

## J. B. Watkins Elementary School PTA Meeting Minutes October 11, 2011

The General Membership Meeting of J.B. Watkins PTA began at 6:58 p.m. on October 11, 2011. The following people were present: Niki Mason, Stephanie Gonzalez, Colleen Kopidis, Dawn Owen, Angela Castillo, Holly Wray, Lauren Kern, Adrienne Haskins, Barbara Cohen, Mandi Buccafusco, Melissa Davis, Amy Nugent, Kris Perko, Melanie Suddreth, Caroline Holt, Jessica Winston, John Gates, Marlene Scott, Debbie Walker, Michelle Quiram, Tom Hamilton, Stephanie Kraft, June Millacci, Tracy Rawls, Anne Counoupas, Julia Trebour and Sara Ward.

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:58 p.m. by Niki Mason, President. Niki welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### Officer Reports

#### President: Niki Mason

Niki thanked everyone for coming and introduced the following items for discussion:

- My Coke Rewards – Niki mentioned that we still need a chair person for this committee. If interested is interested or knows of anyone that might be interested, please contact Niki.
- The Cloud – Niki talked about The Cloud as a way to save documents on the Internet (vs. a computer hard drive) which prevents loss of documents in the event your computer goes down. She has placed several PTA docs on there for the committee chairs, and asked that committee chairs forward pertinent documents to her to put on Cloud. The Cloud will serve as the storage house for all pertinent PTA documents so that future board members and committee chairs have access to previous PTA documents.
- Stated Rules - Niki introduced the Stated Rules for the PTA meetings and passed a copy of the rules around the room for all to read. These general guidelines cover PTA meeting basics, including budget requests and agenda timelines. All agenda items must be turned into Dawn the Sunday before the PTA meeting. If unable to attend the meeting, a statement must be submitted for Niki to read on the committee chair's behalf. If agenda items are not submitted on time, there will be an opportunity to present the information at the end of the meeting when "New Business" items are being discussed. Also, any check request over the amount of \$500 needs to be brought to the attention of the PTA Board before the meeting. Niki also went over the reimbursement checks guidelines and asked that everyone fill out the appropriate check request or deposit forms for Colleen. These forms can be found in the front office PTA crate (Treasurer Folder) or at [www.jbwatkinspta.com](http://www.jbwatkinspta.com). Niki asked that everyone look over Stated Rules so that a vote could be taken at the end of the meeting to approve the rules going forward.
- Email – Niki mentioned that the PTA uses email as the main form of communication and asked whether everyone had access to and felt comfortable using email. All present were fine with email as the main form of communication.
- 2012 Virginia Proposed Legislative Program – Niki passed around the proposed Virginia legislation and mentioned that the voting ballot can be found on the PTA website as well. She asked that everyone take the time to vote and make sure to turn ballots on on/before October 19.

**Vice President: Stephanie Gonzales** – No Report

#### Secretary: Dawn Owen

Dawn asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the PTA meeting on September 13, 2011 with those minutes being posted on the PTA website for the last few weeks. No corrections or additions were made, so the minutes stand approved as written.

She also reported that minutes from tonight's meeting would be available on the website for viewing by Friday.

Dawn then asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the Back to School nights of September 15 and 22, which have also been on the PTA website for several weeks. No corrections or additions were made, so the minutes stand approved as written.

### **Treasurer: Colleen Kopidis**

- Amendments – Colleen passed around a copy of the current PTA budget and explained how the spreadsheet reads. The top half of the budget spreadsheet is income we are expecting; the lower portion is expenses. Every committee chair should check to see what expenses have been allocated for their committee. If the amount allocated is not adequate, please advise Colleen so that the budget can be amended.
- Clarification – Colleen advised of a few changes made to the budget. She advised that a number of parents wanted to send in donations to the PTA in lieu of the Cherrydale fundraiser, so Parent Donations was added as a separate line item. The second was the additional of a line item under Fundraiser Expenses to accommodate some unexpected expenses for Candela's. She again reiterated that all check deposits, no matter how big or small, must have a check deposit form filled out as required by our auditors.

Colleen then took a vote to approve adding Parent Donations as separate line item and adding Candela's under Fundraiser Expenses. The vote was unanimous and the amended budget was approved.

### **Administrator's Report**

**Dr. Scott** introduced the teacher representatives present at the meeting as follows:

Adrienne Haskins – representing 1<sup>st</sup> Grade  
Jessica Winston – representing 3rd Grade  
John Paul Gates – physical education

Dr. Scott advised that the students are settling into the school routine and have completed year-end reviews. Teachers are now in the process of testing and assessing students. Interim grades went out on October 5; please call your child's teacher if you have any questions.

She mentioned that in the past, the school has hosted Science night, Technology Night, and Math Night. This year, we will try combining them into one event. More details will come out regarding "STEM Night" shortly.

Lastly, Dr. Scott reported that for the first time, Watkins is offering a Strings enrichment program. The County has provided 40 violins for students and a music program will be put together.

### **Teacher Liaisons**

Mr. Gates spoke about the Jog/Walk Wednesday themes and mentioned that next Wednesday's theme will be in support of Breast Cancer Awareness. Students should wear pink and are asked to bring in a \$1 donation for the National Breast Cancer Research Center. He asked that this be promoted via PTA (nList, PTA website and Facebook).

Adrienne Haskins requested that committee chairs please place promotional items in the teachers' boxes the morning they are to be distributed, or that the material have a note indicating distribution date. She mentioned that the teachers are getting promotional material and stickers in their boxes all at once and are not aware of when they should be distributed to the children.

### **Old Business**

Road to Nowhere: Niki Mason reported for Catharine Anderson that we are still working on getting the film shown at Watkins, but recently found out that the actual cost would be \$500 vs. \$100/day as originally

thought. The event could be held as a fundraiser with a charge of \$10 for tickets sold in advance or \$15 for tickets sold at the door.

Alternatively, there are two screenings of the film already scheduled in Richmond -- one at the Modlin Center at University of Richmond on Sunday, October 30, from 4-6 pm and the second at Godwin High School on Thursday, November 17, at 7 pm.

The question is whether parents will actually travel that far to see a screening or whether to proceed with getting the film at our school.

Niki asked for thoughts and suggestions. Parents came up with several suggestions, such as: 1) teaming up with another school to offset PTA's cost; 2) charging \$2/person to help offset PTA's cost; 3) passing out flyers to ascertain how many people would be interested and how much they would be willing to pay; and 4) getting corporate sponsorship.

Niki indicated that this issue will not be resolved any time soon, and asked that parents contact her or Catharine Anderson with any additional suggestions.

**School Renovation Project:** Niki Mason reported that a meeting with Patty Carpenter, Mr. Bullis, Mr. Myers, and a representative from the construction company will be held on Thursday, October 27, at 6:30 pm. Please submit any items you would like addressed to Niki before the meeting.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Blood Drives: Deb Dudley**

The Fall Blood Drive is still scheduled for Thursday, November 3, from 3-7 pm in the Watkins Cafeteria. Deb has already reserved the Cafeteria and made arrangements with Virginia Blood Services to have the updated sheet sent to Dr. Scott for approval. As soon as the form is approved, Virginia Blood Services will send Deb copies of the form to distribute to all teachers for them to pass out to students. Signs will also be posted at the main entrance and gym promoting the event.

The Spring Watkins Blood Drive date has also been set for Wednesday April 4, 2012 from 3-7 pm. The cafeteria space has already been reserved with the front office. Other details for this drive will be provided closer to the drive date.

### **Box Tops (General Mills): Kris Perko**

Kris reported that at least 10,000 box tops have been turned in, with 4,000 of those being left over from the end of last year, and that this amount is almost as much as was collected all of last year. Kris and helpers will be around school the week of October 24 to collect teacher's boxes. She asked that everyone continue to clip as many Box Tops as possible since there are only 2 submissions each year – one on November 1 and another in March.

She mentioned that a mystery box had been turned in to the front office with over 1,000 box tops; however, the box was not marked with a class name. Please advise Kris if you have any idea whose box this might be so that the class can get credit.

### **Chess Club: Anne Counoupas**

Anne mentioned that the Chess Club's first meeting was on Friday, October 7, and that there were 15-20 more students than last year. Remaining meetings are 11/4, 12/9, 1/6, 2/3, 3/2, 3/30, 5/4, 6/1). All ages and skill levels are welcome to join!

### **County Council: Sara Ward**

Sara mentioned that the second County Council meeting is on Tuesday, October 18, and she will report the results of that meeting at the next PTA meeting in November. She also encouraged everyone to vote on the Virginia Proposed Legislative Program.

**Cultural Arts/Reflections: Michelle Quiram**

Michelle reported that all Reflections entries are due Friday, October 28, and that the class with the most entries will win a pizza party. The awards banquet is tentatively scheduled for December.

**Fit Kids: Niki Mason for Maggi Lewis**

The first session is underway and registration for the second session will go out on October 17.

**Green Team: Niki Mason for Catharine Anderson**

International Walk to School Day was quite a success with approximately 120 kids participating. Watkins was mentioned on NBC12 as a participant in the event.

Our next Green Team event is this Sunday, October 16, at 2 pm at Watkins where we will be holding our Adopt-A-Spot Cleanup, immediately followed by Pansy Planting Day. All volunteers are welcome!

**Grounds: Angela Castillo**

Angela mentioned that Pansy Donation Day is this Friday, October 14. Parents can send in bulb donations with their children and volunteers will collect them from the kids as they get off the bus. Parents and children are welcome to help out for any amount of time. Also, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade flower bed in front of trailer has been spruced up with over 5 bags of weeds removed, mulch added and azaleas planted. Pansies and other bulbs received from Pansy Donation Day will be planted there as well.

**Health and Safety: Niki Mason for Ginger Grizzard**

The Dash in Disguise Fun Run (a 5K and 1 mile run) is on Saturday, October 29. Registration deadline for t-shirts is Thursday, October 20.

**Lunch Buddies: Niki Mason for Melanie Suddreth**

Melanie reported that we now have 79 volunteers which is enough for 3 people per shift and which finally allows the teachers to sit down and eat lunch.

**Membership: Julia Trebour**

Julia reported that we now have 700 PTA memberships and that membership cards will be coming home shortly. The class with the highest participation will be announced on October 28 and will win a pizza party.

**Candela's Nights: Niki Mason for Brittany Krebs**

A total of \$480.81 was made for the PTA at Candela's Night on October 3. That is one-fourth of the entire year's budget forecast. Niki reported that this event ran more smoothly. The next Candela's night will be Monday, December 5, from 4-8 pm.

Parents asked how Candela's compared to McDonalds nights last year. Colleen reported that McDonald's nights made \$1,225 last year and did not meet the budget forecast of \$2,000. Niki added that most parents did not want McDonald's nights to return as per parent survey comments.

**Newsletter: Dawn Owen**

The October 1 issue of the Coalminer was posted on the PTA website on September 30. The next Coalminer newsletter will come out around December 1; please submit articles to [dawn.owen@hotmail.com](mailto:dawn.owen@hotmail.com) by Monday, November 28.

Also, local businesses can place ads in The Coalminer. Anyone interested should contact Dawn for information and pricing.

**Pumpkin Lighting Festival: Barbara Cohen**

The Pumpkin Lighting Festival is on Friday, October 28, from 6:00-8:30 pm. This year, all games and activities are free and some activities will be outside. Food will be available for purchase, with Baja Bean and Candela's being the food vendors for the evening. Barbara asked that teachers please carve their class pumpkins the morning of the festival.

**Room Parent Liaison: Niki Mason for Maggi Lewis**

The first meeting is on Thursday, October 13. Because of a conflict with a Kindergarten field trip scheduled for the same day, the Kindergarten meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday, October 18.

**Spirit Wear: Sara Ward**

Gross sales as of September 28 were \$3,741.66. Items will be sent home with students this week. If you do not receive your item (missing pertinent info on a handful of orders), please contact Sara. Spirit Wear will be sold at the Pumpkin Lighting Festival on October 28. Sara also mentioned that the Spirit Wear order form is now on the PTA website.

**Staff Appreciation: Angela Castillo for Shelley Neofotistos**

The 5th Grade Luncheon has been moved to Thursday, October 27 with a Fruit & Salad theme. Emails were sent out to 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents advising them of the change. The next luncheon is on November 16 with a Sub theme sponsored by the 4th grade.

**Student Directory: Niki Mason for Betty Jo Fulghum**

Work is in progress and keying of student information has begun. This week staff and class information will be collected and prepared. Ads will be accepted for another week or two before the directory goes to print. Contact Betty Jo Fulghum at [jofulghum@comast.net](mailto:jofulghum@comast.net) to place an ad.

**Volunteers: Niki Mason for DeAnne Watson**

A spreadsheet of all volunteers (except Carnival volunteers) has been emailed to all committee chairs. All volunteers are in place for Picture Day this Friday, October 14.

One parent mentioned that parents are using Sign-Up Genius instead of nList (which PTA pays for) because class email lists have not been updated on nList. It was suggested that room parents could act as nList administrators and update class email lists on nList.

**Talent Show: Niki Mason for Tammi Slovinsky**

The Talent Show is tentatively scheduled for Friday, May 4, with auditions being held on April 18 and 19, and rehearsals on April 25 and 26. A questionnaire will be sent out to talent show participants asking for information on costume attire and music selection to ensure appropriateness for a family audience.

**Watkins Friends: Niki Mason for Melanie Suddreth**

The next outreach program will be a holiday toy drive for Watkins families. Unopened toys will be collected for boys and girls, ages 5-12, starting on Monday, November 14.

**Ways & Means: Colleen Kopidis for Jarica Davis**

Cherrydale orders were due Monday, October 10. Parents wishing to contribute to the PTA can do so by making a check out to the J.B. Watkins PTA and sending it into school to the attention of: Lisa Rossi: PTA Ways & Means Committee. Lisa will place a box in the front office for the check contributions.

Colleen said that Jarica reported a preliminary sales total of \$15,670 (this is not the final amount) and that PTA will get 50% of all sales. This total does not include online purchases. PTA received an additional \$535 from parent contributions.

**WEP (Watkins Enrichment Program): Niki Mason for Maggi Lewis**

The first session with 10 different classes began last week. Because many parents did not receive the form, Maggi is still accepting registrations.

**WOW – Niki Mason for Maggi Lewis**

The first session had 31 kids and October registration forms will go out October 14. Niki mentioned that WOW was moved to the church across the street. Children will eat lunch in the JBW cafeteria, and then proceed to the church. A crossing guard will be present to assist the kids across the street safely.

**New Business**

**Target Red Card** – Kris Perko mentioned that parents can sign up for a Target Red Card. Card holders receive a 5% discount on all purchases, with the designated school of choice receiving 1%. The card must be registered on the Target website and J.B. Watkins assigned as the school of choice.

Another parent mentioned that Martin's and Kroger also have a similar program whereby a percentage of purchases go back to the designated school.

Niki will pass this information to the Ways and Means committee so that the information will be made available on nList, Facebook, and The Lantern, with website links provided so that parents can sign up and register their cards.

**Campbell's Soup Labels** – Kris Perko reported on a large box of labels in the office which can be submitted for reimbursement. Volunteers are needed to sort and submit the labels on the Campbell's website. The school has an existing Campbell's account and Dana in the front office can provide that information.

**Gardener Presentation** – June Millacci reported on 3 Sisters which was started by June and Christie Bondurant. They work with 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and some 3<sup>rd</sup> graders for science SOLs. The kids are taken to the outside gardens to plant seeds and watch them germinate and grow. Last year, they were able to secure 3 rain barrels used to water the gardens. More volunteers are needed to maintain the garden. Angela Castillo has provided names of volunteers that signed up to work on the grounds committee. 3 Sisters would like to merge with the Grounds committee to ensure that the grounds and garden are tended to on a regular basis. June and Christie will begin working with 2<sup>nd</sup> graders in March. In the meantime, June will tend to the neglected garden to make it beautiful once again.

**Monkey Joe's Nights** – Niki reported on behalf of Laurie Valerio that the October 7 Monkey Joe's night was quite a success, though we do not yet know how much we made. A group picture of the kids was taken that might make it into the yearbook. Monkey Joes is currently running a 3-month special for \$19.95 which includes admission for 2, a full size pizza and 4 drinks (admission for 2 is typically \$16). This special will apply for the December 9 Monkey Joe's night only.

**Parent Coffee Request** – Niki reported that she received a request to have parents donate items for the monthly Parent Coffee meetings. Ms. Rainey and Mrs. Spencer had provided all the refreshments in the past. Niki asked that Julie Miller send out emails using the Hospitality volunteer list requesting donations for future parent coffee meetings.

Niki then asked that a vote be taken to approve the Standing Rules. Before the vote, she asked whether anyone had questions or comments, and mentioned that the PTA meetings will end no later than 8:30 pm. A vote was taken and the Standing Rules were unanimously approved.

Sara Ward asked for another vote that would provide the principal and assistant principal with complementary Watkins Spirit Wear shirts. A vote was taken and it was unanimously approved. Sara also mentioned that all J.B. Watkins staff receive a year-round 20% discount on all Spirit Wear items.

### **Announcements**

The next PTA meeting will be Tuesday, November 15, at 7 pm in the Library.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.