

Mohawk Elementary PTO minutes from December 6, 2023

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Katie Ruzala

Attendance:

Board Members – Courtney Hannah, Ashleigh Balsamo, Marie Laskowski, Michelle Schmidberger, Katie Ruzala, Katie Fohey, Jill Talant, Julie Hasse, Stephanie Burkart, Nicole Milam, Ashley Fruciano

Staff members – Andrea Verellen, Mrs. Dolot, Mrs. Carroll, Mr. Szwejk, Mr. Middleton, Mrs. Grahn, Mrs. Gendernelle, Mrs. Woolsey, Mrs. Dabrowski, Mrs. Gielegthem, Ms. Rubino, Mrs. Berry, Mrs. Irwin, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Rosenburg

Chippewa Valley – Charlene Staniec, Lori Bruce

Parents – Kristina O’Halloran, Traci Bowman, Amber Clark, Nicole Rowley, Jeff Talant, Daniella Pizzimenti, Alyssa Laszczak, Jill Mrak, Emy Christensen

Principal’s report:

- Santa shop is going well.

Teacher’s Report:

- Mrs. Dolot – seconded Santa shop is going well. Lots of volunteers makes for smoother and quicker shopping.

Officer Reports:

President’s Report-

- Katie Ruzala approved minutes from November 2023. Seconded by Ashleigh and Katie F.

Treasurer’s Report- Statements read by Michelle Schmidberger

- Bank Statement through the end of Nov: Checking \$23,441.01
- Savings \$5.

Business:

- We need to add lines to our bylaws as they haven’t been updated since 2016.
- Amend Article IV, Section 3:
 - A. Authorized positions shall be the PTO President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and a person appointed by Chippewa Valley Schools.
 - a. The previous statement did not include the Secretary position. We are including the Secretary.
 - B. Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations of Chippewa Valley Schools must be added to the bank account.
 - a. This is Scott Sederlund.

- b. Julie motions to approve the two statements above. Marie seconded.
 - i. Discussion - This is just a formality as this is how we have been operating already.
 - ii. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- Amend Article IV, Section 10:
 - A. Add statement Per the State of Michigan, all Community Support Group Bylaws must have a provision that states, “all assets and real property of Mohawk Elementary PTO will revert back to Mohawk Elementary School should the organization dissolve.”
 - a. Julie motioned we add the statement above. Marie seconded.
 - i. Discussion – This is the statement that is required by the IRS to all community support groups.
 - ii. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- Amend Article VII – Duties of Officers Section 10:
 - A. Every member of the Executive board, except the Treasurer, must chair at least one committee or co-chair two committees during the school year. The Treasurer can co-chair committees.
 - a. The previous statement stated each member needed to chair at least one event. We are amending this statement to include a member can co-chair 2 committees.
 - b. Julie motioned we add the statement above. Marie seconded.
 - i. Discussion – Can the treasurer and the co-treasurer chair an event together?
 - 1. They can co-chair with another person, but they cannot co-chair alone.
 - ii. All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
 - c.
- Budget –
 - We would like to remove Penny Wars from the budget.
 - Discussion:
 - Ms. Verellen wants to know why we are getting rid of it. After last week’s meeting, she talked to the staff she emailed us and said we could do it.
 - We tried coming up with different solutions at the last meeting, but both Ms. Verellen and Mrs. Gielegam were opposed to it.
 - We voiced our concerns that removing this fundraiser would affect our budget, and she was ok with it at the Tuesday meeting.
 - Ms. Verellen thought the only thing off the table if we took this fundraiser out was the book vending machine. However, the vending machine was not in our budget this year. We have to amend things currently in the budget to make up for the lack of this and other fundraisers.

- Other fundraisers are also being removed for lack of performance or other issues.
 - Michelle – explained how the budget works. This is a temporary band aid as our cash flow does not match the budget.
 - Meeting minutes should record expenses and income.
 - Teachers want the budget posted online and updated regularly.
 - The budget should be at every PTO meeting with the agenda. And posted online with the minutes.
 - We need to expand on clarity, have more lines, in the budget. But not itemized details. For example - We brought in 5k and spent 2k in expenses. So our over under is 3k.
 - Ms. Verellen now has read access to PTO Finance Manager so she can review it at any time. All members of the board can have access to this, just email Lori.
- No longer doing bingo night, which had a projected income of \$500.
 - Mrs. Dolot appreciates the PTO because more work goes into this than she thought.
 - We are canceling Little Caesar's Pizza Kits because it has continually underperformed. We projected earning \$800 annually and only brought in \$198 in the fall.
 - Mrs. Gendernelle wants to know why we are cutting the teacher's budget. Some people have already spent their money, and some haven't so it's not equitable. Some wait until the end of the year.
 - The budget last year was \$150. We are just amending it back to what it was last year to make the budget balanced.
 - If an event does has an excess of income, then we can possibly amend again. For now, the PTO is taking the money from the building, rather than the kids. If teachers need money for something, they can come to a meeting and request it.
 - Mrs. Gendernelle wants to know why they have to fill out a form for supplies.
 - Our front office told Marie supplies have to be locked up and teachers request what they need.
 - Kristina – as a parent – teachers can tell parents what they need, and parents will send things in.
 - Mrs. Woolsey asked why do they have to now fill out a form to purchase classroom supplies?
 - This is a district rule.
 - If you can't buy last minute when things are on sale, then she won't turn anything in.
 - The PTO is unclear who we answer to. The office staff, or Ms. Verellen.
 - We answer to Andrea. She will talk to them.
 - Ms. Verellen requested we table the order form for supplies.
 - Gendernelle wants no form. If they need tissues, they should be able to grab tissues.

- Mrs. Gendernelle says Ms. Verellen is not nixing field trips. This year has just been hectic and some just haven't had time to plan.
- How are we supposed to get teachers and parents to the meetings?
 - Can we do every other meeting at 4? Or a different day of the week? Or a teams meeting?
- The email Ms. Verellen sent out about this PTO meeting seemed to work better than the smore and fb posts.
- The PTO Room has a camera and a smart board. Potential site for a virtual meeting.
- It was suggested that we have a PTO Remind or Class Dojo so we can have open communication with the teachers. We tried Remind but there is a limit.
- It was suggested that a PTO member come to their staff meeting for maybe the first 5 minutes.
- Mr Szwejk – appreciates the support. Does not need a budget.
- Mrs. Gendernelle feels better that these budget decreases can be increased again if fundraisers are added back or the ones we have scheduled perform better than anticipated.
- Can parents count penny wars money. District has guidelines for penny wars. 2 counters – does not have to be PTO. Parents counting it must be ok with signing off on it. There are district rules to follow. Posted online.
- Mrs. Gielegthem – confused that we have a large sum of money, why are we decreasing the teachers.
 - Because we have more money allocated to be spent than we currently have, or are projected to make.
- The PTO can only carry over \$3k to next year.
 - This is already in the budget.
 - Last year there was a surplus of funds. The PTO asked at previous meetings if the teachers need money for anything. Someone mentioned flexible seating would be nice, but no specifics were given or an amount requested.
 - It's a concern that 5th grade parents are donating money that is not being spent on the current year.
 - The PTO bought shirts for the 5th graders last year.
 - PTO in the past has thrown a graduation party at the end of the year. Covid forced it to be outside, but it's still outside, so there is not a lot we can do.
- Daddy Daughter dance is a self funded event – ticket costs pays for event and hope to have profit.
- Why are room parents getting donations from parents?
 - Because running a party costs more than \$80/party.
 - Room parent coordinators communicate guidelines with room parents. Parents still plan the party the way they want.
 - Teachers want guidelines to make the room parent adhere to.

- It's a concern from the teachers that the parties aren't equitable and fair for some teachers who have parents donating a lot of time, money and supplies, and some who don't.
- 5th graders not doing camping trip – doing tree runner.
- Mrs. Gendernelle makes a motion that the proposed PTO decrease of fundraisers; Bingo \$500, Penny Wars \$2,500, and Little Caesars \$600 are allotted at this time.
 - Kaie F. seconded.
 - Discussion – none
 - All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- Michelle motions to decrease bingo fundraiser budgeted income by \$500 to \$0–
 - Ashleigh second.
 - Discussion – none.
 - All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- Marie motions to decrease the projected income by \$2,500 for penny wars to \$0.
 - Ashleigh seconds.
 - Discussion – Are we decreasing it, or eliminating it from the budget?
 - We are decreasing the budgeted income. The line item will still be on the budget so if we choose to bring it back at a later date, the amount can be reallocated by a vote.
 - The motion should be remove it from budgeted income.
 - All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- Mrs. Gendernelle motions that the Little Caesars budgeted income of \$800 be decreased by \$600 leaving \$200.
 - Marie seconds.
 - Discussion – none.
 - All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.
- Mrs. Gendernelle stated we cannot vote on decreased expenses since it is not on the agenda.
- Will need to be on the agenda to vote where the decrease in budget will be for January.

Committee Reports:

- Penny wars – tabled for now.
- A Night with Mr. and Mrs. Clause 12/15. Make ornaments and have hot chocolate.
- Chuck E Cheese 12/8.
- New Rink 12/4 6-8pm

- Scoop and Twist

2024

- Bingo Night has been postponed until further notice.
- Penny Wars has been postponed until further notice.
- Daddy daughter dance 2/2 at Shelby Gardens.
- Mother Son night 3/6 at Dave and Busters.
- Bike to school is in Spring.
- Little Caesars pizza in spring has been canceled.
- Scholastic Books May/June.
- Read a thon March.
- Buddies Restaurant Night March 12th.
- Staff Appreciation May 1st or 2nd week.
- Muffins with Mom in May 2024.
- Donuts With Dad in June 2024.
- Mom to Mom tabled until March or April if there are enough volunteers.
- Chuck E Cheese days 1/23 3-9pm, 3/13 11-9pm (Half Day)
- Cutting Edge Open Gym Saturdays 1/13, 2/17, 3/30, 5/18 2-4
- Field Day Fun Day in June.

Ongoing

- Box Tops
- Kids helping kids – December 22 – participating students can wear their favorite holiday hat
- Kroger

Open discussions:

Next Meeting is January 16 @ 7:00 p.m. at Mohawk Elementary.

Katie R motions to end the meeting.

Mrs. Gendernelle seconds.

Meeting adjourned at 5:23 pm

Minutes compiled by Jill Talant PTO Secretary