**PTA Meeting Minutes**

**March 4, 2015**

Present: Iain Mourer (Treasurer), Mary Murray (President), Karen Rosenberg (Co-Secretary), Lindsay Zaccara (Communications and Co-Secretary), Molly Laster (Vice-President), Dave Seawell, Josie Clark, Perry Parsons, Liz Gillespie, LaQuita Hester, Ali Thomas, Tim Lohraff, Carol Adams, Harold Churchill, Carrie Evans, Pete Intravartolo (Powerful Schools), Katie Seawell

**General Update**

Mary Murray moved to vote to approve the minutes from the 2/11 PTA meeting. Molly Laster seconded the motion. Members voted unanimously to approve the 2/11 minutes.

Mary Murray reported that teacher Courtney Clark-Loera requested PTA funding assistance for t-shirts for 5th graders participating in the Global Reading Challenge. Mary suggested that the PTA cover the full cost of the 7 t-shirts and moved to vote on donating the t-shirts (which were previously purchased by the PTA for sale to families). Karen Rosenberg seconded. Members voted unanimously to fund the t-shirts.

Ann Cotton will be putting together an order for more t-shirts to fill in sizes that have been depleted, and to give to Field Day volunteers. People can contact her via the secretary (secretary@friendsofhawthorne.org) with suggestions on types of shirts that should be ordered.

**Nominations Committee Update**

Nominations Committee co-chair Dave Seawall reported that the nomination form went out in backpack mail on 3/4 and the form is due by 3/18. The form has been translated into Spanish and Vietnamese. Joyce Shimizu in the school office suggested that Melissa Mak assist with outreach to non-English speaking families.

The two significant holes in the slate of candidates are for vice-president and a teacher. The vice-president role is crucial because it is seen as an “on-boarding” role for assuming the president role the following year.

The election is scheduled for 4/22. The slate of candidates must be announced at least 10 days before the election. In the past, the elections have not been competitive; if there is more than one candidate for a position they can share it.

**FOH PTA Insurance Review**

Board member Tim Lohraff reviewed the PTA’s current insurance policies. These policies are available for general membership to read as well; to request a copy email secretary@friendsofhawthorne.org. Tim recommended that the coverage be increased for medical costs. Mary pointed out that FOH pays $165 a year in insurance premiums and has budgeted more than that so that there is “wiggle room” to increase our premiums and coverage. Treasurer Iain Mourer will speak with the insurance provider (Association Insurance Management) to explore options for increasing coverage.

Members discussed potential liability issues associated with the auction. Tim explained that insurance coverage can be denied for causing or contributing to the intoxication of a person (a very broad clause) as well as giving alcohol to a minor. Tim recommended formally making the auction a 21+ only event. Tim also explained that the current policy covers volunteers but not contractors.

**Budget Review**

Iain provided copies of FOH financial statements. Mary provided budget documents and explained that expenditures reveal which line items are spent quickly and which ones take more time to spend. She reported that classroom supplies are underspent because the FOH process of reimbursement is cumbersome for teachers. She suggested giving gift cards for supplies directly to teachers for next year. Members discussed FOH financial support for Scholastic and subscriptions ($2812 to date for this academic year) and if FOH should frontload support for these expenses, even though it is outside of customary budgeting cycle. Members will vote on this and other out-of-cycle budgeting issues at the next meeting.

Other budget issues include the grade band STEAM mini-grant, which is new this year. Teachers requested it but most have not yet used it. Teacher Mark Meraki has suggested the addition of lines on the playground to better demarcate different activity spaces (i.e., a soccer field). Teacher Tina Leighton has requested pre-approved funds for new playground signs. Mary circulated a budget request form and she will send this out to Hawthorne teachers and FOH members who have made requests in the past. Anyone is welcome to be involved in the budget process; interested people can email Mary at president@friendsofhawthrone.org. Current savings in the FOH budget is $6,500.

**Hawthorne Handbook**

Lindsay Zaccara is spearheading an effort to create a Hawthorne Handbook for families (new, returning, and prospective). She is exploring partnering with a school newsletter company who would do graphic design and printing in exchange for soliciting and placing ads from local businesses. The company would also translate materials into Spanish. The ad revenue would be shared by the newsletter business and FOH. Lindsay has a draft Table of Contents for the Handbook and invites people to contact her to help with the project (she can be reached via secretary@friendsofhawthorne.org).

Members discussed the accessibility of FOH meetings and communications from a language perspective. Members outlined outreach and accessibility efforts and agreed that this is an ongoing challenge for FOH. Hawthorne staff members Melissa Mak and Liliana Calimlim requested that PTA minutes be translated into Spanish. Karen offered to do a draft of the translation but requested that someone proof/correct her draft.

**Education Funding In Washington State**

Board members Harold Churchill and Lindsay Zaccara reported on a training they attended on school funding in Washington State. Washington State is not meeting its constitutionally mandated obligation to adequately fund K-12 education. A lawyer who helped sue Washington State (in the [McCleary case](https://k12.wa.us/Communications/OtherCommunications/SummaryMcLearyDecision2013.pdf)) explained advocacy options available to encourage the legislature to comply with the court case.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30. Next meeting is April 22, 6:00-7:30. Meeting will focus on discussion of draft budget for AY 2015-16.