



MINUTES
Blythe Park PTA
General Membership Meeting
January 16, 2015
9:00am- Blythe Park School

- I. **Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance-** Called to order 9:06am.
- II. **Reading and Approval of Minutes (vote)-** Minutes from November 14, 2014. Motion to accept- Debbie Brand, Second- Meaghan Mathews.
- III. **Shopwithscrip.com:**
A new fundraising opportunity where you buy gift cards for any store you want and our school will get a percentage of the money back. For example Starbucks gives 7% back. The only thing we have to pay for is the cost to ship the cards to us which comes out to about \$7. We need to decide if we want to do this as a one time blast during a certain time period or have it be a continuous thing. The goal is to eventually have this be ongoing. Kickback ranges are 1%-13%. There is a nice range of denomination values to choose from. You can also have it be on your phone as well depending on the vendor. The consensus from the Exec Board is to make a big push for it in the fall of next year vs. introducing it at the end of this school year. In order to work out the kinks beforehand, we sign up for scrip immediately and have the members present today try it out. Motion to test out shopwithscrip as soon as possible: Claudia Chapulis. Second: Meaghan Mathews.
- IV. **Dad Event:**
This event does not have a chair. We have struggled through the years to get volunteers to chair and to even volunteer for this event. The event is not on the calendar anyway. Since there is no one willing to chair we should cancel the event. Motion to cancel Dad Event: Claudia Chapulis. Second: Julie Stack.
- V. **2nd Assembly:**
We have yet to schedule the second school assembly. Narrowing it to two companies after talking to other schools that have used them. One is more expensive than the other. Get Science is \$385. Tournament of Science is \$595. There is not a major difference in the two companies' presentations making one superior over the other. At this time, General Membership feels we should go with the cheaper option and give it a try. Motion to vote for the cheaper assembly, Get Science for \$385: Carol Barlow. Second: Meaghan Mathews. Vote passed.
- VI. **Fifth Grade Field Trip:**
A couple different options being discussed in regards to the fifth grade field trip. Thinking of maybe doing the architectural tour downtown and then seeing the Tornado documentary at Navy Pier. Also looking at the IMAX option at The Science and Industry museum. Concerns with the architectural tour is that the weather could be unpredictable and also cost prohibitive. Right now the tentative plan is for the class to take the train to downtown, then catch a water taxi to Navy Pier, watch the Tornado movie and then have lunch that everyone has brought with them. The class would then return to Riverside via the water taxi and train. Still looking at the cost, possibly it will be about \$30/student. Ms. Gorman made a suggestion to have the 4th graders run a fundraiser where the money raised will be gifted to the 5th grade class to be used towards their field trip. This could be a nice tradition to implement. Executive Board to help put this together. Motion to agree to move forward to have future fundraisers by 4th grade to raise money for 5th grade which is to be hammered out at the next EBM on Feb. 9, 2015: Debbie Brand. Second: Julie Stack.
- VII. **Volunteerism:**
Considering our volunteer numbers are low, Susan has revamped the volunteer forms so they are easier to read. We want to have the room parents play a more active role in getting more volunteers. The room parent role will need to be more defined. Julie Stack, Claudia Chapulis, and Debbie Brand will be working on creating this to be included in the volunteer packets. A plan will be written out to be presented at our next meeting.

VIII. Chair and Board Member Reports- Upcoming:

1. Snowball Dance: Margaret Senese & Claudia Chapulis

We are in need of more volunteers to help out at the actual event and also more people to bring cupcakes. Claudia Chapulis being the room parent for her grade, created an email that she sent out to her room families asking for volunteers to bake cupcakes. Sharing this email with the rest of room parents to be used as a trial run if this method of communication helps drum up more volunteers.

2. Chicago Steel: Mary Smith

Everything going smoothly. All tickets orders are due by Tuesday Jan. 20th.

3. Schwan's:

This will be starting in February. Plenty of notice will go out before the actual start date.

4. Adult Social: Meaghan Mathews

Considering of having the Adult Social at Mollie's. Do not have firm confirmation from Brian as of yet. Will have the final ok on Monday. Information will be sent out as soon as Meaghan Mathews gets that confirmation. Looking at Fri Feb 27th. 8pm-11pm. \$25 to include beer, wine, and light appetizers. Will setup buying the tickets online. Looking to have one big raffle item. This is more of a social event vs. a fundraiser. Have room parents involved in getting the word out. Goal is to get 120 people. Doesn't have to be just Blythe Park families, can invite any of your friends.

5. Read to Succeed: Debbie Galloway

This is the Great America program where students that participate receive a free ticket to Six Flags Theme Park. Participation ranges from 25%-50% per class. Some families truly count on that free ticket to use over the summer. Majority of members at the meeting agree that we should keep this program and that many people do like and count on this. Considering this program is not labor intensive, we have a chair to run it, and the teachers are all supportive of it, we will keep it in place. We will start the program in Feb/March so that we can receive the tickets in time for summer break. Ms. Gorman also presented an idea for the month of Feb. where students can pledge how many books they will each read. Will have a big thermometer gauge in the hallway to show progress. This can be linked to Read to Succeed and can be used as a reinforcer.

6. Skating Event: Chaza Schira

Exec board has debated if we want to still have this event. Looked into a newer roller rink in Lombard but worried we will not get enough participants due to the distance. General Membership stated they are fine with the Fleetwood Roller Rink since it is close by and suggested having it on an early release Monday instead of on a weekend day. Chaza Schira to call Fleetwood and setup.

VIII. Chair and Board Member Reports- Recap:

1. Original Works:

Susan Casey has looked into alternative companies to use instead of Original Works. One of them is Artsonia which the previous art teacher used. The positive is that it is online and parents can choose from a variety of pictures vs. just having one art piece. However, this is a time consuming program because each art piece needs to be uploaded onto the site. Other companies have similar costs and methods as Original Works. Majority of members at the meeting really like Artsonia and the quality of their product. Rory Dominick has volunteered to help facilitate and have a meeting with the current art teacher, Ms. Alvin, to get her input and be involved in the decision. Details need to be ironed out before the school year ends.

2. Five Below:

We made about \$60. Do we still want to keep this in place for next year? This is a really easy event and hardly any work for the PTA.

IX. Executive Board Member Reports:

1. President's Report: Susan Casey

Susan contacted other PTA/PTO groups in the district to see how they handle paying the feedblitz fee. Everyone is in the same boat and has a person that volunteers to pay with their own credit card and then gets reimbursed. Julie Laube has volunteered to be that person for us since.

2. 3rd Vice President Report: Susan Casey on behalf of Laura Rubio

We are a few hundred ahead of our fundraising goals to date and only have a few fundraisers left for the year. Next big fund raiser is the Chicago Steel and the Adult social. Later in the year Bargain Book sale (start donating those books!) and the plant sale. Keep clipping those box tops!

3. Treasurer Report: Julie Laube

Our CD balance is at \$3192.04. Our cash at hand as of 1/16/15 is \$8422.42.

Starting the Gift a Book to the library event. Information will go out in the happenings where families can purchase a book as a donation to the Blythe Park Library and have a personalized dedication put in. Next Thursday we can use volunteers to help out in the library. Going through old books, restocking, rearranging, etc the library to make it more open.

4. Parliamentarian Report: Julie Stack

We are starting the process of selecting the nominating committee. The committee is comprised of at least three PTA members. One of them is from the Executive Board and the other two are from the General Membership. One alternate is chosen from the Executive Board and two alternates from the General Membership. Lisa Gaynor and Rory Dominick have volunteered to be on the committee. Once the nominating committee is formed, applications will be accepted and phone calls will be made. Please consider getting involved. The nominating committee will be approved by the General Membership at the next meeting in February.

X. Principal's Report- Ms. Casimira Gorman

Kid's Bootcamp has started. Meet on Friday at 7:45am in the gym. We have about 30 kids that have signed up.

A replacement has been chosen for 2nd grade to take Mrs. Depke's spot while on maternity leave.

MAP results are in. Results and a letter explaining them will be going home next Wednesday.

Our first Parent University will be held next Thursday Jan. 22 from 6:30-8:00pm. Topic will be the inclusive classroom.

XI. Staff Report- Mrs. Bryan

Thank you for the ornaments and the donation of popcorn for the school movie. We are in need of more winter gear for the Angel Fund. Everything we had has been distributed. Please drop off what you have to the office.

Fun Lunch: Lisa Gaynor has volunteered to run fun lunch which is scheduled for Feb. 6th.

Adjournment- 10:50am. Motion to dismiss: Julie Laube. Second: Julie Stack.

Respectfully submitted by Chaza Schira