

Farmington River Elementary



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Thursday December 3, 2015

Meeting Start: 3:15 pm

Motion made to approve minutes from November's meeting; approved.

In attendance: Wendy Berman, President; Craig Drenga, Vice President; Kathy Adams, Secretary; Ilona Packie, Treasurer; Meaghan Martin, Teacher; Kathy Couch, Ashley Nelson, Stacey Schultze, Sherry DeCelle and Dana Pustinger, Parents / Committee Heads.

FOR OUR CALENDARS

Th Jan 14 Next PTA Meeting, 3:15 pm in the Library

Wed Dec 9 Holiday Shop setup in Art Room, 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm

Th Dec 10 + F Dec 11 Holiday Shop is open, discussed in detail below in Old Business

W Jan 6 Ski program begins; runs total of 6 weeks, ending Feb 10.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Wendy

Children's Online Bookstore and Friday 11/20 Family Fun Night Pizza Party wrap-up.

Good turnout to Friday Fun night, but no live birds. Nice slide show by Arlene. Teachers have wish lists; perhaps choose a couple books off of each, since not very lucrative fundraiser. Should have received \$266 for book sales; we were shorted \$40, Wendy to check why. Probably timing too tight against Square 1 Art fundraiser to entice parents.

Mary wanted to do spring Scholastic BOGO (Buy One, Get One) book fair; however, Scholastic said no to spring book fair, because we did not do fall book fair. One must follow the other, no exceptions. Disappointment that Scholastic did not reveal this in past. We could as an option do Scholastic book fair in spring, with BOGO book fair May or June. Mary tried to call and appeal during PTA meeting. 800-822-3247 general Scholastic contact line. Supervisor said absolutely not, only can set up spring BOGO event following main book fair. Scholastic has limited availability; we have to make room according to their calendar, not our own.

Spring date chosen TBA early March, to time with Dr. Seuss "Read Across America." Sherry suggested we do not put out the tchotchke stuff, and also ask for higher-level reading. Dial it up; too young of a focus. Need an overall upgrade to books they provide. We skew older. Meaghan commented a lot of great series out there that are not in the Scholastic fair.

Dana suggested other companies out there, as well, such as Usborne Book Fair (consultants available in Lee and Blandford). Some research conducted, apparently their books seem to also skew younger.

Wish Lists by kids: not online, but need to walk through, touch books, make it a tactile experience. Make it a half day, morning one day and afternoon next day. Doesn't need to be all day long for both days. Grades 3-6 don't need assistance with their Wish Lists. Becky Bliven and Mrs. Canon are overseeing the Library now.

Mahaiwe Opportunity.

Will hold off decision for this March event until after speaking with Tom, as it coincides with MCAS scheduling.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Craig**Indoor recess issue.**

People have expressed being upset to Craig because of children being still in classrooms (not in gym to run) during indoor recess. Sometimes gym is available, sometimes preschool uses gym, sometimes Kim uses gym for music activities. Ongoing issue past couple of years; needs to be more firmly resolved by speaking with Tom. Is it possible to make the statement to paras that if the gym is open, kids must use the open space if indoor recess? Older kids need older gym games (not babyish); younger kids can be better occupied in their classrooms. Stacey suggested "adult" coloring books. Wendy to check with Karen; Craig to check with Tom.

Drama program.

Kim will not be doing this year. Craig being asked by many parents, expressing disappointment that no play this season; however, Kim relied on Mrs. Canon, who has a new baby at home. Ideas discussed. Stacey suggested Shakespeare & Co visiting here? Meaghan said she experienced a similar play group visiting a school, but it was an after-school program—not during school. Must start with Tom and the staff to see if they would even want to do another play; Kim had applied for a grant, plus her room and equipment would be used. Craig will check in.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ilona

General update. \$108 on staff dinner; Family Fun night pizza party \$166; winning classroom 2nd Grade \$30 for winning Square 1 Art fundraiser. \$1,081 for Holiday Shop (can go to \$1,200). Loss of \$100-\$200 okay; must feel positive about inventory. Cash Calendar donations so far: \$1,175. \$20 donation. \$7,063 in coffers. Flying Deer invoice just in for \$1,800 (\$2,400 original fee). Nothing in yet from Square 1 for funds. Chili cook-off; will wait to discuss with Kenly.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Kathy A.

Holiday Shop update. To discuss in Old Business section.

Ski Program mention: packet went out this week to families with all details. Ski Program is Wednesday evenings, 1/6 - 2/10, for Grades K-6. Lessons run 6-7:30 for the first two weeks, then 6-7 for weeks three through five. Week six is a skiing free-for-all ski time, capped by traditional pizza party. Kathy C. suggested eat early, then free ski; Sherry will discuss idea with Mark. Intent is for Grouse to be open. Reminder preschoolers can sign up, but not for lesson portion; can get equipment and must have parents accompany. If anybody asks, people with school-age kids can do this program (do not have to be FRRSD kids), but cannot get same PTA subsidy. Will cost full \$65.

OLD BUSINESS**Cash Calendar: Sherry**

Letter sent to everybody that contributed last year; \$3,300 in cash donations before. One-third of the way there, at \$1,175+ (a few more committed and on board, just have not yet contributed). Kathy C. suggested Sherry get in touch with Kwikprint in GB to see if any printing discounts of the Cash Calendar cards.

Stacey suggested and offered imagery to reflect status being a PTA event on Cash Calendar cards. Generally about \$700 cost in printing. Looking into how much might be a donation by going full-size, reducing trim cost.

Square 1 Art Wrap-Up / Final Thoughts.

Kenly in Albany today. Student complained of broken mug to Ilona. Company rep happy to deal with problem, will send replacement within week. One student did not receive a pillowcase; will also be followed-up on. Very creative and unique idea, children providing art for unique gift ideas. Question of quality in some cases.

Meaghan mentioned awkward, concerning situation that a few children's parents ordered many items, while a few other children's parents ordered nothing at all; some children felt hurt that there was nothing of their own seen in class when orders came in, did not understand why if they participated, they were left out.

Ideas for upcoming fundraisers: Kathy C. suggests a return to Yankee Candle (35 participants sold 48 items; \$4,787 retail sold, PTA profit \$1,915). Suggestion of PTO road trip once per year, at a cost of \$10 to "PTO Today Expo" on March 15, 2016 from 9-2, Hartford, CT. Voucher: enter raffle to win \$250; can be transferred. Can see many ideas for fundraisers. Coffee sales also suggested as a strong idea for a fall fundraiser.

Holiday Shop: Kathy A.

Sign-ups for Holiday Shop nearly filled. All set for Wednesday, Thursday, and first Friday morning slot. Need assistance for last two Friday slots: second midday shopping with teacher/parent/guardian browsing, and third slot for break-down. Ashley and Stacey volunteered to help for second shift on Friday; Kathy C. will help with third shift, with her girls Kelly and Haley and James (all of our kids) helping.

W Dec 9

12:30-2:30 pm. Sherry, Kathy C. and Ashley assisting. Meet in Art Room; set-up should take roughly two hours, ending approximately 2:30. Laura Catullo welcomed us to feel free to use the room as we see fit, and only asked that, as usual, we are careful to not touch the "storage" and "teacher areas" so that they remain in place.

Th Dec 10

8:45-11:45 am — Sherry, Ashley and Craig assisting.

Visiting classrooms:

- 9 am (1st Grade)
- 10 am (Kindergarten)
- 11 am (4th Grade)

F Dec 11

9:45-11:45 am — Bridget Krans, Craig, Sherry and Jen LaBarre assisting.

Visiting classrooms, first slot:

- 10 am (3rd Grade)
- 11 am (6th Grade)

F Dec 11

11:45-2 pm — Bridget, Ashley, Stacey and Aimee MacGovern (confirm with Aimee) assisting.

Visiting classrooms, second slot:

- 12 noon (2nd Grade)
- 1 pm (5th Grade)
- 1:45-3:30 pm (Shop open to faculty, parents and guardians)

F Dec 11

2-4:30 pm — Kathy C. and Bridget (until 2:45 pm) assisting. Check with Aimeé MacGovern for assistance. Shop break-down, update inventory and pack away.

Items and Supplies Remaining

- Sharpies
- Wrapping Paper
- Printout inventory sheets / pens / clipboards
- Snacks
- Sherry can grab more gift items in GB if areas weak

- Kathy A. get cash advance from Ilona, do bank visit, make change for \$100
- Sherry will do cash box for Thursday and Friday first slot, until 11:45 am

Wendy spoke of concerned parent letter about Holiday Shop promoting consumerism. Consensus is those who may not like an activity need not participate. Holiday Shop is not intended to be fundraiser; typically breaks even. Stay within \$1,200. Existing inventory considered pure profit. Nearly 1k spent so far on Holiday Shop items.

Chili Cook-Off Update.

Ilona has news and update. David Reed and The Trio Trimatica available on Friday, Jan 22. Knox Trail Inn available. Flyer from past, to be doctored up. Reed trio needs an hour to set up. Chris Keller on board to help out. Anastasia has resources list to peruse from past event. People who donate chili get in free; those tasting \$5 donation. Knox did not charge to use room. The Knox donated corn bread and table cloths. We even made a little money off donations at door. Bartender needed. Dana will speak with a friend-parent about helping with bartending.

Be sure to put a "Save the Date" in Otis Observer as a community event, about much-beloved 3rd chili cook-off will be held at The Knox!

NEW BUSINESS

Read Across America: Kathy C.

Seeking assistant to learn the ropes to take over next year.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:45 pm