

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of Sequoia Parents Club, December 7, 2023 @ 7:00pm**

**ROLE CALL**

# **The following officers were present**

* Jessica Helms – VP
* Kristy Botti – Treasurer 1
* Kevin Buchanan – Treasurer 2
* Jenny Weiss –VP
* Christina Frakes – Secretary
* Joy Finn – Secretary

# **The following Board Members were present**

* Patrick Jackson
* Laura Montenegro - ZOOM
* Jen Barsuglia
* Jennifer Boones
* Josh Eaton
* Erin Agius - ZOOM
* Anne Rhodes
* Melissa Warren
* Joanne Ngo
* Jack Ayers – ZOOM
* Amy Ayers – ZOOM
* Melanie Leef - ZOOM
* Alicia Krouse - ZOOM
* Kelly Johnson
* Nathan Reyes

# **Welcome – Jenny Weis**

Welcome everyone! Thank you for being here this evening. I know this month is a busy time for all. Thank you for being here. There are a couple items I would like to circle back on.

1. Had a nice correspondence with the district on getting new turf. We are meeting soon for final estimate and will get back to you in January.
2. Pride Flag – We will fly the pride flag in May and June. We will have a new flag for when the time comes.

# **Principles Report – Mr. Jackson**

Hello everyone! We recently hosted an assembly for our next character trait – SUPPORT. The assembly was for K-3 and then we visited the upper grades separately. We are doing more group play on the playground including Dodge Ball, Capture the Flag and Castle Ball. The students love Castle Ball! This is helping to build our culture. On 12/19 we will have an all-school Bingo game with lots of prizes.

# **Treasurer Report – Kristy**

Not too much to share this month. There is revenue coming in from Readathon, so far we are at almost $10k. And our expenses are down about $3,300 over PY. Fundraising timing coming in

# **Approve November Minutes – Christina Frakes**

Motion to approve September Minutes – Joyelle Finn – 2nd –Kristy Botti – APPROVED

Square 1 Art Wrap up – Christina Frakes

# **RVEF Stem update – Josh**

In the first week of November, I followed up with Lacey Malone from the Rincon Valley Education Foundation (RVEF) to discuss the future of STEM at Sequoia. Lacey made it clear that hands-on STEM education was not only in jeopardy at Sequoia, but at all the local elementary schools. RVEF has the ability to help fundraise and provide a stop gap solution for all seven of the elementary schools that the RVUSD is not able to fully fund. Supporting STEM is not an a la carte proposition, but instead all ships rise together, and the funds raised by the RVEF will go to support credentialed teachers that build out packets and teach at the schools.

The REUSD has decided not to fund Science Facilitators or Qualified PE Teachers in the 2024-2025 season. The district will continue to invest in one salaried Art Docent position. Historically the district has paid to support two credentialed teachers to design courses and materials and teach STEM to all the local 6th graders. RVEF has stepped in to provide the district an additional $40K a year to assist with building STEM packets regularly to all RVUSD 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. While the younger grades do not have dedicated STEM distribution schedule, those teachers do have the ability to request subject specific materials and lesson plans for their students. RVFE's current mission is to raise funds to fully support the existing three salaried STEM positions listed above.

The largest fundraising event to save STEM in RVUSD (#keepSTEMoncampus) will take place on March 8th, 2024, during the "Evening out for Education" at the Paradice Ridge Winery. The idea has been floated to have an open school- child care site to help parents to be able to attend the Evening out for Education event. RVEF also has STEM nights at the elementary schools and is actively seeking local business sponsors. At one point there was an effort to get support from the Sonoma State teaching program, but that has stalled out at the moment.

Check out RVEF.org for more information or contact events@revf.org.

Disheartening conversation. Need $100K to pay for licensed teachers to support this program because the district will no longer support STEM.

Request from RVEF is for every school to pay a 5% profit from their walkathon since the district cannot

* Joh will circle back with Lacey and RVEF

What is our motto? And does STEM fall into it? – Reminder, our SPC Community agreements are the following - Keep kids at the center, Follow through on agreements, Speak directly to people about issues, Be open to possibilities, Monitor time, Listen to understand, Invite and welcome the contributions of every member, Take risks and be vulnerable learners.

Question from Jack? - Can a % of this money go towards making our campus safer? Jenn – it’s a bigger question because we would need to break it down. There is a line between what is paid for by the district vs. what is paid for by the SPC. There will be a sub-committee created soon and we can get more answers and then reach out to the district.

# **Campus Lunch area and Mural - Laura M.**

All the murals have been spoken for. I have mine sketched out to get mine laid out and done to help inspire the other groups who are going to be doing the other murals. I have been hesitant to create a deadline for this because we have a lot of other projects going on and the holidays are getting close.

Jenny – What do you think about starting somewhere with a date? What about February?

 Laura will follow up with firm agreement at the January meeting. Preliminary date for February. We also need to get all artwork approved by the district. Will create an email chain and then we can all share.

# **Sequoia Drama Society - Dominique & Laura**

Laura – Soft rollout and then a formal rollout of applications. We haven’t received the flood of applications I was hoping for, but we are currently at 16 applications. There may be more in the office.

The kids were really thoughtful about how they answered the questions and are taking it seriously. I spoke to some of the parents of the students who applied, and they are excited. Next step is to reach out to all the teachers to see if they have any students from their class who they might recommend. So far we do not have any 6th graders who have applied, and we would love to have some 6th graders.

Deadline for application is 12/16 and we will start the program on 1/10/24. We would love to have 20 kids in total! Currently working on an agenda and a set of mindful intentions and mantra. Going to keep it a positive and inclusive environment.

If you have a student who is on the fence, we can invite them to come and try a class and see what they think. There is no investment. If they don’t like it, they don’t have to stay. We are also not forcing students to perform until they are ready.

# **Mid-Year Fundraiser – Joy**

Very productive first meeting for the first-year fundraiser.

Date is 2/25/24 from 9:00-11:00am. We will be having the fundraiser at Ausiellos on 5th street in Santa Rosa.

Right now, we are securing the prize donations and hope to have finalized by 12/21/23. So far have secured a family gold lesson, family escape room experience, Bodega house, and now I am looking for 2 more. 1 is going to be a private family experience at Bale of Fun Farm and the other is hopefully a place to stay at a vineyard, and a hot air balloon ride. The other follow-up items will be for basket items.

I sent a sign-up genius for ideas to raffle them off. Goal for this year is to raise $6,000. We also have some ideas on how to monetize this event. One of the things we are going to do differently is promote the event earlier and promote what the prizes will be. The event will sell out. We need fresh families in the mix who are buying the raffle tickets and buying the extras. Also do a pop-up spirit wear shop with remaining items. Joy will check in and see if Leanna at Ausiellos can promote the event as well.

# **Open Forum –**

Melissa – Yearbook – I need photos! Please send! I am creating a flyer and a QR code on the SPC email address. Will reach out to teachers as well. Joy will pin it to our social media.

Jack – Progressive Pride Flag – Question – Can we do something more progressive and create a plaque on our campus and we can show our support every day of the year. I approached the superintendent and Laurie O’Connor and presented the idea to them. So far they have only responded saying “We are looking into it” However they did suggest that it was a great idea. Every student can be acknowledged every day. Through my job, we are at the forefront to promote inclusivity.

Jenny – Not quite sure but guessing that because we are a public school, this would not be a parents club decision. Jack – I understand that, but I am asking if we can promote it and assist in the getting the district to approve this.

Jack – School Safety – After last meeting, there were varying thoughts on whether or not we can fix anything. Article in PD on 11/12 – school violence escalating. Asking these questions again, what are we going to do to create a safe space? Since our last meeting we have had multiple fights among students at many campuses in the city. We need to do something. We should not say no, but say “How can we help”?

Jen B – wrote an email to Emily and Jessica about how we can get a group together. At this point, open forums are great, but I really don’t think that it will be problem solving oriented to fix it. We need to get a committee going and it is a priority of mine. I promise you it is on its way. We are waiting until after this meeting and when Emily is back.

Kelly – What is the goal of the Committee? We only have so much we can do as parents and advocates. Jen – We need to problem solve and the change will not be drastic, but we can chip away at this issue a little bit at a time. We need to bring it to our smaller community. There was a buddy system idea that was brought up. And as much as we complain, we need to be on campus ourselves. We need to be mindful and present. We hear your concerns, and I am letting you know that I will co-lead the charge to work on these issues. Jenny - Once you come up with some productive solutions you can then bring them back to the SPC and we can decide what we can do to help and when we need to bring them to the district.

**Safe Campus Alliance** – It’s a group of parents who are concerned about this. They often meet and discuss things with the superintendent. These meetings are open to the public.

Joy – This is a nationwide issue. If we bring this to our meetings, we should first do our research and find out what other schools and organizations are doing to fix this problem.

Jessica – In conjunction with Square 1 art and other fundraisers/events that work directly with Teachers. Do we have a representative from SPC that can meet with the teachers for staff meetings? Currently staff meetings are every other Thursday from 3:15-4:30pm. Patrick – Yes, that is a great idea. We can have 1 person join the beginning of the teachers meeting and discuss any upcoming SPC news.

Josh – Reminds me of Halloween – next year – sell coffee and hot chocolate to parents before parade!

Jen B – Dudes on Duty – What can we do to create a bigger and better program? I think that Dudes on Duty can really reach the students in a positive way.

Joanne – last meeting Mr. Jackson said that we need more volunteers in general. It is more challenging to commit to a consistent schedule, but if we can instead get a sign-up genius that is ongoing and we can add it to the Weekly Newsletter, add to social and have a QR code for the sign-up genius. Please help out! It takes a village. Patrick – will work with Marissa to get a sign-up genius created for parents to help out throughout the day. Stay tuned!

**Motion to adjourn: Not needed since meeting was later than 8:00pm.**