



PTO Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 19, 2011, Rochester Elementary Library
Present: Mary Sue Crowley, Siobhan Neal, Sue Domas, Liz Steventon

Sue brought the meeting to order and the minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Liz is going to work this summer to get the Rochester School PTO Facebook page up and running. It's a great way to get more exposure. We will have a shortcut on the school website.

The idea of having the PTO meetings every other month was discussed. If we keep our meetings focused we can certainly accomplish what we need to. We would like to ask the members of the PTO List if you have any questions or concerns about having the PTO meetings every other month. If you could contact Liz at justlizpooh@myfairpoint.net or Sue at tsdomas@comcast.net with any questions or concerns that would be helpful. If we don't hear otherwise, we will go with every other month.

Setting up a calendar at the beginning of the school year and layout all of the activities that we plan on having for the whole year in place on the school and the town calendar and have them set. This way we will know exactly what we are doing. Anything that comes along afterward we can take on a case by case basis and if something we find important to add in we can if not, we can put on the list for the following year. Not everything has to be done every year.

May 26 refreshments for the Spring Combined Arts Show. Cake from the Bring a Buddy lunch has been donated from the cafeteria for the refreshments, Claudia and Liz will provide pigs in a blanket, veggies and dip, cheese sticks, the Student Council will also be supplying brownies and cookies. Sue will be donating 3 containers of coffee. Cynthia found out there will be 60 kids and with parents, siblings and such it could be about 150 people.

Mary Sue joined the meeting and she had prior to the meeting met with Gretchen Cotell and signed the paperwork for Circus Smirkus for either the week of October 3-7 or October 24-28. She also checked the school calendar and there aren't any conflicts. Gretchen is applying for a grant from the Vermont Council on the Arts to help pay for this residency.

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Liz will give Mary Sue the information about Market America so we can decide whether to go with it as a fundraiser for the next school year. I will also email Jean White the information to find out if we are a 501C. We will not do the School Mall fundraiser next year and possibly try the Market America program.

The PTO currently has \$619.14 in our bank account. The graduating class has quite a few students and we have a good amount in our account wondering if we could possibly have two scholarships this year. We won't always give two scholarships every year, but since we have a surplus have it available this year. We are asking the Guidance Department for the following criteria: Member of the National Honor Society, Must be college bound, must have completed some community service and show financial need. We are looking for the names and then Claudia, Liz, Sue and Amy will make a decision. We will first ask the officers to make sure they like the idea of having two scholarships this year. The Teacher Advisor will present the PTO Scholarship to the students.

The Rochester PTO is still holding the Community Dance at Pierce Hall on Saturday, May 28. The Face Painting will be held at the Skate Park where other activities are being held for the kids attending. The PTO will not be charged for the table for face painting. The PTO will be paying the Town of Rochester for the use of Pierce Hall and then the proceeds from the dance will go directly to the PTO.

Siobhan Neal is hoping to also have a booth for the Excel Afterschool program at the Community Block Party on May 28. Liz gave Siobhan the Town Clerk's number to contact Joanne McDonnell. They would like to have a booth with summer camp registration information, serve cupcakes, Karl Hubrich will present an open Martial Arts Workshop for about ½ hour and photos of the programs that have been offered.

Admission for the dance is going to be \$8 single, \$10 family. PTO will also be providing refreshments.

Mary Sue mentioned that next year we are free to have sock hops at the school and there won't be a charge. That is in the plans for the next school year. It was also mentioned that either the gym or the lobby's in the high school could be used for the dance. It made the dance a little more intimate.

June 15 is Farm Fling. The PTO is going to hold Face Painting from 3 to 5pm. Excel is asking the PTO to possibly help with clean up which would start at 5pm. Mary Sue was going to ask some kids to participate. So if people are available to help. We are also going to have our PTO Booth up with information.

Siobhan has asked if we would like to have help with our Face Painting at the Block Party. She offered her two new Excel Staff Members, Mal Smith and Rhianna Graham-Frock to assist us. Not sure of our time schedule at the Block Party, but maybe we can split up the time.

The Elementary School use to do Sally Foster increased their cost for fund raising and switched over due to difficult system. The program, Meadow Farms Fundraiser, is a VT Based business. We received a suggestion from a parent of another way to fundraiser. Her niece or nephew had this fundraiser which is basically a letter that states: I, (student's name), promise to do my best work for the school year, for

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Rochester School, and we are asking for a donation of any amount which 100% will go towards the school. This option means we wouldn't have to sell anything. This fundraiser was very successful. Mary Sue's niece also had success doing this at a Christian school.

The Meadow Farms Fundraiser brought in quite a bit of money. This money helps fund most of the elementary field trips. Sue will contact Faye Severy to find out how much money is raised through this fundraiser. Also to weigh the option to straight donation letter and if we could raise the same kind of money like Meadow Farms. It would make a difference so that people were giving 100% and not a percentage and then having items they don't use to help the school. School Mall was held as a fundraiser because we can get funds as people can shop at merchants online that are listed on their website.

Bring a Buddy to Lunch was very successful. **Job Well Done to Claudia Sherwin on all of her hard work.** Kristi said that she fed 75 more people. Mary Sue asked our opinions to having Bring a Buddy on the same day as the Elementary Play. The Bring a Buddy date was picked originally first. Next Mary Sue checked with the softball teams regarding when they didn't have a game to have the Elementary Play. It was the same date as Bring a Buddy hence they were on the same day. The opinion was that it was too much in one day and we also had relatives from out of town mention that it was great to be able to attend both functions. There was also a family that said they couldn't spend the gas money to attend both functions. For next year plan the Bring a Buddy maybe could be early in March or even earlier around Thanksgiving. The parents commented how they enjoyed it. The lasagna was wonderful. A traditional as well as a vegetarian lasagna was served. The PTO also has left over cake that will be used for the Spring Art Festival Reception on May 26.

Siobhan would like to have a Family Night in conjunction with Jen Kennett and the Garden Club and the aim is to get some stepping stones and paint and write out family trees, leave them to dry and then lacquer them. Use them as a part in the garden. Garden Club is designing a sign "Our Family Garden" and on the night paint the stones and on the other sign facing the road paint a tree and have people wearing gloves and put their hand prints on the greenhouse. It would go along with a performance of some kind as well as refreshments. Jen Kennett is checking with Cari Burkhart. The date for this would be the first Wednesday of June and the rain date of the following Friday. The PTO was asked if we would like to be involved. Siobhan will get back to us with the exact date and more information.

Mary Sue mentioned that a PTO table be there, but look for volunteers. Mary Sue mentioned what she suggested in Barre Town for the PTO. Have a list of our PTO programs to be offered for the school year and then have people volunteer for whichever program they were interested. Some parents haven't been able to attend meetings, but do want to be involved and this is a good way to get more parents involved.

June 17 is the last day of school which is a half day for the students and they will be done at noon.

Liz shared with everyone that this was a great PTO year and the group shared the same feeling.

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*******Things we need feedback on from our PTO members.*******

- 1) We would like to have the PTO meetings every other month starting at the beginning of the new school year. If you could contact Liz at justlizpooh@myfairpoint.net or Sue at tsdomas@comcast.net with any questions or concerns that would be helpful. If we don't hear otherwise, we will go with every other month.
- 2) Refreshments are needed on Thursday, May 26 for the Arts Council Combined Arts Show as well as the Community Dance on Saturday, May 28. Contact Liz Steventon at 767-4327 or email at justlizpooh@myfairpoint.net as soon as possible with what you can provide.

Thank you very much for your assistance.