

**Roberts Elementary School  
PTO Board Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2006**

**Attending:** Kelly Teague, Carol Tindall, Kathryn Berg, Tracey Bruhn, Amparo Nelson, Melissa Padden, Stephanie Walton, Dana Donovan, Helen Dreyfus, Sherri Walsh, Kristina Brosig, Michelle McCormick, Tom Black, Claire Auchter, Deidre Hawkins, Bettina Siegel, Karen Wagner, Christine Manca, Lisa Aaronson, Robin Owens, Michelle McKane, Valerie Tompson, Marta Eskin, Annette Van Brunt, Grace Pierce, Pat LaPadula, Jenny Sommer

**Recording Secretary:** Carol Tindall

These minutes were approved by the PTO Board on October 11, 2006.

**Next PTO Board Meeting:** Wednesday, October 11, 2006

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## **1. Meeting Called To Order (Kelly Teague)**

Kelly called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for all the hard work already done. She asked everyone to please sign in and look at the thank you notes to the PTO. She also asked that committee chairs try to hit highlights of their committee, needs, concerns, etc. She handed out a list of meetings for the rest of the school year.

## **2. Approval of Minutes**

Claire Auchter made a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. Sherri Walsh seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

## **3. School Report (Pat LaPadula)**

Pat reported that Mr. Sarabia had taken another position; his last day at Roberts was July 31. He came back to help with team building for teachers and he is happy in his new position. We had a committee that went through interview process for a new principal last month. They interviewed six people, gave recommendation for three (one is a principal, two are assistant principals), one has been given to Dr. Saavedra. If the principal is chosen, they will get new principal for that school before that principal comes to Roberts. Pat and Stephanie are doing a great job running the school. Hopefully at open house they can announce who our new principal is. Pat thanked everyone for all of their support.

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade** Ms. Parikh has decided not to come back after having her baby. So we are without a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. Ms. Litt was subbing, but she cannot fill a vacant position. Ms. Lairson is now subbing in the class. The interview process is going on right now a permanent teacher. 5<sup>th</sup> graders are going to Adair Park for a team building activity. They will work on cooperation, etc. and participate in activities like a ropes course. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, Pat, Stephanie, and some of the ancillary teachers will go. This is not a field day, but more of an opportunity to dialogue. The office will be short handed on Fri.; if you can spare a little time to help answer phones let Stephanie know. Open house is tomorrow. Current enrollment is 645, a little lower than last year. District wanted us to have 673 we said no. Pretty much all classes are on level. 62 kids are from the Parkwood apartments that are going to be torn down. We will keep the kids for the rest of the year, but cannot guarantee their slots for next year. Technology – this summer HISD gave us 44 new computers with the ones we bought there is now a computer in every classroom, some have two.

## **4. Reports on Current Activities**

### **a. Membership (Grace Pierce)**

Grace reported that the membership drive has raised \$29,000 plus. Last flyer has gone out. 30 staff and 250 families have responded.

**b. Sally Foster (Melissa Padden)**

Melissa reported that Sally Foster is just over \$18,000 net. Some orders are still straggling in. Last year we raised about \$15,500; historically amount raised ranges from \$11,000 to \$22,000. This is the first year to add cookie dough. About 75% of orders are Sally Foster, 19% cookie dough, 6% magazines. The official order will go in at the end of the week. There was a controversy over Mr. Thelkie's dog food challenge and it has been changed. Yesterday was a celebration day at lunch. 299 students participated this year, compared to 241 last year. Delivery will be in 2 parts, Sally Foster will be here on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> and cookie dough on 28<sup>th</sup>, distribution will be on Fri afternoon, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>. Melissa reported that anyone can make purchases on line through the end of the year and Roberts will still get the credit.

**c. Directory (Robin Owens)**

Robin reported that taking on directory has been a big learning curve and thanked for Tom and Ed for their help. We have several new advertisers this year. Deadline for submission is Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>. If you know anyone who wants to advertise please let her know. We are hoping to get the directory out earlier this year. There have been some new challenges with the online enrollment. If you enroll on line, your child's name goes in drawing for smoothie at lunch. We would like as close to 100% on line registration as possible. If people are not enrolled by the deadline, they will get a paper request. Grace Pierce asked for deadline for submission of membership names; Robin asked for them between the 22<sup>nd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>. Robin also reported that she is gathering bids for printing to try to get the best deal. Ms. Codd is available 7:30-8:30 and 2:30 – 3:00 to help anyone having problems with the online registration. Computers will be in classrooms at open house to sign up as well. Melissa Padden suggested asking room parents to help get 100% participation from their classes.

**d. School Store (Tracey Bruhn)**

Tracy reported that we spent \$21,137 on school supplies sales were at \$19,444 and she has returned about \$1,000 worth of excess supplies. She will order school shirts.. The store will be open during Open House. She needs a step ladder, Pat said that the office will order one.

**e. Cookbook (Kathryn Berg)**

Kathryn reported that the cookbook kick off is this week. She has looked at lots of publishers and has decided to self publish. She is getting bids on costs and it will depend on how many pages, probably will be anywhere from \$4.50 – \$9 per book. She would like to sell them for \$10 – \$15 dollars and asked for input on that. Pat gave permission to go into classrooms to talk to kids about the cookbook. Everyone can submit colored pictures, a few of which will be chosen and black and white drawings for recipes submitted. We will start selling them the week of the

International Festival. Orders will be taken at the Festival as well and we should have the books, hopefully, by Nov. 1

**f. VIPS (Karen Wagner)**

Karen reported that VIPS is moving slower than anticipated. She thinks the new web site has been good thing because she is noticing more names of people who have not volunteered in the past. That is good because one of her goals was to get more people to do smaller jobs and more foreign language speaking parents involved. Volunteer sign up is dependent on people going to the web site and registering. She has sent out a few flyers on VIPS but is now waiting for directory to be done before pushing more. She still needs to add more descriptions. We need café volunteers and Kelly did a training this morning. Kelly reported that we really need help in there so please come if you can. Kathryn asked if paper sign up forms will be in rooms tomorrow night (Open House). Karen plans for a bulletin board to put everyone on and spotlight those who are doing their fundraisers then.

Marta Eskin stated that she thinks technology has done great job and believes most of us have signed up for directory, but haven't gone to all the spots you are supposed to go to sign in as committee chairs. Chairs need to go into school wide section to sign up for their position.

**g. Technology (Tom Black)**

Tom handed at a copy of a report for us to look at (attached). The wireless network was installed over summer to allow for school-wide capability. The new members web site has become a consuming job and about 2/3 of parents have signed up. We are still missing 200 students. They sent out a reminder in the Tues folder. Thanks to early users as they have helped to fine tune instructions etc. They feel that if we put all volunteers in it we can use that information to get more volunteers. Please be mindful that there is information on your committee lists that people have asked not to be published in the directory. Please do not use that information. It is in red. There was discussion about adding people on to lists who have volunteered verbally but not on line and that they may not want to be publicly listed, is that going to work. Robin asked if it would be possible to set up in the computer lab to assist people in signing up. Stephanie said that she will check with Ms. Codd. Kathryn asked about broadcast emails. Fifth grade students received one today about the upcoming field trip. We can do broadcast emails to everyone in the school database or by grade level. We will have to be careful about how that is done and how often so that privilege is not abused. Robin asked who was authorized to do that and Tom said that there are 3 administrators. If there is a critical sign up needed that can be done through the Tues. folder. Kelly asked that all of that go to the office by Fri. morning to be approved. All broadcast email needs to be approved as well. All committee chairs have capability to get their committee reports and should have received an email to that effect. Room parents and teachers have the same capability. For proofs for the directory - everyone will get a unique email with their

directory information and information that will not be published to make sure that all is correct, this will be an additional expense that will be covered by budget. There is a function to RSVP for cookbook, auction, etc. This is for head counts only, not payment. The committee has 2 pages with email accounts for each chair on Google mail.

**h. Room Parents** (Claire Auchter)

Claire reported that Tom will generate reports to put out as Open House like in the past so that parents will be able to sign up on paper. There will be a meeting for head room parents. Marta suggested that assistant room parents be included.

**i. Family Sponsors** (Kelly Teague)

Kelly relayed Beth Brown's report – "We have had 26 families express an interest in volunteering to be a family sponsor this year. So far, we have 9 families (10 kids at Roberts) who are attending Roberts who either the child or a family member is receiving medical treatment.

"Questionnaires were sent out the week to all sponsor volunteers to help us make the matches, which should be completed in the next few weeks.

"Barbara Chase-Hopkins is donating her time to conduct training for anyone interested in becoming a sponsor. It is set for Mon., Sept. 25 at 11:30. There will be something in the Front Page about it.

"Nurse Sandra Felder is assisting with the Family Sponsor program, since we no longer have a social worker.

"A big success to continue to be glad about is that the school bus is still stopping every day at Ronald McDonald House, thanks to our school board representative, Dianne Johnson. We currently have 3 or 4 children riding it to Roberts."

Helen Dreyfus asked about replacing Barbara Chase-Hopkins. Right now that position is closed and will be revisited with new principal.

**5. Operations Reports**

**a. Treasurer** (Kristina Brosig)

Kristina reported that an email was sent to each chair about the budget and instructions for deposits, receipts and check requests. Fill out the form including who to be paid. She will try to check 2 times a week and if you are in a rush you can drop the request off at her house. Be aware of how much is in your budget, left over funds do not get carried over. Please note that we changed banks. Our accounts are now at Bank of Texas. New deposit slips are in the PTO box. Please

get a duplicate deposit slip and put it in the box and write the committee name/function on it so she will know where to credit it. The credit card machine is being used more throughout the year we will change our account to be put as seasonal customer; that would save us about \$500 for the year. Annette vanBrunt asked about money not being carried forward. Kelly explained that it goes back to the general fund.

The budget is attached and is based on the July 1<sup>st</sup> statement.

**b. Auction** (Dana Donovan)

Dana reported that the auction will be February 24<sup>th</sup> and the theme is masquerade ball/ mardi gras. They are thinking of making it a black tie optional event. Black Walnut will probably do the food again this year. They are looking for a printer to donate the printing. Annette stated that Poe has a sponsor just for printing. Melissa asked about combining bids with all the different printing needs. Dana asked that the board please try to get businesses to donate items. Marta asked when forms for sponsors will be ready. Hopefully soon.

**c. Book Fair** (Sandra Fossum)

Sandra reported that she needs a replacement chair. The theme this year is jungle.

**d. Teacher Appreciation** (Lisa Aaronson)

Lisa reported that the teacher appreciation committee will provide monthly lunches for teachers, birthday gifts for teachers, and holiday gifts. They have already done 2 things -breakfast for teachers and Aug. birthdays.

**e. Carnival** (Helen Dreyfus)

Helen reported that the carnival will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup> and she has volunteered to be the chair. She has been getting lots of help from past chairs and is looking into letting the kids pick a theme. She is also looking at making t-shirts a school wide deal.

**f. Memory Book** (Deidre Hawkins)

Deidre reported that they need money for printers' based software and would like to purchase the software to make it easier to get the memory book printed. There are 5 people on committee and they would like to try to get 10 user licenses so that the software can be used at school as well. Ms. Codd could then help with the book. Rochelle wants to use software as well and it could be used for cookbook. It includes 4 different things and would cost about \$4,000 for software for 10 users. Kelly said that is an issue that needs to be taken to the finance committee for approval. Robin might be able to use the software for the directory

as well. Deidre asked Pat if there is a way to have teachers be held more accountable for use of cameras and memory cards because there is some carelessness going on . Pat said that he will address the issue.

**g. Building, Grounds and Habitat** (Jenny Sommer)

Jenny reported that there will be work days the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month right after drop off. There will be a planning session for the garden and lessons for those volunteers working with classes. The first family work day will be October 14 from 9 – 11. Planting starts at the end of September/beginning of October. Thanks to Kelly and Kim O'Reilly the pond is up and running.

**h. Workroom** (Amparo Nelson)

Amparo reported that the workroom is going well with lots of volunteers. There have been some issues with some of the equipment – copier and paper cutter problems. Pat can get the paper cutters replaced. The laminator is also having problems. Pat and Stephanie can take care of some of the equipment issues. Amparo will send out emails to get additional volunteers throughout the year.

**i. Hospitality** (Bettina Siegel)

Bettina reported that she is trying to work Black Walnut into mix for PTO lunches.

**j. Community Liaison** (Christine Manca)

Christina asked that if you have any news to please send it to her and she will get it published in community papers.

**6. Other Business**

Marta has some café issues she would like to address. She will talk with Karen after the meeting.

Tom needs foreign language speakers to help translate new technology to help non-English speakers. Please talk to Karen if you know someone who can help.

**7. Meeting Adjourned** (Kelly Teague)

Kelly adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be October 11 at 11:30.