

Saratoga Education Foundation
10 October 2007
Meeting Minutes

This meeting came to order at 9:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Kristi Petters, Naomi Wong, Katherine Tseng, Lisa Lu, Flora Hoffman, Susan Vukovatz, Stacy Alexander, Cheryl Bailey, Grace Jens, Kelly Berryhill, Terrie Creamer, Lane Weiss, Sherry Scott, Tacey Tucker, Dianne Smalley, Beth Kingsley, Joyce Lauro, Faithe Liu, Liz Guy, Gillian Sands, Paige Berardo

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Two projects the executive team would like to pursue are:

Website Subcommittee: the purpose, to review SEF website with an eye towards improving its use and appearance. Encouragement was offered to all interested parties. Cheryl Bailey offered to help when her schedule frees up in November.

Fundraising Subcommittee: the purpose, to review and evaluate current fundraising events and activities in order to make recommendations for the coming years that 1) continue to help SEF meet fiscal goals and 2) satisfy the needs of the community to whom SEF appeals. Kelly Berryhill, Kristi Petters, Cheryl Bailey volunteered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes from September 9, 2007 were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Lisa Lau noted that the action item, "to provide the board with an update on how all these programs work" (e.g. PayPal, credit cards, etc) be reassigned to the current treasurer, Stacy Alexander. Stacy Alexander moved to approve meeting minutes. Liz Guy seconded. No discussion ensued. MOTION CARRIED.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Stacy reported that SEF current holdings amount to \$2.5M. A portion of our holdings is endowment and another is committed to the school district for the year. Stacy distributed a financial report and noted the following information:

- gift wrap will be reduced by 50% after our invoice is paid
- The Bank of America statement has not been seen yet
- Stacy needs to better understand SEF account balances, for example what amount is endowment and what is DUTRA.
- The numbers on the financial report are accurate and indicate an auspicious start to the year.

Sherry Scott motioned to approve the financial report. Kelly Berryhill seconded the motion. No discussion ensued. MOTION CARRIED.

GUEST SPEAKER

Lane Weiss introduced Gillian Sands, who for the past two years has served as elementary school counselor and whose salary is paid for by the SEF. Gillian explained her counseling background, both in agencies and integrated into the school. She feels that being integrated into the school district is better for everyone involved. Being integrated into the school enables her to establish a better rapport with parents, who being a part of the counseling process, must be made to feel receptive and safe in dealing with her. Gillian reports a good success rate. She made the differentiation between a counselor and school psychologist, the latter tend to work solely with children on an academic level. In her role, she looks at whole child, academically and socially.

Last year of the 1400 students in school district, 90 students were referred to her. She saw 60 personally. That equates to 580 sessions (9-10 sessions) per student. That means she saw 3.9% of the student body, exceeding typical expectations.

PRINCIPAL REPORT

Dianne Smally reiterated how lucky the district is to have Gillian. She reassured the board that SEF employees are not made to feel 'outsourced' but integrated members of staff.

Dianne noted that October is a time when the school embarks on 'character education', a key part of three-dimensional success. Saratoga Elementary this year is focusing on friendship and Friendship Week is coming up. Friendship Week dovetails with the school's Anti-Bullying campaign. Dianne made special note that her goal is to make kids aware that they are the heartbeat of the culture of their schools.

There were a number of short days in September when the teachers worked on writing skills. A math coach also came in to work on number talks which entails helping children solve math problems. Next week teachers will be working on calibrating and scoring fall writing scores. Following that, teachers will meet district wide on the problem of the month.

Finally, Dianne emphasized the impact SEF work has on school and thanked the board for its efforts.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Lane Weiss talked about his efforts. His role is to understand the big picture, to spread positive news, to create understanding and support amongst the many parts that make up the school district; the ultimate goal being to support students. Every undertaking faces his scrutiny: does it get to the kids and does it improve things for them.

He offered positive news regarding PE: There were recently competitive grants for state funding. Lane applied and two schools in the SUSD district won, receiving \$30k each for PE staff and equipment improvements. This funding will be used across all schools. They will look at increasing instructional time and equipment. This funding will be integrated with SEF funds to make bigger impact on PE. The district has not received money yet but it would be for this year.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

Lane noted the following:

- The SUSD board voted to allocate funds to provide for desktop support. Recently the board added 64 plus computers and other equipment. But there was no funding available for support for that new equipment. Now, they've added .40 per week of desktop support from SUSD.
- The board has added money to school site budget to evaluate and improve classroom furniture. The first goal is to establish a standard for equipment, to better evaluate equipment, make buy or repair decisions and then develop a replacement schedule. This gives each school site control over replacing furniture with new equipment and providing good functioning materials.
- Lane noted a 16% increase in budget for things such as paper, staples and such goods at school sites.
- With regards to Noon Duty Supervision, SUSD is in discussion with the Teachers Association, and if it can be worked out with Union, elementary teachers would be able to give up their lunch voluntarily to be paid to watch children during lunch recess, similar to the program at Redwood.

PHONATHON

Kristi Petters announced the Phonathon is January 27th. An appeal was made to seek volunteers to help with Phonathon. Tacey Tucker immediately offered to take on the role of Co Chair. Other volunteers are needed. She has written a letter that she will email to the board as a part of a campaign to solicit support. Other roles yet to fill include:

- Food subcommittee chair
- Teacher and admin support
- Bilingual translator for 2008

A handout with job descriptions was provided. Dianne Smalley offered to spread the word. Kristi said she would like to avoid a recruitment night in November if possible.

Stacy suggests that an appeal is made via listserv to district. All were in support of the idea while concurrently continuing to leverage personal connections, then possibly broadening the search via room parents.

GIFTWRAP/DIRECTORY/SAVOR SARATOGA

Giftwrap concluded at the end of September but orders are still coming in through the website. Numbers in general are down this year and Innisbrook is reporting a soft year overall. Terrie asked that the fundraising committee, giftwrap chairs and school reps get together for a postmortem analysis of giftwrap. This will help establish better expectations. This year revenue is \$56,5k (compared to last year \$66k). Last minute internet orders will amount to perhaps est. \$3k, with a final projected revenue of around \$59k net.

Terrie reports that the estimate earnings for business directory will be about \$27k, higher than budgeted \$15k. Last year more realtors than businesses participated. This year there are 36 businesses and 16 realtors. There is currently no way to track whether or not the directory provides any uplift in sales to business donors. Terrie encouraged everyone to use the directory to find goods or services and to mention SEF to let businesses know how you heard about them.

A new fundraising program called Savor Saratoga has grown from the business directory endeavor. Terrie heard back from many businesses that \$500 ad in the business directory was expensive. In cooperation with the SVDC (Saratoga Village Development Council), a program to get parents downtown to shop before Christmas was established. Between November 2nd through 8th the board was encouraged to spread the word to get parents into local businesses and mention SEF. Participating businesses will donate a percentage of sales to the SEF that week.

ESCRIP AND SCHOOLPOP UPDATE/CLARIFICATION

Terrie summarized that Leadership contributions include:

Direct donations of stock and car, eScrip contributions greater than or equal to \$50 for period Jan-Dec, Gift-wrap contributions of 50% of gross over \$100, Golf contributions above and beyond goods and services, and Jogathon donations greater or equal to \$50. And participants in the business card program receive \$250 towards Leadership. A one-page write up explaining this information was suggested. ACTION: Stacy Alexander offered to create this.

Susan reinforced the importance of using the website portal for any shopping that is done online in order to get credit. It was recommended that all portals be promoted giving parents the ultimate choice of which one to use. Escrip has 147 vendors, Schoolpop 397 vendors, and 563 vendors on Upromise. Immediate announcements are needed to promote these programs.

SCHOOL REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Grace Jens from Argonaut reported meeting with giftwrap chair and learned that younger grades do not appear to be participating (across the board -- even with volunteerism). There is a school spirit bash coming up this Sunday. Money raised goes to PTA. There is a buzz around the Winter Blast party.

Sherry Scott from Foothill reported that the Hawaiian Luau in September was well attended. There is a PTA meeting tomorrow to approve the budget. She reports that people want detail about leadership and different fundraising activities. She said she will promote Nov 2-8 Savor Saratoga and will solicit feedback re giftwrap or other activities.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.