**Minutes of the Board Meeting of the JSSPVA**

**March 15, 2016**

**In attendance:** Julie Kalainov, Kath Lyman, Adrienne Weisenberger, Michele Bacik, Kristin Jungbluth, Emily Tzur, Stephanie Henry, Donna Brunso, Angie Veber, Brooke Timmerman, Lisa O’Rourke, Kendra Wallace, Melissa Ross, Suzanne Nelson, Sarah Mohr, Carrie Beeman, Chike Erokwu, Chris Guthrie

The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m. by Julie Kalainov, President.

Julie stated that the first order of business was to approve the minutes from the board meeting in February. Kath Lyman motioned to approve the minutes. Lisa O’Rourke seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

Julie invited Chris Guthrie to speak to the board about the Village House.  Chris introduced herself and her family, which includes a 7th grade daughter at Sears and two high school sons.  She is the chair of the Drop In Program and chair of the Village House Task Force.  Chris stated that the Village House is owned by the Kenilworth Park District and is used by Drop In, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, sports teams, and for birthday parties.  It is in need of about $100,000 in repairs.  The committee preference is to start fresh rather than renovate the existing structure.  People wonder why we need the facility when we have the Kenilworth Club, but she explained that some activities should really not take place at the Kenilworth Club.  The task force is going out to constituents to determine the project feasibility.  They are working with the village and Metra to determine building constraints.  The cost of hiring an architect to study the needs of the facility is $10,000.  The committee has received donations from the Park District, Booster Club, and Scouts.  They are requesting $1500 from the JSSPVA to reach their goal of $10,000.  Joseph Sears School has not donated.  Angie Veber asked for the reasoning, and Chris stated that the task force is hoping that the school will contribute down the road but is unsure of what the school needs will be.  Stephanie Henry asked if the water plant might replace the Village House.  Chris mentioned that the community would still require the Village House building for a warming house and sports meetings even if the water plant is repurposed.  Suzanne Nelson said that the Board of Education has participated in many discussions about the Village House.  The BOE and Park District both agree that the building needs to be addressed.  Mindy Kelly is the board representative on this committee.  The Kenilworth Park District feels strongly about maintaining ownership of the building.  One of the most important needs of the school is a lunchroom, and the BOE is exploring that independently.  The BOE is supporting the efforts but not offering financial support at this point.  Julie Kalainov asked if any groups have declined to support the effort.  Rebel Football, Kenilworth Lacrosse, and Drop In are all groups that operate without extra reserves.  Girl Scouts also declined.  Lisa O’Rourke said she the Girl Scouts also operate without extra reserves and likely did not have any funds available to donate.  The structure of the troops is different from Boy Scouts.  The Kenilworth Park District has already contributed.  Suzanne said the board has an interest in establishing official agreements for building use in the future.  There is no formal agreement for Sears to use the building for lunch at this point.  Kath Lyman asked if there is a plan for when the project would take place.  Chris responded that Chip Hackley has been hired as the architect.  They are hoping to have plans on display at the Benefit celebration party on May 14.  The building was previously funded privately through a fundraiser.  Julie asked if the task force has set up a legal fund for the collections, and Chris confirmed that they had.  Stephanie asked for a breakdown in how other groups had donated, and Chris shared the information:

Kenilworth Park District $1000

United Fund $2000

Boy Scouts $1000

Cub Scouts $1500

Sears Booster Club $3000

**Treasurer’s Report / Past Treasurer’s Report**

Michele Bacik reported that we are in good shape and that there are no outstanding issues.  Kristin Jungbluth reported that the audit went smoothly.  It would be great if our organization had more checks and balances, but everything is being documented properly.  Our reserves have been raised since last year.  Julie clarified that our fiscal year end is August 31, so there are occasionally timing issues where some things are prepaid and other expenses come in late.  Kristin is also in the process of filing our tax return and is working on insurance for the benefit.

**President’s Report**

Julie Kalainov started her report by opening up the discussion regarding the Village House project.  Angie Veber raised the concern that the park district is asking the JSSPVA for more money than they have contributed.  Stephanie stated that she thinks that they don’t have the money.  Suzanne said that the park district would not have the funds for this project.  Angie was approached prior to this meeting and said that she does not want to have the park district soliciting for funds at the benefit party.  Michele said that she feels that most parents donate to the JSSPVA with the intention of the funds being spent on their children at Sears school and that we have to be prudent of how we are spending this money.  Kristin said that we could make a token donation for past and future use.  Donna Brunso said that the Sears Booster Club donated because they felt that the sports teams use the facility frequently but that they felt other groups should also participate in supporting the effort.  Adrienne Weisenberger said that we should keep the door open for future use but that we do need a governing body to manage the facilities.  Kath said that going forward, there is a need for more advertising and community feedback.  Lisa stated that the entire community needs to be solicited, not just Sears community.  It was clarified that the JSSPVA will not solicit for Village House funds at the benefit party.  The JSSPVA has $20,000 in special projects fund, and can make the $1500 donation from this account.  Emily Tzur stated that donating is a gesture of goodwill and will keep the door open to request input in the project. Kristin sees plenty of options for spending money contributing to the facility improvements in the future.  Lisa said there is a need for better communication from the park district.  Lisa then moved to donate $1500 to the Village House task force for a feasibility study.  Brooke Timmerman seconded the motion.  All voted in favor, and the motion was approved.  It will come out of the special projects fund.

Julie next brought up the Kenilworth Citizens Advisory Committee (KCAC).  Lisa and Anne Crowley currently represent the PVA on this committee.  The Kenilworth churches, Neighbors of Kenilworth, Garden Club, and other local organizations all have representatives.  They have asked the JSSPVA to come up with two new representatives by September of next year.  There are a few meetings where the representatives interview candidates and decide who will be on the ballot.  They may also have to solicit volunteers to run for positions. Please let Julie know if interested.  The meetings are typically on Sunday evenings.  Julie asked Lisa if guests could attend the upcoming meeting in April.  If a representative cannot attend the meeting, he or she must find a registered voter to attend in his or her place.

Julie thanked Stacy and the nominating committee for their hard work.  The slate will be presented at the board meeting in April.  She also thanked Angie for all of her effort working on the benefit.  Angie has been planning a great party, and the last e-mail push was great.

The last regular board meeting will be held on April 19th.  May 17th is an annual recap meeting, and May 24th is the budget allocation meeting which is mandatory.  Mrs. Wallace solicits teacher wish lists behind the scenes.  Once we see how many funds are available, we go through and see what we are able to support.  Job descriptions will be sent out in April.  Please turn in any receipts as soon as possible for budgeting purposes. In June, the board turns over all information to successors.

**Principal’s Report**

Mrs. Wallace reported that six bikes racks have been installed near the second grade playground.  She thanked Kath Lyman for spearheading this effort.  She also thanked the lost and found committee. Many items have been returned to their owners, and parents are very happy to be reconnected with their belongings.  It’s been a very busy month leading up to spring break.  The 7th graders walked for two hours on Sunday for their Sears Has Heart service project.  They haven't confirmed whether they got all 10 smiles but they had a great sense of energy and community and wonderful dialogue.  The teachers were disappointed not to be able to participate in student experience donations for the benefit this year and are already planning great things for next year.

PARCC testing for 2nd-8th grades will take place during the third week of May.  The state is holding schools responsible for attendance.  Sears was one of two schools on the north shore that did not meet requirements. We are not sure how this will impact us.  The majority of 8th graders did not participate in taking the test. Angie asked if it is advertised that it is optional.  Mrs. Wallace said that the school is in a hard position because they cannot force children to take the test.  Many kids did research and felt like the data wasn’t going to be used for them and that it would not affect the teaching for them.  The testing is done over a three-day period, with no make-ups allowed.  The total testing time is 6.5 hours for elementary and 9 hours for junior high.  Lisa said that the publicity about the test last year might have lead to fewer kids taking it.  Mrs. Wallace said that there was too much uncertainty about the test last year.  Marcy Sellers is putting together information for parents to help share information about the usefulness of the testing.  Stephanie asked if low numbers affect state funding, and Mrs. Wallace said that it could but is still not clear.

**Vice President Reports**

Kath reported the following for the subcommittee chairs:

**Outdoor Classroom**

The Outdoor Classroom committee (Cathy Bell and Katie Nahrwold) is preparing for spring with Lynne Hubert. Plans are being made for spring planting dates with students, continuing Wednesday lunch recess with The Organic Gardener, and June garden days with The Organic Gardener. Lynne is working on having Dennis Downes return to Sears to tell the 2nd grade about our Native American trail marker tree. This is an annual event and an amazing presentation.

Parents will be contacted soon about helping to open the outdoor classroom, cut back prairie, clean and weed, and volunteer weekly to help with maintenance, watering, weeding and more. Summer family volunteers will be needed too.

**Directory**

Mindy Douthit spoke about the online directory.  She is putting together a survey.  Directories were very expensive to produce this year, and input from the parent community is needed to determine if the pocket directories are still desired.  Users can print the directory from the app. The school will be able to give us the PDF file next year, so this will reduce costs in the future.  Kath is looking into options.  Graphic design fees have been the largest expense.  There is the possibility of moving to a pocket directory and a separate school handbook.  The school is required to provide a calendar with all of their dates and policies.  Kath said that the feedback she has heard is that most people are not using the online directory.  Julie said that the app isn’t set up to sort by class, which is a common use.  Mindy said this functionality could be unlocked.  Stephanie said that she thought people would be frustrated by having to print the entire directory.  Kath said have to determine whether we print them and whether we pre-order.  Mindy estimated that the PVA spent $1,000 last year on directories.  Sarah Mohr suggested that if the app supported more sorting, maybe printing would not be so cumbersome. Kristin said you could currently sort by grade. Michele said there are timing issues for the directory expenses and income due to money coming in last year during registration through Infosnap and the expenses are paid later when invoiced.  The consensus was that a survey would be helpful.  Kristin asked if you could purchase an additional district handbook.  Mrs. Wallace said we do not produce many extras.  Addresses, class lists, and calendar are the primary functions of the handbook.  Mindy asked if you could download a spreadsheet with contacts. There is an acceptable use policy that parents sign to prevent using contacts for distribution outside of Sears.  There will be a question on Infosnap allowing some institutionalized Kenilworth organizations to access your information.

**Benefit**

Angie Veber has sent out communications with Q&A and a fact sheet. She also sent a push yesterday highlighting that we are currently at 35% participation.  There will be another update later this week accurately reflecting donors to date.  The team was originally hoping to underwrite the costs of food but is currently looking at a few food trucks.  Beverages and music will be provided.

Mrs. Wallace suggested that a flyer might be a good approach because people are digitally saturated.  Angie said those will go out this week and will be posted in public places.  She asked for feedback on hanging a banner.  They are trying to keep things low key but also looking for ways to motivate people to participate.  A suggestion was made to fill a heart by participation.

**Communications**

Stephanie reported that the next newsletter would be going out tomorrow.  Michele asked if Sears has Heart can go through the newsletter.  The preference is to go through room moms, but the 5th grade project will be open to the whole school so it can go through the newsletter.

**Community Liaison**

Adrienne reported on the BOE meeting the night before. The milk fee was discussed and approved for next year.  The master schedule was also discussed and will be out in April.  Math and English periods will be one hour, and social studies and science will be 40 minutes.  Specials will go back to the old schedule.  Science teachers will work with specials to accommodate extra lab needs such as during dissections. Children have discussed missing morning time with advisors, so that may be reintroduced.  Modified master schedule is hanging in Kendra’s office.  Lunch periods next year will be aligned and 40 minutes long. 5th grade leveling was also discussed.  The school is in the process of a math curriculum renewal.  They are creating a solid document to explain what our curriculum looks like, identify score ranges, and readiness requirements. The Science program will be presented at the April meeting.  They are looking to add another math specialist to the faculty.

The Alliance for Early Childhood has an event on April 19th - The Importance of Being Little at the Winnetka Covenant Church.

Chike also added that the board approved the extension of Mrs. Wallace’s contract for the next two years.

**Enrichment**

Melissa reported for the team.  Grades 6th-8th will be going on a field trip on March 29th.  On April 5th, 8th grade will visit the Holocaust Museum.  On April 6th, 2nd grade has a field trip.  On April 13th, Hi Touch Hi Tech will do an in class presentation for 1st grade.  In June, the Organic Gardener will do workshops in the Outdoor Classroom.   Mrs. Wallace added that she is meeting with them tomorrow.

**FAN**

Donna Brunso reported for Brooke Timmerman, who had to leave early.  There are four events scheduled in April, but fliers are not ready.

**New Trier Liaison**

Donna Brunso reported that there is a concert on April 7th at the Northfield campus, and May 9th is the club forum, which is great for 8th graders.  The New Trier Parent Association is looking for volunteers, and there are many great ways to get involved.  Georgia Heisinger, a former Sears parent, is in charge.

**Nominating**

Stacy Smith reported that the committee is making good progress and will present that slate next month.

**Sears Cafe**

Carrie Beeman reported that Marla Stone had generously donated another $500 this month, totaling $2000 this year.

**Secretary**

Nothing to report.

**World Link**

Sarah Mohr reported for the team.  There are two major upcoming events.  One will be on the next JSSPVA meeting day, so she and Beth will be unable to attend.   They are having an Apache healer on April 19th who will perform a general blessing and talk to students about natural healing and how it fits in with modern medicine.  They are planning to use the MPR.  On May 2nd, there will be an all day event by Urban Gateways. They are bringing in performers for a fandango performance.  There will be two sessions, one for JK-5th, and one for 6th-8th.  Artists will stay and do projects with all grade levels.  Beth and Sarah will need parent volunteers on May 2nd to help with the projects.  There will be four artists with each group but they will need an additional 1-2 parents.  A sign up sheet was passed around, and an online sign up will be generated and distributed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 am.

*Respectfully submitted by:*

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*Julie Kalainov, President*

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*Emily Tzur, Secretary*