pay for this?

Treasurer's Report – Barry McGrath

- We currently have around \$21,000 in our account.
- Tonight we paid McCarthy & Hargrave for filing our FY09 taxes.
 - \$2,500 for filing our FY09 taxes
 - \$200 per year for filing 5 years (2005 – 2009) MA Form PC
- The cost of the tax preparation seems high. The books are clean now. It should be less expensive moving forward. Next year we will put it out for bid to see if we can get a better deal.
- The check given to the Red Cross for Haiti was \$4.90 short of what we collected for the disaster in Haiti. A check for \$4.90 will be sent to the Red Cross.

Motion to accept Treasurer's Report approved.

Scholastic Book Fair – Gretchen Switzer was not present. Debora Connor spoke on her behalf.

- Book Fair sales topped \$7,000.
- The final numbers are not in yet, since the Book Fair just closed today, but we expect to receive between \$2,500 and \$3,500 if we choose to receive our credit in books.
- Not all of the books that teachers had requested for their classrooms were purchased and donated by children and parents. Can \$900 be taken from Scholastic book credits to purchase these books for the teachers?

Motion to accept Scholastic book credit being used to purchase books requested by teachers approved.

- Jill Andros requested taking a book from each teacher's donated pile to give to the teachers at the Books and Beyond ceremony.

Family Nights – Meg Mulhern

- Movie day was a huge success. It was a great time. Even though it was snowing, plenty of people showed up and it was a lot of fun.
- Oliver will take place on Saturday, April 24 at 2:00 pm at the Hanover Theater. Reservation forms are in. An email will be sent to those who reserved with payment details.
- Tornadoes night will be on Thursday, June 3. Students from Nelson Place will be singing the national anthem. Mrs. Kolo has begun to teach the children the national anthem. Ticket order forms will come home after April vacation.
- Nelson Place T-Shirts will be purchased shortly for each child in the school. Forms will be going home with the kids to get their correct shirt size. Any family members that would like shirts as well, can order them on the same form for \$5/ea.

Fundraising – Deb Steigman

- Since we have plenty of money, no fundraiser is planned for the spring.
- Yankee Candle is a profitable fundraiser. Do people still have candles left from last year? Do we want to do this next year, or something else? Square 1 Art and a calendar/raffle idea were also mentioned.
- Tomorrow, Deb and Kristy Lewandowski will attend the PTO Today Expo in Marlboro to check out vendors for future fundraising endeavors.

Books & Beyond and TRIPP – Jill Andros

- Jill is ready for the Books & Beyond Medal Ceremony to be held on Friday, March 26 at 9:30 am for grades K and 1 and at 10:15 for grades 2 and 3.
- The Books & Beyond and TRIPP programs used to be run on a budget of \$1,100 per year. Now their budget is only \$800 per year. Ways to save money include eliminating the Barnes & Noble gift cards and eliminating medals for kids who don't send in forms. Some teachers think that if children don't read at home and send in their forms, they shouldn't get a medal. Miss Quitadamo mentioned that in past years, teachers and parent volunteers have read with the children during the school day in order to complete the Books & Beyond requirements. Should children who don't pass in their Books & Beyond forms receive a medal?
- \$950 would be a more reasonable budget for Books & Beyond. Then Barnes & Noble gift cards could be purchased.

Motion to give an additional \$150 for Books & Beyond approved.

Hospitality – Deb Steigman

- Teacher appreciation will be held during the first week of May. A breakfast will be prepared by parent volunteers and there will be something special going on each day of the week.

Box Tops – Maureen Economou (Tony Economou provided the update)

- No report

Playground – Beth Proko was not present – various people piped in with the update

- Around \$400 left to raise for the playground maintenance fund.

CPPAC (Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council) – Deb Steigman

- On Saturday, January 30, the Citywide Parent Round Table event took place. 95% of schools were represented across the city. Over 200 people were in attendance. Now they are crunching the data. Even with the diversity of the city in terms of socioeconomic class, race, etc., it seems that most want the same things from our schools:
 - A good education
 - Vigorous academic curriculum
 - Preparing children well for college/employment

- It was a very positive event. People care about our schools. There were lots of wonderful suggestions about sharing ideas from school to school. Solutions don't have to cost money. One parent suggested teaching parents how to write grants for the schools.
- Meets first Tuesday of each month at the downtown library at Salem Square. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Minutes from the meetings are posted at http://cppac.worcesterschools.org/modules/locker/files/group_files.phtml?parent=4130410&gid=1112792&sessionid=b2eee3fa231009a56192164c6d2898ff. or go to the Worcester Public Schools website at <http://worcesterschools.org/>, then click on the Parents/Students tab, then select CPPAC.

Stand For Children

- Every year, Stand organizes a Day on the Hill event. Governor Patrick has proposed level Chapter 70 funding for schools. We can't afford another cut in school budgets, so in support of the Governor's proposal, Stand has organized a Day on the Hill on March 23. A bus will leave from the Greendale Mall at 9 am, and arrive at the statehouse at 10 am. Participants can take part in the Day on the Hill, which should finish up around noon, then board the bus back to Worcester.
- Stand has undertaken an initiative to protect Chapter 70 funding through virtual signs online. Teachers can encourage a civics lesson by suggesting that students create virtual signs. Parents and their children can create signs too. It would have a huge impact if children make signs saying what is important to them. To participate, go to www.stand.org/MA/signs.

New Business

Motion to fund MCAS breakfast approved.

Motion to fund Thomas Jefferson Award plaque approved.

- We are looking for someone to organize an outdoor clean up day at the school prior to spree day. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Debora Connor at 508-856-0443 or dconnor@hanover.com.
- Discussion of date of next PTO meeting. If we adhere to our regularly scheduled meeting date (3rd Wednesday of the month), the meeting would fall during school vacation week. Since school vacation week is not a convenient time for PTO meetings and since Mr. Kelley teaches a class on Wednesday nights, it was determined that the next PTO meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 13 at 7 pm.
- Dave Francis had proposed hiring someone to paint a mural on the concrete walls behind the school. The initial estimate was \$1,500, but the cost would be \$700 if we provide paint. After some discussion it was determined that although it is a great idea, it is too costly. The majority would like to table it at this time.
- There will be no PTO meeting in June. The last PTO meeting of the year will take place in May.
- If anyone is interested in running for an officer position on the PTO, please submit your name and specify in which position you are interested by May 14th. Submissions can be placed in the PTO mailbox in the office.
- Submissions for the April newsletter should be sent to Deb Jerszyk (debra.jerszyk@sepracor.com) by March 30.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Landry
PTO Secretary