

Meeting Times, Attendance and Scheduling:

- The first PTO meeting of the 2011-2012 school year was called to order by Co-Presidents, Tammy O'Keefe and Lauren Hitchman, at 7:02 PM and adjourned at 8:37 PM.
- In attendance were PTO officers, committee members, teachers and concerned parents
- The next meeting will be held Tuesday October 11 at 7:00 PM
- Officers introduced themselves. Michelle Thomas is Secretary but could not attend so Penny Xifaras Jones took notes on her behalf.

Agenda Item 1 – Principal's Report:

- Dr. Sidell could not attend tonight's message but sent a note to communicate the following:
- **Thank You** – extended to volunteers for the Hoover Garden, painting the library, building of the shed and PTO for the new Hoover rug and library chairs.
- **Recycling** – Mary Beth Calnan from Melrose DPW came to talk about different recycling initiatives. Schools are required to recycle. Mary Beth entered us into a **national paper recycling contest** which will run from the middle of October to the middle of November. She will send her results. Student and staff numbers are taken into account (so we are not penalized for being a smaller school). **Trex recycling contest**. Each school has two bins where they collect plastic #2 and #4 grocery and newspaper bags, Ziploc bags etc. When they get filled take it to Shaws. Shaws has not been as supportive as we needed them to be in the past however this year the store has a new initiative to do recycling so are now signed on to take and recycle the bags. Take the bag into the concierge. They have signed on to take and recycle the bags. **Penny Xifaras Jones** was the coordinator for the Trex contest at the Hoover during the last two years wants to transition this job to someone else. She **is looking for volunteers to help**. The contest is to win a new Trex bench. **Question:** Can the per-student capita be considered for bench? Mary Beth will ask the person who coordinates TREX. We have a **new recycling truck** and you don't have to cut cardboard anymore! As long as you bundle it. **Martha Grover is now the City's new Energy Efficiency Manager**. She is going to get into the school to discuss curriculum with the teachers to fold in energy efficiency. Also Mary Beth wants to fold in Martha's work with her recycling initiatives – turn off the lights and computers. PTO – if you are looking to do an enrichment program or theme, there is **Green Night Out** and it is an initiative to be an energy efficient organization. The event has activities and games and we can fold into our ice cream social or other social events. Mary Beth sent out for a kit and is volunteering to help. Run by a PTO group.

Agenda Item 2 – President's Report:

- **Hoover Hoedown** is 9/23. Flyers will go home in backpacks tomorrow.
- Welcome packet went out today and it contains information about multiple volunteer opportunities:
 - Traffic coordinator
 - Outreach coordinator – heads up the food drives, coats for kids etc. It is a once a week commitment to pick up and deliver coats, food to the local pantry. **Cindy Casey** is currently the coordinator and she is looking for someone to co-chair with her.
 - PTO Citywide representative (urgent need) – meets once a month the first Tuesday at 9 AM at the Superintendent's office and then they come back and report back to this meeting.
 - Lunch coordinators and lunch volunteers
- . Accepting co-president candidates for next year (2012/2013). This is a two year commitment.

Agenda Item 3 – Vice President’s Report:

- **Room Parents** - In your welcome packets you will see a sheet for room parents. This volunteer position acts as a liaison between the teacher and class families for things such as activities and celebrations. The commitment is not huge but there are certain peaks during the year. A lot of times the teachers are looking for help for the parent to send an email communication to the families. Typically each class has 2 room parents and 1 alternate.

Agenda Item 4 – Committees:

- **Library** – Coordinators are **asking for volunteers** for the library. The library is run by volunteers. We have only one librarian who comes once a week and she comes down for 1 and 3rd grade. But on Thursdays and Fridays classes come in for half an hour. Need two volunteers for every class to check in and check out books and read a book to the library. This is about a once a month commitment and very enjoyable. We are currently in the process of **getting gently used laptops**. We will have a beefed up laptop for desk. Not sure when we are opening yet because we are waiting for the computers to come in. We buy books every year. Kathy automated us starting 2002. **Question** - What about gently used books? Karen said that the **library is happy to take donations** and if they cannot they can either donate it to a classroom or give it back to the donor. The library just needs to know who is donating the book(s) and what to do with the book if the library can't take it. Accept many series books. The library with its **new paint job looks fantastic!**
- **Enrichment** – Having a kick off at the end of September and will email teachers to find out what they want.
- **Ways and Means** – Donna George could not be here but sent communication that for the **fall fundraiser** we are not doing a Golf Tournament. Instead we will do an **adult social** tentatively scheduled for October 29 (some parents had concern that this might conflict with Halloween activities). Event will be on Chipman Ave VFW and have hors d'oeuvres with cash bar. **Question:** How much will the tickets cost? We want the cost to be low and it will somewhat depend on what Chipman Ave will charge or give for a deal. We will collect **sponsorship for tables**. Contact Donna George for any donations for auctions, raffles, or volunteer to get donations.
- **Communications** - eNotices go out once a week. Need to email hooverhighlights@gmail.com and let them know what you want to communicate and do so by the deadline of 5:00 PM Sunday night. Chris VanderRhodes is head of eNotices and is **looking for volunteers**.
- **Playground** – There are **safety issues** that we addressed to Mrs. Bell and she is going to give a date on when the city will fix them. **Question** - Did the city send more wood chips? No. Susan Maher will follow up and send a note to Mayor Dolan. Mrs. Bell (parks coordinator) said that the city will do the irrigation so we get a field. We still want to **paint the black top** for more organized games to synchronize with the school's **Responsive** program. Our playground is run by the city – the school doesn't own the playground (that is not the case with the other schools).

Agenda Item 5 – Treasurer’s Report:

- See separate report posted on PTO page.
- **There is a new Treasury Page**. It is a sub link to the PTO page. It gives information on some new initiatives we are doing in order to continue to strive to automate and become more efficient. We purchased new online PTO financial software that any member of the community can access. We have new forms for people to use when asking for a reimbursement, requesting a cash box and change, doing a raffle, etc. This is time sensitive information sometimes because the treasurer needs some advanced notice and other times because we might have to report

Melrose Public Schools – Hoover PTO Meeting Minutes For Tuesday September 6, 2011

earnings for raffles for example within a short period of time. We are also going to leverage off of PayPal to cast a wider net and offer another way to pay for things such as donations and events. This will hopefully increase participation in some of our fund raisers. **Question:** Is there a fee for PayPal? Yes, it is about 2.5%. For the Annual Fund and Hoover 50/50 we are eating the fee because we are hoping to encourage people to make online payments. For ticketed events we will charge the fee to the person buying a ticket. Depending on what the adoption of using PayPal will be we can re-assess if we should charge the fee for things like donations.

- **Budget** - Explained that we have taken last year’s categories and split them more to have a little more detail and transparency. We have Income, Expenses, and Non PTO funds (which are neutral funds held by the PTO on behalf of another group). Proposed the budget. One issue is that we voted to spend over \$12000 last spring but don’t have the receipts yet and it is now carry over and committed in this year’s budget. The following is a summary of changes and questions:

- **Technology funds** – list the \$9297.21 as carryover funds in the budget but remove the \$8000 – we won’t vote on the \$8000 expense for next spring until we actually have a technology fundraiser. Remove the projected \$8000 income for technology funds. We will add in when we know we are actually doing this again this school year.
- **Charity / Community outreach** – Add \$775 to make a total of \$1000 total in the even that there is a real need for our help.
- **Updated Budget** with above changes are:

	10-11 Actual	11-12 Proposed
Total Income	\$36,845.86	\$16,850.00
Total Expenses	\$29,589.41	\$39,557.97
Total Budget Deficit / Surplus		(\$3,436.81)

- **Motion raised, seconded and voted in to approve the Melrose Hoover PTO 2011-2012 Budget.**
- **Follow up items –**
 - Penny to follow up with Dr. Sidell to ask if all the Teaching Aids have been spent. We still don’t have all the receipts.
 - Tammy / Lauren to ask Dr. Sidell if his funds can pay for the custodian and other fees for the Holiday Concert.
 - Penny to follow up with Dr. Sidell to find out if Science and Math items mentioned as being funded by the PTO are in the current budget – we are not sure. If not, it would have to be voted on.
 - Tammy / Lauren to ask eNotice to be sent out with the dates for Box Top submissions because we are about to send soon and want all box tops in to get \$ in the first submission.

Miscellaneous – Items not on the Agenda

- **Ideas for Fundraising or other initiatives for Fundraising not yet in plan:**
 - **Coupon books** – we won’t put any money into it this year. We can sell these books and it is transferrable to any state (so you can buy a book for someone who does not live nearby). Parent indicates if they want to buy a book – we are not sending books home. If we sell as many as 250 books we are eligible for 50% of their cost (\$30).
 - **Whale watch** – the boats are out of Gloucester. Normal cost is \$40 per ticket but the whale watch would charge the PTO \$10 a ticket. PTO can set a price of \$20 a ticket for example and make money. And it is flexible - the family can go on any day they want.
 - Veteran parents know that for 5th grade eCamp there is a lot of fundraising that goes on. The kids do a lot of fundraisers. Considering rolling out something new this year where starting with first grade, have each class do their own fundraiser for ecamp. They would have their own line in the budget and each year their fund can grow. We therefore try to control the timing of different fundraisers and hopefully make it easier on families so they are not taxed. **Ecamp is environmental camp** spent in Ocean Park, Maine. It is 5 days long and run by

Melrose Public Schools – Hoover PTO Meeting Minutes For Tuesday September 6, 2011

the camp and some teachers go with the fifth graders. There is field work. Students spend Monday through Thursday in a dormitory / campus. Ecamp has different locations. The 5th grade has to decide how they want to pay for the students. Either fundraising or write a check.

- Need **Regarding Art** volunteers – Annie Shippee is the coordinator. We have several units, a few for each grades 2 – 5. At the end of the year we do a field trip for the 5th grade to the Museum of Fine Arts. We will put more information in the eNotice.
- **Family Science Night** – There is a new group called the Melrose Education Coalition. They scheduled with the mayor's office a science afternoon where we showcase all science related activities that go on with families in Melrose. The City is paying for it, not the PTO's but will invite all groups to have booths. **November 19th**.