

## GENERAL PTA MEETING – MINUTES

September 18, 2013 – 6 pm – Auditorium

Minutes approved: October 16, 2013

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm by Ashley Duncan

Quorum present (please see sign in sheets)

Executive Board members present: Ashley Duncan, Laetitia Damiani, Caroline Rouine Danielle Solomon, Kristin Moshonas , Charlie Collins, Mame McCutchin, Marjorie Zarin

Minutes from last meeting on June 19, 2013 were passed out and approved.

### I. President's Report – Ashley Duncan

#### A. PTA Communication and Participation

1. Purple Sheet. PTA information is delivered on purple handouts sent home in students' backpacks.
2. Many volunteer opportunities throughout the year, including Taste of the Seaport, Book Fair, Movie Nights, Pie Sales, Spring Gala, Direct Appeal, Wellness Committee among others. Ashley asked parents to return form at bottom of agenda or email her to volunteer for Taste of Seaport. No amount of time too small.
3. Parents should let PTA know if they have talents or resources to contribute to PTA events.
4. Check school website ([sprucstreenc.org](http://sprucstreenc.org)) often. Changes are coming such as the addition of class pages.

#### B. Halloween/Fall Festival. Kristin Moshonas and Danielle Solomon requested and received budget approval for a new Halloween/Fall Festival event to be held in last October at Spruce gym or roof.

1. Objectives of event are to foster a sense of community early in the year, give kids an opportunity wear their costumes, and raise funds.
2. Will include bouncy house, games, crafts, food.
3. Kristin and Danielle asked for votes about which day of week to do it – a week day or a Friday. More people voted for a Friday.
4. \$2,500 event budget was unanimously approved.

#### C. Parents should voice their complaints about Beekman Street noise.

- D. Composting. Yasmeen Hoosenally shared the news that Spruce is part of the NYC composting public school pilot program
  - 1. Two years ago PTA funded elimination of Styrofoam trays and replaced them with compostable trays. Under this program, the trays can now be composted.
  - 2. Julie Lam is the Spruce sustainability coordinator. Spruce needs a “green” team. Parents should let Ashley know if they are interested in participating in “green” issues.
- E. Green Products. Raised topic of requesting only “green products” on Spruce supply list. Too late to change this year’s supply list, but if parents buy more products throughout the year, please make them “green.” Ashley distributed handouts compiled by parent Anna Grossman. PTA will post the information on school website.

## II. Treasurer’s Report – Charlie Collins

- A. There is \$217K in the PTA Chase bank accounts. The approved 2013/2014 budget is \$284K. Through fundraising, we will strive to end the school year with \$284K available for the following year.
- B. Charlie passed out copies 2013-2014 Approved Budget and the 2012/2013 Budgets. See attached.
- C. Reminders on how to help raise funds for Spruce
  - 1. Use Amazon link on Spruce website to earn funds for school.
  - 2. Donations to Spruce are tax deductible. Individuals donating should see if their company has matching.
- D. Direct Appeal - Caroline Philpot is leading the Direct Appeal Campaign. She spoke:
  - 1. Spruce PTA spends roughly \$775 per child. Examples of what PTA funds are used for: dot books, librarian.
  - 2. Parents will be receiving a flyer in the next few weeks soliciting contributions. Contributions can be made via Spruce website.
  - 3. As needed, Direct Appeal will help parents get their company match.

## III. Principal’s Report – Nancy Harris

- A. Welcome Back and Physical Space
  - 1. About 370 children in the school. Many families have more than one child in the school.
  - 2. Plaza space crunch; a lot of people in the building; necessitates things like phased arrival times.

3. Roof play yard soft surface is half done; was scheduled to be completed before school started. Was funded by a \$95,000 grant the school received last year. Students have been playing in the gym so far this year.

B. Lunch and Recess

1. Clubs are starting for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> graders to participate in optionally in lieu of recess.
  - a. Laura – Library
  - b. Eric – Music
  - c. Al – Science
2. Parent asked if lunch schedule could rotate during the year because child not hungry at 11:00. Nancy said, maybe, but not right now while we are getting used to the routine.
3. Parents asked why the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade was split between two lunch sessions and could the children be put together for recess. Nancy said the decision was made thoughtfully because of scheduling and shared space with the other school.

C. Communication Changes. Victoria at echalk has been helping Julie with the website.

1. Teacher email addresses
2. Twitter feed from Nancy; will also be posted on website
3. Information about workshops and curriculum morning will be posted
4. Family handbook going live 9/20/13

D. Data Points about Spruce – details public and available on DOE website

1. Results of the standardized test 3<sup>rd</sup> graders took last year – Spruce was at the District 2 average.
2. Learning Environment Survey

E. 33 Beekman Construction Site. Location of future 33 story Pace dormitory.

1. There have been daily noisy protests due to use of non-union labor. Pace reached deal to get rid of the whistles and noise making. The protesters were quiet today.
2. Potential congestion issue as Spruce uses that side of the street for fire drills.

F. Comments and Questions

1. SLT (School Leadership Team) Next meeting is Tuesday, 9/24/13, 3:15 – 4:15 in the Library. Full year schedule to be posted on website. SLT deals with the learning environment; teachers attend meetings. Parents are welcome; parents need to be added to the agenda in advance if they want to speak

2. Parent noted that no smoking signs are missing from the plaza. Nancy will have signs replaced.

3. Overview of new staff :

- a. Dan – pre-K
- b. Jess – 1<sup>st</sup>
- c. Joyce and Katia, Nicole, Tatya (maternity leave replacement) – 2<sup>nd</sup>
- d. Nancy – 4<sup>th</sup>
- e. Eric – music
- f. Claire – pre-K – 2<sup>nd</sup> – Art (1 day per week)
- g. Michael – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> – Art (1 day per week)
- h. Kevin – out for personal reason; Tyler has been taking over
  
- i. Parent asked why 2<sup>nd</sup> grade got all new teachers? Nancy answered that two of the teachers had Spruce experience and Joyce taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade before.

G. Safety Presentation. Nancy presented a Power Point document about school safety procedures and answered parent questions. This presentation to be distributed via backpack after the meeting.

1. Nancy commented about the garage opening. It is owned by the hospital. Students and families should act as if it is open; stay off the chains, etc.
2. Nancy would be happy to have parent representatives participate in communicating with the garage parties on safety. Parents should email Ashley if interested.

IV. Additional Comments – Ashley Duncan

A. PTA meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month. Next one is 8:50 AM

B. Elections will take place at the next PTA meeting to fill two open Members At Large positions. Candidates need to be parents new to Spruce

V. Q & A - No questions

VI. Adjourn - Meeting adjourned by Ashley