



**BUTLER PTA General Meeting** December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 7:00 pm  
Minutes taken by Stephanie Wratten, Recording Secretary

**Attending:** Stephanie Wratten, Bo Yang, Carlos del Canizo, Maria Angurel, Bill Like, Eliza Wu, Jessica Mutch, Kim Blinn, Kate Abruzzi, Sterling Crockett, Maribel Carvajal, Barbara Bulfoni, Mauro Lance, Ed Ozawa, Michael McAllister, Laura VanderHart, Ann Ozawa

**Fun run recap and thoughts - Laura**

- Laura handed out a summary of the pledges. Mostly credit card pledges – we do pay a fee for that. However, 80% of people who donated opted to pay fees so it didn't come out of what we raised. The amount of money donated by corporate sponsors covered the fees for using the company website and any credit card fees that people didn't pay.
- Other costs - party for top 10 fundraisers at studio cinema, costumes, a few thank you gifts to sponsors
- A few facts - Most sponsors donated \$25 or less. Only 4% were 100 or more. 72% of students registered only and nearly all of those brought in contributions. But everyone participated in the run regardless of money raised.
- Compared to running an auction there was a much higher percentage of participating families and it was a much more kid-focused activity.
- Would we do this again and how often? Yes, do it again. Kids had a great time. Mr Trodden would do it again.
- One thing to think about – the pedometers – a lot were defective had to weed them out. Also - do we want to give them to the adults who participate too?
- Some discussion about whether to do it on a school day or a weekend day. Probably would make less money if on a weekend since not all would participate. Mike reported some initial pushback about loss of instructional time, but this was softened by benefits of raising so much money - \$18,000.
- Some discussion about location other than the school – go through neighborhood or in PQ park. But, uncertain about insurance and police needs.
- Suggestion to do it annually. Takes pressure off other fundraising. Spreads fundraising to grandparents. Also connects to PE and is community building. This alone essentially pays for the in school enrichment.
- Plan date more in advance for next time. Have rain date predetermined also.

## **PTA audit and bylaws committee - Mauro**

- PTA audit – every PTA has to convene an audit committee separate from the treasurer. This is an annual requirement. Committee was Mauro Lance, Cara Cogliano and David Engerman.
- Worked with Julie (Treasurer) and found that everything was fine. Presented audit report to Mass. PTA by November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- PTA as an organization has by-laws. There's a requirement that those by-laws have to be updated at least once every three years and have to be filed with the state. Mauro volunteered to chair this process. Another volunteer is Travis Johnson. He is an attorney and Maura has some experience from work. Needs more volunteers – Ed Ozawa may join the committee. Others volunteers are encouraged.

## **“Put on your own oxygen mask first: an introduction to mindfulness” - Ed Ozawa**

Ed shared that some years ago he started looking for a solution for some stress in work and personal life. Came to mindfulness to help. He had a disclosure – not a certificate trained meditation instructor but have gained practice and knowledge over last 10 years to talk about his experience and view.

To explain mindfulness, Ed shared a “mind in a jar” bottle of water, soap and glitter (or could use dirt). Our negative energy is the same as agitating the jar – lose clarity and can't see through the jar. Thoughts are not settled. To be mindful is to not add energy to this system – it's like taking the jar and putting it down. Everything will settle and you will have clarity. Analog to what happens during meditation. Gain clarity and open up space in your brain.

Ed led us in a doing a 3-minute meditation. Sit in erect and dignified position. Focus on your breath and if you are thinking of things – return to the breath. Can use an app to time yourself. He said to try not to have self-doubt about doing it correctly. Figure out what works for you – kind of like exercise.

He encouraged us to model mindfulness with our kids. It's hard to teach mindfulness to your kids unless you yourself are a practitioner. Hence the title of the talk – Put your own oxygen mask on first. If you take care of yourself first then you can take care of others – energy can radiate outwards from loved ones to community. We're not here to make others thrive at our expense.

Can make a mindfulness jar with kids. Kids can sit and watch the jar can be helpful and calming. In order to actually do sitting meditation kids might need to be middle school or older.

Ms. Romig is trying it out this year in Ms. Ruddock's class. Mostly about breathing exercises.

Ed suggested the following resources for more information: "*Full Catastrophe Living*" by Jon Kabat Zinn, "*Planting Seeds – Practicing Mindfulness with Children*" by Thich Nhat Hanh, "*Peaceful Piggy Meditation*" by Kerry Lee MacLean and a report on mindfulness on 60 minutes <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/mindfulness-anderson-cooper-60-minutes/>

The meeting concluded at 8:15 pm.