

Home & School Association Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2011

Present: Lauren Beckmann, Sara Coffou, Susan Joy, Lisa Lesjak, Yvonne Luzney, Karen Hunt, Wendy Scherwenka, Joan Schramka, Wendy Wallace, Kathy Wyatt, Amy Hietpas

Guests: Jennie Fox, Allie Pierson, Jeannette Corbett, Bill Boniface

Excused: Dennis Reilly, Cindy Bacskai, Pam Mattox

I. Reflection

II. Emerald Auction Chair Report– Jennie Fox, Allie Pierson, Jeanette Corbett

- Overall the Auction Committee did a fantastic job this year and raised over \$123,000 which was better than the budgeted \$114,000!
- The most important change for next year is the location. The Shorewood Fire Marshall made it clear that we can't hold the event at St. Robert. This year we had over 330 people come to the Auction. However, if we would want the auction to remain at the school we would need to limit attendance to 200 people because that is the capacity of Reilly Hall. We could possibly get a deal at another venue by connections the school may have. Allie is doing research on other facilities. Allie will have some information in a couple of weeks. Please call or e-mail her to give her suggestions for places.
- Don't hold the Auction Kickoff party because it is a waste of money and not worth it. Just another thing for the chairs to worry about.
- The check out and check in did not go very well. They recommend hiring an IT guy or some expert such as Kent Maly. Maybe IT support at the school could help to set up the computers for the checkout and check in next year.
- They never got any support the night of the auction from Greater Giving. They are trying to receive credit for Night of Auction support for next year. Maybe they should hire someone from Greater Giving to help run check-out.
- Technology expenses are very large. We need to re-evaluate how the hand held devices are used and whether they are worth the money because it is very expensive. Many mistakes are being made on these devices. How are we going to make this more efficient? Every year there is going to be a learning curve. There needs to be a committed data committee that can serve year to year with less turnover. They were very mindful of all their expenses but are concerned with how much money we are spending on the technology.
- The data committee should deal with check out as well as check in. They should have at least a back up printer. Next year they will need a new check out chair since Wendy Barron will not be doing it again. The data committee could manage acquisitions data, table assignments and reservations as well as check in and check out. Sara will send them the description with the categories for the Auction so they can update for next year.
- Kim Christenson has volunteered to do an analysis on acquisitions to see if it would be of benefit to do some targeted acquisitions next year.
- Keep for next year the Live Auction Raffle. It went very well. It sold in 45 minutes and made \$5,000
- Keep for next year the Wine Chance was fun and made a complete profit with no investment needed. \$1877 in pure profit.

III. President's Report – Sara Coffou

- **Raffle Update:** The Holy Moly Money Raffle is moving along very nicely, Amy and Karen are working on the marketing. They are getting information for a flyer and ticket info together and will market in various ways including the church bulletin, e-mail blast, and the St. Robert Facebook page and on Twitter. Lisa and Claire are putting together information to put in the Blueprint, school and parish page. The winners will be announced at 6pm on Sunday night at the fair. Father Dennis will do the big drawing. Jen O'Keef will do the administrative portion. Next week they will be ready to distribute the initial information with the school families. The thought is to do a lead in e-mail to the families and then have the flyer with a set of tickets for the kids to sell right before Easter. The parish wide sale will start after Easter. They are talking about possibly selling tickets at the Middle School Showcase and the Parent Meeting in May. They are also going to try to sell at all the Masses

in May and will be at the First Communion masses as well. She will also contact Gail DeFrancisco about the raffle for the Religious Ed families. Sara will be asking the board to help sell at the Masses as well.

- **Event Planning for 2011-2012:** Sara continues to review events and is getting good feedback from everyone on updating and revising. The Raffle will be a volunteer event next year. They have decided not have the coffee receptions committee next year and will roll up the Welcome Back Coffee and the 8th grade last school mass coffee reception into the Hospitality Committee. Yvonne said she would run the Welcome Back Coffee to help out if this was added to the Hospitality committee. We need a replacement of the dining fundraisers chaired by the Barb Monnatt next year. This should be added to the Effortless Fundraising committee. Sara will finish the draft and send out to finalize the numbers for the volunteers. She plans to have the volunteer packet ready to send out to current school parents with the registration confirmation. Lisa will be sending the volunteer commitment form out to the new families.
- **8th grade fundraising 2011-2012:** Angie Turner and Sara met with Margaret Wittkowske to present the new 8th grade fundraising guidelines and to start to coordinate efforts on fundraising. The guidelines outline five major fundraising events. Margaret has agreed to get the 7th grade parents together to get going and find a chair(s).

IV. **Principal's Report** – Lauren Beckmann

- Lauren has been busy in discussions about the very real possibility of eligibility for school choice being opened up to include everyone from city of Milwaukee regardless of income and with no lottery limit. They have met with an education attorney and have looked at it from different perspectives. There is a lot to think about regarding opening up enrollment to accept school choice students. Lauren met with Father Dennis and the principal from Holy Family. Through discussions they have decided that this is something too big to rush into and maybe they might open a few seats in Kindergarten in the fall. The bill is scheduled to pass in June. The Archdiocese expected to see a lot a movement between schools. There are a lot of pros and cons on both sides and we need to be cautious at this point in time. They would prefer to watch the trends before changing anything in a major way. This will need to be dealt with strategically and by observing what is happening in the community around us. Lauren will be attending seminars to find out more as the months go on.
- There are many rules within the archdiocese regarding bookkeeping for fundraising. Records need to be kept for anything the students do in terms of fundraising. There are also issues with the room parent money as there is no tracking. We need to document the money raised and how it is used. They are going to get together and document this process with Dennis and have the money collected by the room parents kept in a Home and School account.

V. **Other Reports**

Marketing & Development – Lisa Lesjak

- Enrollment: Lisa has been deluged by several people calling that are interested in enrolling in the fall. These are people that were not even on the radar in terms of any previous inquiries from them. Interest has grown as the specialty teachers are being cut out of the MPS curriculum and this makes our program at St. Robert more attractive. This is exciting in terms of increasing enrollment however they are nervous about the Milestones piece. There isn't enough room for the Milestones Program right now at St. Robert, and they looking at ways they could expand here. For many parents enrollment is contingent on Milestones. Lauren is going to be making a phone call to Milestones to discuss different options such as using space at Atwater. Dan Davis was thinking of making a modification to accommodate the older students in one of the areas on the 2nd floor.
- The Development Committee will return to promote the last push for the Annual Fund. They are currently reviewing lists of Alumni to target. They would like to review a list of Alumni names to continue building relationships with these people. They would like to identify potential connections and have current parents perhaps make the initial connection. She will be sending some of these names out to Home & School.
- They are planning on doing a school birthday party at the fair. There will be a tent at the fair for alumni this year. The party will be for young alums and their parents. As part of the party they will hold a low key Scavenger hunt to check out the changes in the school. Almost every year

there is a 50th reunion. The reunions are always held the Friday before the fair and they never have been able to have a dedicated space during the Fair for Alumni. Lisa approached the fair committee and will have a 2 hour dedicated block of time for the reunions on Saturday night in the Alumni tent.

Parish Council – Kathy Wyatt:

- John Scheid who is part of the finance committee gave the parish financial report. The good news is that they are not in debt. The report shows that we are not in the financial predicament that they thought they were in. John Scheid is writing a process for the documenting how the parish handles funds. Lisa mentioned that Home & School already has procedures that they could share as a guideline.
- Capital improvements need to be done. The parish has been able to put aside \$150K for doing mandatory repairs. This is what was determined from the assessment and 5 year Capital Plan that was put together by Dan Davis and the Buildings & Grounds committee. They are also looking for options to have some repairs be done in kind to reduce expenses. If you have connections with people that can do this type of work please let us know. They will also put a notice about it in the bulletin.
- Elections are coming up for the Parish Council. They have 9 vacancies they need to fill. They will also need a finance trustee.
- Father's report included the announcement that he has applied for an associate pastor. St. Robert & Holy Family will share a priest that will be ordained this spring.

School Advisory Board – Karen Hunt:

- The SAB reviewed the new rules for participation in extra curricular activities at St. Robert. Middle School students will have guidelines around the number of late assignments allowed and participation in extra curricular activities. Religious Ed students must also participate in order to be eligible for extra curricular activities.
- They reviewed the comprehensive repair listing from Dan Davis.
- New School Advisory Board members are needed. A secretary and one development committee chair is needed. They will advertise to the parish and school. The nomination form will be in Family Matters this week

Treasurer – Wendy Wallace for Dennis Reilly:

- Wendy distributed the balance sheet for April. The auction is the big news with \$121,431 net income. It might not be completely finalized but is close. The income statement is not the negative \$17K that was originally budgeted but it's a little better at negative \$12K. At the moment we will need to take this money out of operating reserves in order to balance the budget. The school commitments have been met with two payments. There was also a contribution to the technology fund for \$10,000. Dennis wanted to know who he needs to send the money to that was collected for the rice bowl. He should contact Claire Anderson and it is going to Operation Rice Bowl. There is currently activity for Middle School Showcase with fee's going in and out. The money for the Peace Learning Center is still pending per Lauren. Lauren acknowledged that they weren't able to get this activity in this year. The Library budget currently has \$69.55 left for library book additions.
- Per Lauren they are working on a final price now for the artist in residence program for April and May. Right now she thinks they would still need another \$1K from Home and School to help fund this program and the School Garden still needs to be funded. How about the 8th grade gift to the school? Could they possibly help fund some of these programs as a gift? Typically they give something to athletics, school and the music/art program. Angie thought they would know tomorrow what the 8th graders were going to give to the school as a gift.
- We will be approving the budget for next year at the May meeting. It will be difficult as we need to make choices on what we will need to cut back on in order to balance the budget.

Volunteers – Susan Joy:

She just obtained one more buy out fee this last month and has sent out invoices to parents that didn't show up for the Rummage Sale volunteer commitment and that not have contacted her to find a replacement volunteer opportunity. She is getting close to taking care of everyone in terms of their volunteer obligations or the buyout payment.

VI. Upcoming Events

- **Class Parties – Wendy S:** For the 8th Grade Graduation Reception they will be separating the reception from the dance. People will be able to linger longer at the reception without having to run off to the dance. They will have more refreshments and appetizers and make it a nicer evening. The additional funds for this will come from the 8th grade class party funds.
- **Middle School Showcase (May 12, 13, 14) – Sara for Cindy:** They will be charging more for tickets this year. They went up by a \$1 for children and adults.
- **Dramatic Reading (May 14) – Sara for Cindy:** The Dramatic Reading will be held again at Boswell Books on May 14th. Everything is ready to go.
- **Alterra Coffee Sale (Dates?) – Sara for Pam:** The Callanan's will be holding another Alterra coffee sale this spring and are currently trying to set up dates.
- **Spirit Wear Sale (April 29) – Amy:** Flyers are going out tomorrow. Several spring items will be for sale.
- **Grandparents Day (May 11) – Wendy S.** Grandparent's day activities will consist of an art fair and refreshments in hallway and will conclude with the Middle School Showcase presentation and dismissal at 2. The show will begin at 1:30 and they need to figure out how to maneuver and lessen the chaos. They will need volunteers at the entrances to serve as greeters. There will be no car line because they will be opening up the parking lot for the grandparents to park. Teachers will need to find out from students what students will be going home with the grandparents and who will be picked up.
- **Mother Daughter Tea (May 1) – Wendy S.** This year they are going to offer free hand and neck massages as well as organic tea and fruit kabobs. The chairs are in place for this event and everything is being organized. Everything seems to be in order. They plan to send another flyer out next week about decorating tables and more details.
- **Green Week (April 11th-15th) – Sara for Cindy:** Green Week is going on now and all is going well. All the children are very enthusiastic. Amy and Mike Mueller have chaired this event now for 2 years and will not do it next year. The recycling competition was an added event this year and is a big success with the students.
- **Inside the World of Work-Bill Boniface for Cindy (April 28th):** Bill's first thought was to orient this program to the middle school students but unfortunately he was not able to do it this year. He has documented and thought through the event. The grades will be split up in the following ways; 5th and 4th grade, 3rd and 2nd grade, Kindergarten-1st grade. There will be three different locations and 3 different speakers. The format of the seminars will be a short presentation from the speaker and then question and answer. He plans to have 9 different speakers in the careers of Art, Social Services and Business. Some examples of speakers he has already lined up are Greg Marcus president of Marcus Theaters to talk about the Movie industry, Betsy Brown from Kramer Krasselt, Mark Davis the head of jazz program at Cardinal Stritch and a Sound Engineer with Apple Computer. He thinks he can get all the speakers he needs for the arts and business categories but he needs help recruiting some people to talk on about social services careers. Lauren referred him to Jennifer MacDonell for someone she knows that is doing some missionary work in Haiti. Lauren mentioned that we need to have some greeters at the door. For the speakers we should use the many volunteers available for that event from Susan. There should be one lead volunteer in each of the venues. Susan will look at the list of volunteers for possible presenters.

Next year-Wendy:

Next month is the last Home & School meeting with the current board. Wendy needs help from everyone in recruiting people for next year's board since there are so many vacancies. In particular she is looking for a new President Elect. She is also looking for Rummage Sale Chairs for next year as this event is close to the planning stages already.

Next H&S Meeting – Wednesday, May 18 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yvonne Luzney
Home & School Association Secretary