

**MASON PTO
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 12, 2017**

Jeff Somers

President

Katie Batts
Vice President

Kelly Sendoykas
Treasurer

Kris McKean
Recording Secretary
& Membership

Krista Somers
Corresponding Secretary
Communications

Valerie Albright
School Board
Observer

Jennifer Amori
Fundraising
Chair

Cynthia Latimer
PTO Council
Observer

Kim Rahi
Volunteers
Chair

Kristen Rubart
ASD Emissary
& Membership

Amy Schubert
Hospitality
Chair

Andrea VanBecelaere
Volunteers
Chair

Roy Bishop
Principal

Anna Court / Margarette Scheich
Teacher Representatives

~ IN ATTENDANCE ~

BOARD MEMBERS:

Valerie Albright
Katie Batts
Roy Bishop
Anna Court
Kris McKean
Kim Rahi
Kelly Sendoykas
Jeff Somers
Krista Somers
Andrea VanBecelaere

GUESTS:

Eddie Hartman
Amy Lyons
Luis Santiago

ABSENT:

Jennifer Amori
Cynthia Latimer
Kristen Rubart
Amy Schubert

President's Call to Order – 7:05 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS – Jeff Somers:

- Minutes from November 14, 2017 meeting were approved.
- Shared an email from Katie Scarsella regarding Mindfulness Training, at a cost \$2,500, which would include approximately 2.5 hours each week for 15 weeks for one grade (recommending 4th grade.) A discussion followed and several questions were posed:
 - Are materials included? Can they be broken out? What is the cost of materials?
 - Are we tied to the 15 weeks, or can that be reduced? If so, how would that affect the cost?
 - Why is the cost more than double this year?

It was proposed that we survey the teachers to see what their priorities might be, before committing to this program again. We should have an outline of what expenses are and then make a more informed decision regarding any proposals, going forward. We agreed to revisit this discussion in January.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – Roy Bishop:

- Parking lot situation continues to provide concerns for the safety and welfare of our children and of Mason parents. As a result, there will be a heavy police presence thru January. Parking violators will be ticketed.
 - Another message (in all our various forms) will go out to encourage people to follow the rules.
 - Discussions included comments regarding the difficulty for parents of children who must / can only be released to an approved person. These parents have no options for leaving their vehicles to meet their child's class. It is becoming increasingly difficult to manage this procedural policy. The lot fills early and parents with limited time to get there can't get in. Parking lot is dangerous. Spots are difficult to navigate.
 - We agreed to form a small committee to review the current conditions and research / recommend ways to alleviate some of the issues. We will work closely with Mr. Bishop and follow all ordinances in making any changes.
- Thank you to the PTO for providing food / refreshments for the teachers during conferences.
- Mrs. Popkie will take over for Mrs. Green during her maternity leave. She is currently in the classroom, so that the children will begin to know her and feel comfortable while Mrs. Green is away.

TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE – Anna Court:

- Thank you for the support to purchase a water station. Cans are currently being collected to offset costs.
- Mrs. Zoufal has asked that we remember to vote for the Mason tree at the Edsel Ford House. It is located in the Visitors Center. Voting is open through December.
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COMMITTEE REPORTS

FUNDRAISING – Katie Batts (for Jennifer Amori – Absent):

- Merry Morning at Mason broke our record for this event, garnering \$1,223!
- We were lacking volunteers, but people were willing to pitch in and help.
- We are rethinking the positioning of the tables in the hallways. Want to be sure everyone is visible.
- Good feedback on the Coffee Bar. We ran out of coffee and hot chocolate, however, and will look for the details on the budget report when making decisions for next year’s event.
- There is some confusion about servings portions and need to circle back to Pancake King to clarify.

HOSPITALITY – Amy Schubert (absent):

VOLUNTEERS – Kim Rahi & Andrea VanBecelaere:

- Still need volunteers for the lunch period (11:30 – 12:30.) Another announcement will be made via various channels.

SCHOOL BOARD OBSERVER – Valerie Albright:

- Was unable to attend December meeting, but details are available in Rebecca Fannon’s email (which includes information about the Blue Ribbon Committee Report and various grants that were approved for various initiatives at various GP schools, totaling \$38,000.)

PTO COUNCIL OBSERVER – Jeff Somers (for Cynthia Latimer – Absent):

- Nothing significant to report. Not much was discussed beyond each school’s fundraising efforts.

ASD EMISSARY – Kristen Rubart (Absent)

BOARD REPORTS

CORRESPONDING/COMMUNICATIONS SECRETARY – Krista Somers:

- No report.

RECORDING SECRETARY – Kris McKean:

- Flyers to call for candidates for the Treasurer’s position were put in teacher’s bins for distribution this afternoon.
- So far, we have three volunteers for the Nominating Committee: Liz Hubbell; Sarah Tomich; Amy Weglarz.

TREASURER – Kelly Sendoykas:

- Provided updated hard copy of current budget. No questions at this time.

VICE PRESIDENT – Katie Batts:

- No report.

DISCUSSION – 2018 EVENTS

- Amy Lyons expressed concern and displeasure with the plan to combine the “dances” and create one winter formal event. Amy’s position is that she likes tradition and added that she doesn’t feel comfortable with a co-ed dance, as older grades are difficult transitions for boys and girls. She also said that she did not like what she saw as the PTO making this change to accommodate a “non-traditional” family. Luis Santiago, offered that his children don’t have options to attend either dance, in the current formats, because all the members of his household are male. Amy followed with comments that were specific to Luis’ situation and intimated that she disapproved and believed others felt the same way. The Board whole-heartedly rejects her viewpoint in this regard. Several comments followed, with the majority supporting the PTO’s current decision to combine the dances.
- Eddie Hartman suggested we keep the traditional “Daddy/Daughter” and “Mother/Son” dances and add a third dance. That idea met with little approval. The prevailing thought is that it would simply splinter our audience; that most would not attend the third event and, Luis Santiago, whose children have been unable to participate, said that a third event felt like a token gesture for all the people who did not have a traditional family, with both parents or a special person to attend the other dances. Many nodded in agreement.
- The Board members stressed that the change was made, not for one family, but in consideration for all Mason families. This includes many children, who may not have an active parent, friend or family member who would escort them to a gender-based event. The Board felt that combining the dances did not take anything away from any of the children, but opened the opportunity to those whose circumstances would prevent them from attending. The Board reiterated that they do not believe this would be "less special," because parents could still provide all the features that support this tradition...(flowers; dressing up; dinner or ice cream with a special escort, etc.) Although the Board continued to believe that the original decision was sound, it was agreed to table the discussion and revisit it at the January meeting.***

**Jeff Somers called for a motion to adjourn.
Katie Batts & Krista Somers so motioned – seconded by many.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 9, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

*****ADDENDUM**

An emergency meeting of the Board was called to discuss the concerns /objections some parents have expressed regarding our change to the "parent/child" dances.

It took place on Sunday, December 17th. The following members were in attendance: Valerie Albright; Jennifer Amori; Katie Batts; Roy Bishop; Kris McKean; Cynthia Latimer; Kim Rahi; Kelly Sendoykas; Jeff Somers; Andrea VanBecelaere

Katie Batts opened the meeting and shared that she had heard from some parents, who expressed their disapproval. She offered an option to change the name of the dances to only reflect gender (Girls' Dance and Boys' Dance,) as a possible solution / compromise.

After a lengthy discussion and respectful consideration, we decided to continue with our original plan to have only one event.

A vote was taken of the members who were present. We have a majority agreement, with Katie Batts and Jennifer Amori abstaining. An email was sent and those who were absent were asked for their comments and for their votes. Kristen Rubart and Krista Somers approved the plan. Amy Schubert abstained.

Subsequently, we agreed to form a committee of Board members to develop plans to expand the event to include more activities than just "a dance" and to move the date into March. Those plans will be presented at the January meeting.