

Redwood Day School Parents' Association Minutes for the General Membership Meeting of October 6, 2009

Attending Board members: Margaret Gee, Michelle Wilson, Brenda Kienan, Laura Abrams, Tracey Borst, Mike Riera (Ex-Officio Head of School), Tony Rimal, Andrew Tilin, Tim Boucher, Debbie Degenshein

1) Welcome

Margaret welcomed Board members and other members of RDS and the RDSPA.

2) September 2009 Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the September 14, 2009 RDSPA Executive Board meeting were not approved. Andrew agreed to revise the 9/14/09 minutes to include a substantive conversation on RDS/RDSPA communications policies. Revised minutes will be submitted for approval at the 11/9/09 Executive Board meeting.

3) Review and Discussion of 2009-2010 Budget

Tony reviewed the RDSPA 2009-2010 proposed budget before a general-membership vote was taken for its final approval. He gave a broad summary of the budget's structure — the PA's sources for income (including membership dues, the book faire, and scrip), as well as the funds that the RDSPA contributes to RDS. He explained that the spring auction/gala contributed greatly to the PA's ability to make contributions to the school.

Tony explained that in the current budget, projected RDSPA committee expenses run approximately \$5,650 over projected RDSPA income. In addition, he explained that projected 2009-2010 RDSPA contributions to the school run approximately \$10,000 over projected income from the 2010 spring auction/gala. Tony then explained why the PA would consider approving a budget that runs at a deficit (totaling approximately \$16,000): The PA currently has approximately \$60,000 in savings. Tony described this as a relatively large sum. He said that the RDSPA has more than sufficient cash reserves.

The group entered into a dialogue about the budget. When should the school receive its contributions from the RDSPA Board? How will some of the RDSPA committees spend their budget monies? Would the Governance Committee have sufficient funds to hire an attorney to vet its work? Can the Communications Committee seek additional funds as the school year wears on? Discussions ensued.

Tony motioned for the RDSPA General Membership to approve the 2009-2010 budget, as already approved by the RDSPA Executive Board at the 9/14/09 meeting.

The motion passed.

4) Raising the RDSPA's profile

Tim suggested that the RDSPA consider ways to raise its profile. He said that the Board does a lot of good work that goes relatively unnoticed, and bringing more attention to its work could lead to more volunteerism and fundraising. A discussion followed. Ideas included raising the RDSPA's profile via the Friday Folder, displaying RDSPA signage/banners at events, and the notion of RDSPA "branding" — somehow identifying more documents and events as sponsored by the RDSPA. Many other ideas were introduced/discussed:

- Make PA meetings more engaging/informative, less administrative.
 - Connect kindergarten families with “buddy” families (families with more years spent at RDS) in order to introduce new families to the RDSPA and its work.
 - Find parents of younger students to volunteer, specifically with the hopes of preventing the depletion of volunteers due to families “graduating out” of Redwood Day School.
 - Relieve burden of volunteers who take on disproportionate amounts of responsibility/work.
 - Advertise/promote volunteer duties that might be fit into busy lives—work that can be performed at night, or during the weekend, whether potential volunteers have minutes or hours of time to donate.
 - Specify volunteer tasks so potential volunteers know what to expect when offering to help.
 - Use the Friday Folder to alert more of the community to volunteering needs/options.
 - Invite a different member of the faculty to each RDSPA meeting. The faculty member could relate some of his/her experiences (especially those connected to PA-sponsored experiences, like Summer Study Grants) in order to invigorate the Board/potentially boost RDSPA meeting attendance.
- Members of the Board and other PA members agreed to continue brainstorming on the topic.

5) Miscellaneous Items

- Tracey Borst summarized solidifying plans surrounding the March 6, 2010 gala, which has been christened “Rock the Night Away with Redwood Day.”
- George Horton and Mike Riera discussed increased efforts to “greenify” RDS, including waste monitoring performed at the annual fall picnic and the installation of new recycling bins on campus.

END