

# MINUTES

## New York Harbor School PTA Minutes

Tuesday, October 16, 2018, @ 6:00 pm | *Meeting called to order by* Lissa Wolfe

### In Attendance

**Board Members:** Nan Richardson Co-President; Lissa Wolfe, Co-President; Theresa Jordan, Vice-President; Marge Richards, Recording Secretary; Bill Seery & Penelope Clarke-May, Marine Science Parents; Liana Huth, Professional Diving Parent; Lisa Edstrom, MST Parent; Sunita Woodcheke, Vessel Operations

**Absent Board Members:** Michele Lardou, Treasurer; Georgia Stefanidis, Co-Fundraising Chair; Nikita Huggins, Co-Fundraising Chair; Kelly Vilar, Aquaculture Parent; Susan Tobias, Aquaculture Parent; Ellen Dobbyn-Blackmore, Marine Policy Parent; Raquel Morales, MST; Nancy Usiatynsk, Ocean Engineering Parent; Susan Bailey, Ocean Engineering Parent; Marjike Briggs, Professional Diving Parent; Sabita Arjne, Vessel Operations; Kathleen Daniel, Freshman Parent; Pam Bailey, Senior Parent; Schanequa Knight, Senior Parent

**Harbor Leadership:** Dr. Jeff Chetirko, Principal; Ronni Ettinger, Parent Coordinator

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes were read from the September meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes. Minutes approved by a unanimous vote.

### Board

Lissa W. Welcomed parents and introduced the Board and NYHS staff.

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurers Report (read by Lissa Wolfe –as the Treasurer had a family emergency and was absent)

- ✚ \$33,090 in the bank. PTA owes \$1,200 to the school for Indock
- ✚ All-Hands-on-Deck donations essential. Donate what you can. We would like \$250 per family. Can be donated in one lump sum or in increments
- ✚ We keep ourselves afloat with AHOD commitments and other income sources. To date in the last month, we have earned \$4,860 from All-Hands-on-Deck, Harvest Fest, and sales of PTA merchandise.
- ✚ Do not have the exact amount of expenditures, but it is approximately \$500

### Guest Speaker

Guest speaker from the NYC School Construction Authority (NYCSCA) Michael Mirasola reported:

- ✚ There is no money for the pool; however if we can find the money that changes everything
- ✚ Expansion – preliminary plans –The design for the classroom building is completed. Now SCA is trying to find funds for the classroom building . Waiting for capital funding from the City.
- ✚ Gymnasium – there is funding through the Mayor's initiative and SCA is scoping the area for a place to put the building. Presently looking at the courtyard in front of our current building.
- ✚ No time frame was given for either the classrooms or the gym
- ✚ Parent concerns included:

Is the space large enough? Answer: "Engineers will decide."

Is there going to be pushback since it is a landmark area? Answer: "NYCSCA does not answer to the Landmark Preservation Society. We have to complete scoping, then a decision will be made."

- Zipline and Glamping on the Island is not necessary and should not get in the way of our needs for an aquatic center on the island in that location
- Building a gym in the courtyard is not expansion, it's just using our present footprint
- If we raise the funds for the pool does that guarantee that it will be built? Answer: "Yes, but it needs a space and he doesn't know the politics of getting the space needed"
- ✚ Parents do not accept building the gym in the courtyard as the only option
- ✚ Parents next steps:
  - We need to work on getting firm commitments from TGI for additional space in the Hospital building or glamping area or both
  - We need to work on getting commitments from government officials that squarely address our future long term
  - We need to work on getting money—8M more—though Bill Seery objected that without a space no funder will take us seriously and put 5 million on the table for something that will never happen without a site – "it's all just smoke."
- ✚ Theresa Jordan asked about using a container pool. Mirasola said while the NYSCA have never built a container pool, and before that happens a feasibility study would have to be done, but that yes, if it's a school facility SCA would likely need to be involved in building it. One parent said, "Though now the kids are jumping off docks and oyster reefs into NY Bay and the DOE isn't overly worried about that safety issue."

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## SLT Committee Report

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Nan Richardson reported that meeting was moved to Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup> because of the school's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. So SLT members have nothing yet to report.

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## Committee Reports

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**Fundraising** – nothing to report

**Communications** – PTA has a blog. Please get the word out re our blog and Facebook. Lissa need help getting information out. We need graphic artists and other tech people.

The **School Expansion Committee** – Last year at this time and all through June we were told by the SCA that the funding for the new classroom building 555 **would be included** in the funding for the gym. Now a full year later we are told by SCA that *more* money is needed for classrooms. This is new information to us and a real disappointment. In fact, it reads as a delay tactic. Further, the confirmation of what we heard as rumor in June that the courtyard was the only place for the gym (relayed by Theresa Case at the Oyster Classic June 10, but a rumor Jeff had no knowledge of) is upsetting also—firstly parents and students do not want a lightless school and a gym planted in front would block all southern light) and mostly because if the courtyard is now the only location and then Landmarks shoots it down. (as our sources say it must and will), the DOE/SCA can shrug and say, "Well we tried, but TGI wouldn't give us any space—so, too bad" -- and walk away and we will **NEVER get a gym. We cannot allow that to happen!** TGI has plenty of space and *they must be convinced to share some with us.*

**ACTION ITEMS:** Use all available means to convince TGI to open up the spaces on west and east of the school to us and not give them to a tech company for short-term gain. Put major energy into raising private monies and get corporate sponsors to force the dial to move. Get the Chancellor and the Mayor to come and understand why we need this space. All these forces will overcome the entropy. Heave HO!

The **Sustainability, Garden and Wellness Committee** is currently writing grants for 4 new water bottle fountains. There is a meeting on Tuesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3:30 you are welcome to attend with the new school nurse Helaine Winograd,

Facilities Director Jim Malone. Coach Sammarco, Compost Club director Rob Markuske, and Garden Director Leslie Chow as well as students to discuss ways to wellness and sustainability for the school.

We have 10 goals

- 1) to get the Alternative menu in the school so the kids and staff eat better, plus advocate for upgrades to afterschool food snacks
- 2) to include produce in students and staff lunches from our own school garden
- 3) to promote healthy and nutritious snacks and encourage fitness-oriented activity
- 4) to get 4 water bottle fountains and ban single-use plastic bottles and bags from Harbor's premises
- 5) to encourage zero waste recycling and composting efforts
- 6) to remove the three (broken for months now) vending machines from the Mess Hall and possibly substitute our own machine stocked by the PTA or school, TBD, with healthier snack items.
- 7) to get a microwave so kids bringing home lunch (in winter especially) can warm it up.
- 8) Every student to learn CPR by June **and offer other learning opportunities on health (and this could be anything from sex ed, to drugs to, nutrition to cooking) to the students**
- 9) to return to real plates and flatware in the cafeteria to reduce waste
- 10) to convince the school to set up mandatory participation for one-week recycling/composting for every incoming freshman, thus growing up kids who do right for the planet/the school

**SAIL Program** – presented by senior student Liam – SAIL is a student mentorship program led by senior students for freshman. Seniors want to help freshman navigate through the first year of high school to help make it more manageable.

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## Principal's Report

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- ✚ The Boroughwide High School fair was last weekend. We went to the fairs hosted in Brooklyn, Staten Island and Manhattan
- ✚ Making Strides walk was on Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. We raised \$1,100.
- ✚ College trip for seniors is coming up. Chaperones are Ronni, Jessica and Jeff. We are taking 40-50 seniors to **Morrisville and Cobble** on Friday and Albany on Saturday. There will be another college trip for seniors immediately following. Colleges trip for juniors are planned for next Spring.
- ✚ There is a PPO visit. Superintendent is doing a walk-through of the school.
- ✚ First marking period ends this Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. Report cards will be mailed next Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter grades do not go on student transcripts; only the final grade appears
- ✚ Juniors are going on a trip to the Maritime Careers Fair. This is part of work base learning. It gives students the opportunity to see careers that are available. CTE teachers put this together with 11<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. CTE and 11<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will chaperone the trip.
- ✚ Next Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> is senior On Boarding. The I-9 needs to be filled out if they are planning to get a paid internship. There will be another date for juniors.
- ✚ There is a college trip next Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup> to Stonybrook
- ✚ Spirit week is the week of October 29<sup>th</sup>
- ✚ During the 15 Anniversary Celebration Jeff signed a Memo of Understanding with the Coast Guard and SUNY Maritime. NY Harbor students will be pipelined into these schools
- ✚ Parents are needed for Open Houses to speak to prospective incoming freshman's parents about their concerns. The next Open House dates are: Wednesday, October 24, 2018; Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>; and Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Email Ronni if you can attend any or all of the dates

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## Break out Sessions

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Lisa Edstrom - Signage Break out Group

- ✚ I spoke with one mom and student briefly about the idea of having the Welding Club get involved in making a sign for the island when you get off the ferry. Then another parent approached me about concerns with signs that might lead an undesirable stranger to our kids. Finally, I spoke with Jeff, who also had concerns about safety

as well as what DOE Legal will permit. We spoke about creating a map that could be given to people who sign in at the ferry terminal on the Manhattan side so that they know where to go if it is their first visit. While I realize that this does not increase our visibility on the island, I too share some concerns about safety with people carrying guns into schools all too often, and the openness of our campus.

✚ Emma Acker - Freshman Parent Group

I led the Freshman Parent group in a discussion about two main issues— lockers for the Freshman class and clear, concise information sheet outlining the 7 CTE options the kids will be choosing to come Sophomore year.

Lockers: The Freshman are the only class without lockers. Kids have to carry jackets, rainboots and after-school activity gear etc. to every class. (winter coming outerwear will only get more cumbersome.) A coatroom idea was brought up, but there are no spare rooms for this, plus access for all Freshman, and tidiness would become an issue quickly. Is there space for open cubbies for Freshmen to stow boots, jackets, heavy books? The shelf units could be split up in different sections of the school (i.e. not all clumped in one space) to break up crowding. Action item: Emma to look into types/cost of shelf units, space options at school to put shelves.

CTE Information: Freshman parents are feeling unclear about what the CTE options are for their kids. The website provides some great information, but it is found on different pages/blogs to different degrees of depth. Rumors have swirled about what you need to do to get into different CTEs etc. Parents would like a concise summary of the different CTEs and what (if anything) is required to get into each etc. Action item: Emma to email CTE field teacher Sean Lynch to see if he can provide this easily.

Finally, we also briefly discussed a Freshman social event for parents to meet each other, their kids welcome too, bowling etc. More to come on that.

✚ Nan Richardson - led the SAT Prep group with Pete Woodcheke, Barbara Behren, Desiree Afre, Marion Romero, Adrienne Murray and others and we agreed to form a task force to find out how 15 other schools fund SAT prep for all and bring back information and recommendations. We are concerned about the lack of equity in a program that some of our parents can't afford) though we have reduced its advertised cost by a third---in large part because Jeff agreed to take on the proctoring but also because we bargained hard for a discount. The PTA sadly cannot afford to subsidize. Though we had 4 incredibly generous parents come forward to help with 4 scholarships this time, we cannot count on that each term. But we think demand for prep will grow as the numbers of the next two huge classes are worrisome. Jessica performed a miracle getting 100% of graduates into college last year but this class of 2019 is 25% bigger and the two classes following 2020 and 2021 are 60% bigger- she is only one woman (though a super one!) and she will need serious help to pull off the same superlative outcome. We will have a report on how others cope by the next meeting.

✚ Lissa Wolfe - led a discussion about a possible rowing race/fundraiser/community day on and around Governor's Island. There was interest, but we need to get our teachers and boathouse on board, as well as Governor's Island. This would be in the Spring, in addition to other Spring events -like Spring Tide and the Oyster Classic.

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## Parent Coordinator Report

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Senior parents 1<sup>st</sup> deposit for Senior Dues is due on Wednesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. \$50 n cash, check, or money order. Checks or money orders to be made out to New York Harbor School

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## Next Meeting

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Tuesday, November 20, 2018 is a Thanksgiving themed potluck

Location: 81 New St. 5<sup>th</sup>-floor Cafeteria @ 6:00 pm

Motion to adjourn was made at 8:00 pm and passed unanimously.