

January 25, 2010
Mamaroneck High School

PT Council Minutes

Meeting was called to order by President Cindy Habig at 9:15am.

- I. 1/11/10 Minutes updated per Rick Marsico: changed the number of candidates that will be interviewed. Updated Minutes Approved.
- II. Technology (Laurie Lee)
 - a. There have been a few recent web site advisory meetings. The next one will be in April. If there is any feedback regarding the web site, please let Laurie know.
 - b. Budget Communication: FAQs are now on the school web site (Ed Cofino did a great job). Well received by community – easy to navigate, good format.
- III. School Board Update: Linnet Tse (for Rick Marsico)
 - a. Superintendent search: Meeting Tuesday night with search consultants who will present the candidates. The consultants have said that there was a very positive response to the ads and the active search methods used (over 40 candidates), including both local and non-local applicants (of the candidates presented by the search firm, the board is interviewing 5-6). First round will be to meet (if local) or speak with those candidates this week-end. There will be a 2nd round and 3rd round of discussions if needed. There will be a 4-8 person advisory panel for the final round of interviews (to be done before the Feb break).
 - b. Larchmont-Mamaroneck Community Counseling Center: Recently gave a presentation to the Board of Education to update them on the work being done this year. Funding for the Counseling Center comes half from the state, a third from the 3 local municipalities (we fund approximately 12% of their budget which equals about \$63,000) and the rest from private donations (\$50,000). Their whole budget is \$550,000. They are facing a loss of funding from the state and are hoping to still get the funding from the Mamaroneck school budget. It will be part of this year's struggle to prioritize what the community values most and figure out what has to be reduced given the budget constraints this year.

- i. Students: the Counseling Center provides a service to the schools, specifically in the middle school where they are part of the 6th and 7th grade Life Skills curriculum and assist the advocacy groups for 8th graders. They also consult on cases as needed. They spend approximately 750 hours in the schools.
- ii. Parents: They run parent groups (elementary level) as well as Parent Network meetings (high school level). They see both families and individuals with approximately 130 regular cases and 1400 other cases (one-time visits/consults).

IV. Nominating Committee (Melany)

- a. Standing rules adopted in 2004. No one has really looked at them and there are some items that might not make sense or apply to us anymore. Would like someone to help review this spring (Cecilia A. volunteered to review). For example, the document details the search for the president-elect and other officer positions, but leaves out some of our other important positions including communication and diversity.
- b. Nominating Committee
 - i. One Officer who is continuing: Kristine Budill
 - ii. Three Senior Co-Presidents: Jennifer Malherbe, Joan Capaldi, Tracy Owen
 - iii. One Junior Co-President: Sherri Rozansky

V. Budget: Cindy suggested creating a sub-committee from the PT Council group to help expedite budget strategies when crunch time starts. It will be a "working group" designed to first educate the community and then help with endorsements, if we endorse the budget. It will make it easier then having the entire council review/approve all the materials, information, etc. that will be sent out.

VI. Teacher Institute/Race to the Top Funds (Rina)

- a. Teacher Institute: An in-house development group works together to decide on the catalog of courses. The courses are designed to be in line with district goals. These are sent to the BOE for approval. The catalog will be available on the internet site called My Learning Plan and teachers will have access and be able to sign up through there.

There have been some problems with the web site but it should be up and running on January 25. There will also be a newsletter giving a more public profile to the Institute as well as a publication section citing articles, etc. written by teachers in the district. Courses are free at this point since they are unable to charge due to the receipt of stimulus funds last year. All teachers in our district must have a Masters degree, but these classes supplement their learning and are used to fulfill their profession development requirements. We can't require that a teacher take a specific TI class, but the district can limit what the teachers can take for credit (for example, they can't get multiple credits for taking several of the walking tours in NYC).

- b. Race to the Top Funds: Not looking so good due to the issues regarding Charter Schools. Out of the \$700 million, our district would have received about \$60,000. About \$350 million could be used to revise state education standards (large reforms needed). If New York doesn't get these funds, it would be unfortunate for a lot of school districts, especially those that have lost a lot of their funding (i.e., Mt. Vernon).

VII. Paul Fried

- a. Calendar: The 2010-2011 calendar has just been approved. Teachers will have Professional Development days on September 1st and 2nd. The 2010/2011 school year will have its first full day for students on Wednesday, September 8th. We are off the 9th and 10th for the Jewish holidays. There will be no school on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. December break starts Wednesday (12/22).
- b. Coast Dance: Sponsored by the school and student council – falls under the jurisdiction of the school district. Tried to address past concerns with overcrowding by selling a set number of tickets (370) in advance with no tickets sold at the door. Unfortunately 6 students were suspended due to behavior at the dance that led those in charge to know that they had been drinking. No students were caught drinking on the premises, nor was any alcohol found at the dance. Some say there was a large population of kids that came intoxicated to the dance. Parent/community/media reaction makes it difficult for those in the school district to want to try to do this again. There will be no more Coast dances this school year. We need to address the larger concern about drinking/drugs in the community.

- c. Budget: Dr. Friend has been working on non-instructional items to cut from the budget. He is still looking at programs and staffing – and will bring down the 9% to a percentage that will more likely be supported by the community. There is an assumption that the community would support a budget increase that would be similar to last year (about 3%). The general philosophy is to “reduce” not “eliminate” programs – and have a moderate approach across the board. This has not been easy and there will be people that are unhappy no matter what. They are dealing with making the best decisions given the circumstances. On February 2nd and 9th, Dr. Fried will present his budget to the community. On March 16th, the Superintendent recommended budget will be presented to the Board of Education.

VIII. All Elementary Curriculum (Annie Zimmer)

- a. Meeting on February 5th 9:15-10:30. The meeting will give an update on where we are on the many initiatives that were started over the last few years. They will explain what’s in progress and what’s at stake given the budget changes this year.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35am.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Herbsman

In Attendance:

PTC: Cindy Habig, Co-President, Melany Gray, Co-President; Kristine Budill, Treasurer; Lori Herbsman, Secretary; Laurie Lee, Technology; Rina Beder, Legislation/ Teacher Institute; Laurie Girsky, Jean Meyerowitz, Communications

MHS: Sherri Rozansky, Co-President

Central: Jennifer Malherbe, Pam Buchmueller, Co-Presidents.

Chatsworth: Joan Capaldi, Laura Livaccari Herzig, Co-Presidents.

Mamaroneck Avenue: Lisa Boren, Jennifer Vaccaro, Co-Presidents.

Murray Avenue: Tracy Owen, Ann LoBue, Co-Presidents.

SEPTA: Amy Lieberman, Cecilia Absher, Co-Presidents.

District: Debbie Manetta, Director of Communications.

Guests: Paul Fried, Linnet Tse

Approved: February 8, 2010