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**Friends of Essex Elementary School Meeting Minutes**

March 7, 2024

**Attendance:**

In Person: Mandy Beausoleil, Co-President FoEES; Betsy McKeen, Co-President FoEES; Maggie Gleason, VP FoEES; Rachel Russo, Kindergarten teacher; Bradley Cooke, Secretary; Hilary Mattison, Enrichment Coordinator

Zoom: Sheila McAdams, Principal EES; Heather Harrell, Treasurer; Jessica Torcicollo, Grant Writer; Brandy Markey, parent

Maggie Gleason called the meeting to order at 7:32pm

**Welcome/remarks from Mrs. McAdams**

* New principal was chosen! It will be Ms. Kim Provost.
* They are looking for people for the EES Building Committee - info in newsletter - process will get rolling soon.
	+ Qualifications are not necessary – you would be entertaining proposals and selecting project managers and all of the companies that will work with you.
	+ They just want a range of people generally from the community.
	+ Annie Cameron was on the Building Committee for Memorial.
	+ The time commitment would be monthly meetings at least initially.
* Tickets went on sale for the Grade 5 play next week (March 22nd). This is the week after Messy Art Night.

**Hello from Staff Member(s)**

Mrs. Russo is in attendance but has no specific updates to pass on from the staff.

**Approval of last meeting's minutes:** Minutes from Feb 2024 were approved.

**Enrichment Update**

* Big picture - almost everyone has used their money (about $2000 left)
* All grades - need to coordinate with Mass Audubon
* 1st grade - virtual author - Josh Funk (recommended by Cutler)
* 1st and 3rd tried a bunch of new enrichment this year which is great!
* Mrs. Russo said thank you for sending the updates on how much we (staff) have left!
	+ Sounds like sending individual updates is the way to go!
* 2nd grade is going to Madagascar at the North Shore Music Theater next week! Mrs. Russo stated that 2nd graders could possibly use the free Bridgewater State maps.
* 3rd grade is bringing in a new science program - Hillary will see if 4th wants to join as well
* 4th grade is doing some social emotional team building - taking everyone to Legoland
	+ Could they use their money to buy the food on site? (approx $7/head for food)
* Salter buses - if they can’t meet their contract obligations what paperwork do they have? This issue is affecting enrichment!
* 5th grade is doing the Rivers to Sea program
* Hillary asked if the donated microscope got taken care of? Sheila says not yet, but we made a $200 donation to Audubon in exchange for the supplies they donated.
* Money for a sensory table would be $500.
* Even with money for field day set aside we still have $2300 left.

**Grant Writer’s Update**

* Jess T is hoping the Mass Cultural Council funds came in soon
	+ Heather did direct deposit so it should be coming soon
* Re the Spaulding Grants - Essex did very well! Nearly every funding request was granted!
	+ Mr. Yutkins - print making stuff
	+ Mr. Carpenter - Daisy Nell - we did not get this one
	+ Mrs. Dwyer - math materials / fact fluency kits and professional development (no PD approved)
	+ 4th grade - brain bins for morning work
	+ Ms. Silag - library money - $3000 for each school

**Treasurer’s Update**

* Heather didn't pull a new report but will email it out.
* She spoke with Jeff Sulard (he still lives in Essex but no longer works for the town)
	+ He will continue to do pro bono taxes for us.
	+ PTO taxes are due 5.5 months after the fiscal year ends and then he always does an extension which always gets approved.
	+ They are now due in May. He will be working on them this weekend. This will be the 2022 taxes.
* We just got a check from PGTrionic for $1500 for business appeal, Jungle for $213.28 (gear sale) and $100 from Vita Bella Restaurant Night
* Money Market accounts - not paying good interest right now.
	+ CDs have higher interest rates but you are setting aside a time deposit where you don't necessarily withdraw the funds for that time frame. Doesn't make sense until we change over account holders.
	+ Checking account is now a business account (rather than non-profit). A CD is a much better option than a savings account as the interest rate is closer to 2% versus a fraction of a percent.
* Heather will bring to the April meeting: 5 month CD, 9 month etc. a ballpark on the different returns. We can vote on this!
* Beautification fund still has some money - school district is paying to fix runoff and add pressed stone dust for the stumps to sit on (from Steve Buckley)

**Restaurant Night Planning/Read-In Recap**

* Bella Vita was very appreciated and so happy to support, but made just $100
* Read in - mostly little kids (oldest we got was 2nd graders) very sweet and went fine
* April 30 at Woodmans - Rhonda really wants the kids there!

**Staff Appreciation Lunch Planning - March 12**

* Next week - Amanda says the sign up is filling up
* She's on top of teacher appreciation week too

**Messy Art Night Planning - March 14**

* Same night as Jazz concert
* Elle is doing great with sign ups - but probably need to resend it

**STEAM Showcase Planning - March 27**

No updates

**Poetry Night Planning - April 11**

* Changed the date - Ms. Silag says things are going great - it's very chill and completely volunteer
* This is for Grades 4 & 5 only
* $200 funding request: Manchester Memorial will match whatever EES can give ($400 total) to decorate tea lights and small vases with delicate flowers, and snacks/water.
	+ Maggie made a motion to approve and Bradley seconded. Board approved that we fulfill this request.

**Book Fair Planning - May 23-24**

* Hannah from Beverly Book Shop plans to deliver books on 5/22 and conduct the fair on the 23rd and 24th.
* Re Classroom library wish list (like the warm up “April Showers bring May Books”): Ms. Russo noted that it’s a bit daunting to choose books without any lists…can we attached some lists onto the flyer or offer a “Surprise me” option?
	+ Maggie will adjust the flyer and get back to Sheila

**FoEES Parent Survey Planning**

* Betsy made a motion to purchase two gift certificates for $25 to the Mill. Board approved.
* Add this to the survey to entice participation!
* Rachel can post on social media too

**Art Fundraiser Update**

* Betsy had an update via email from Ms Yutkins - she supports an art fundraiser!
* Square One Art vs. OAW vs. Artsonia - need to reach out to both companies
	+ Mandy will poke around and do some research

**Teacher stipend fulfillments update**

Costello - $36.17

**New funding requests**

Poetry funding request (approved above)

**Other**

* Maggie asked Sheila if there is an update on 5th grade end of year planning?
	+ It will cost $5600 for shipbuilding experience
	+ Sheila has a plan she is keeping in her pocket for now…hoping the funding would come through play
	+ The topic of add sales revenue in the 5th grade play program was discussed.
		- It is not designed to build contention but instead to fiscally support the experience
* Hillary noted that the school supplies fundraiser didn't go well but going to supply companies would be too restricted for staff.
	+ Perhaps there is a middle ground where core supplies that the teachers know they need could be pre-ordered and then a pool of money can be gathered to buy all the random one off things.
	+ She will bring specifics next month!

Maggie made a motion to adjourn at 8:53 pm. Betsy seconded.

**Our next meeting will take place on Thursday, April 4th.**

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