



PTA

Date of PTA Meeting: January 14, 2020

Location: Club Phoenix, Vienna Community Center

Attendees: Rebecca Aguilar, Jameela Akbari, Stephanie Bollini, Urvi Desai, Missy Dixon, Amey Fooks, Jen Hallworth, Joan Hendricks, Kathy Keller, Lisa Kelso, Andrea Kramer, Mary Pat Julian, Patrick Julian*, Wendy Pearson, Alecia Pflughardt, Gwen Riddle, Patrice Scheyer, Dawn-Marie Singleton, Elizabeth Terry-Humen, Amy Vernon, Jason Williams *indicates Thoreau Staff or Guest Speakers

Andrea called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Old Business: The minutes were presented from the November 19, 2019 PTA meeting. Amy Vernon made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Missy Dixon and the minutes were approved.

Principal's Report: No report today. Mr. Azimi is still on leave.

Student Services Report: Mrs. Aguilar presented several school-wide updates. Drama department will present the school musical *Singing in the Rain, Jr.* this week. She also highlighted Project Based Learning, a county-wide initiative. Thoreau is one of the schools that has 100% of staff trained in these strategies. Thoreau has partnered with Town of Vienna for real projects for students to consider and to solve.

She reported that Pyramid high schools presented course selection materials to eighth graders this week. This is the first year that rising high school students have done online registration through StudentVue. Counselors at Thoreau will sit with every student one on one. Parents are not required to do the online work with students. Counselors will verify course registration with students. Following that counselling department will work with rising eighth graders, and then with incoming seventh graders. On February 4 and 5 all rising seventh graders will tour Thoreau. February 6 is Thoreau's Open House for rising middle school families.

Next year, in terms of technology access, Thoreau will be a "One-to-one" school, where every student will have a laptop. The "Away for the Day" cell phone policy will remain in place. Laptop distribution and logistics surrounding that are starting to be planned. Stay tuned in Thoreau Matters.

PTA President's Report: Andrea Kramer started by thanking Seema Javeri for the completion of Thoreau's online family directory. It is up and running with our partner A to Z company again this year to produce a digital edition. She also thanked the Hospitality Committee for the distribution of the 180 pies in November to every staff member including bus drivers. Additionally in December the committee coordinated an assortment of holiday cookies to all staff. Thanks again to Missy Dixon, Karla Mihalak and Mary Louise Nicklas.

Staff Grants Report: Andrea thanked Irina Smirnoff and Michelle Sullivan for serving on the Staff Grants Committee with her this fall. Of the sixteen grant applications received, all were funded, either through our grants or through existing funded programs at Thoreau. Over four thousand dollars in grants were awarded.

PTA Bylaws Review: As required by National PTA, local PTA bylaws must be reviewed every five years. Dawn-Marie Singleton, Stacey Leimbach and Andrea Kramer will be meeting to review the bylaws before the March deadline for approving any changes to govern appropriately over the next five years.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Amy Vernon presented this month's report. Our current balance is \$50,021.27 with \$1,924.26 in outstanding checks. Amy reported that we are in a great position financially. We are revising the School Store budget. Liz Kimball is doing amazing work in this venue. She is very in tune with what the students are interested in purchasing. In March we'll have a complete status update. Amy is available via email or by phone for any questions or check reimbursement.

Committee Reports

Spelling Bee: Jen Hallworth has six years of experience and took over from Eliza Morris who runs the county bee. Thoreau's event is on February 11th, registration closes February 7th. Historically 15-16 students have competed. We have 8 students currently registered. Signup is available online. Participation is free. It's a great experience.

New Business: What's old is new again. Back in 2015 when Thoreau was undergoing renovation, the PTA helped the school tremendously via the Campus Campaign, a multi-faceted fundraising effort. The funds were used primarily to purchase furniture and technology. At the time a Commemorative Brick project was launched but has not been seen to completion. The new courtyard, created by the building expansion, is where the brick project is slated. Patrick Julian, former Thoreau student, a Boy Scout from troop 1978 and a ninth-grader at Madison HS, spoke to us about taking on installation of the brick courtyard as his Eagle Scout project. He reported that around 400 bricks are needed for the project. We have sold approximately 125 bricks already.

Patrick is coordinating with Colleen Taylor, Thoreau's After-School Coordinator, for the installation of the bricks. Patrick is hopeful for an early spring installation, which will take place on a weekend date. Brick campaigns were held in 2015 and 2017. Additional bricks are needed, as well as gravel, sand and plastic edging. Bricks will be available for purchase again. An estimated budget was proposed of \$400 for the materials, \$560 for 300 plain bricks (as filler until additional engraved bricks are sold), and about \$300 in additional costs, totaling \$1,300. Stephanie Bollini, long-time Thoreau parent and PTA member, added that in 2015 there was approximately \$5,000 set aside for this project. The bricks do sell! There's approximately a 2-week turnaround for engraving. We could easily run a Brick Sale for about a month. Amy Vernon moved to add \$2,000 to our existing budget for the brick installation project. Dawn-Marie Singleton seconded that motion. This budget adjustment was approved.

Parent Presentation: The remainder of the meeting was a parent education meeting, as was the traditional concentration of the PTA historically. TMS PTA has partnered with Club Phoenix for today's presentation. Director Natalie Duncan, after-school coordinator for Town of Vienna, welcomed us to Club Phoenix, a free after-school program located at the Vienna Community Center. It is open 2:30-6:30 Monday-Fridays, with extended hours on Friday. Registration materials are available here tonight. Club Phoenix is available for birthday party rentals. Next Monday Club Phoenix is sponsoring a service project on Martin Luther King, Jr. On the FCPS student holiday, ice skating and ramen on Monday, Tuesday going to Atomic Trampoline park and Bolero in Leesburg. 10 spots available for both days. Natalie introduced Jose Torres from their staff. He is a recruiter for students for the University of Mary Washington. He's worked in the Admissions field for the last six years. Rather than share a lecture presentation, Jose opened the floor for questions from parents regarding the College Admissions process.

Adjourn PTA Meeting: Amy ended the meeting at 8:40 p.m.