

Lanikai Elementary PCS

Minutes of Board Meeting, December 15, 2009

Board Members present:

Louis Saint-Cyr - President, Parent
Ann Pederson - Secretary, Staff
Vicky Villegas - Teacher
Jake Hinz - Treasurer, Parent
David Saucedo - Principal
Paul Vierling - Community

Community members present:

Janny Gibson John Ramos Mrs. Cobeen
Jaime Higgins Peggy Taylor Cindy Ramos
Clarke Fremgen Cj Baehr Kanoe Turner
Craig Rowland Virginia Paea Kioko Kuga
Paul Miney Nadine Ayers Crystal D.
Contessa Cassel Daniel Cassel Kerri Glenn
Lisa Kreitzer Sara Quitt Catherine Antonio
Shannon Walker Brandi K. Stephanie Duffield
Chris Harrison Cecie Judd

(Some names may be misspelled as the signatures were hard to read.)

Board Members Absent

Nora Viarnes - Student Council President
Phil Whitesell - Vice-President, Community

1. Call to Order: The meeting was convened at 6:38 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes: Minutes for the November 18 meeting were approved.

3. Finance Forum Recap:

Louis Saint-Cyr opened the discussion by saying that as we foresee a small deficit for next year (2010-2011), at three separate meetings the Finance Committee has discussed the need to explore options that would generate additional revenue. In October, five task forces were formed and each was charged with exploring a specific option to raise \$20,000. Notes on task force reports and discussion follow.

1. Jaime Higgins presented a report for Scott Ritchie (absent) regarding auctions and raffles. Raffles are illegal in Hawaii. Auctions are still a viable way to earn some cash, however, active auction buyers are more likely to go to local commercial auctions (brick & mortar) or internet auctions. The major obstacle we would face in mounting a local auction is the time and effort needed to collect the items to be donated. If we were to purchase items to auction, we would need a 60-80 percent discount on the purchase price to "approach any true level of profit."
2. David Saucedo explained that we cannot count on raising funds from enrichment programs because the people who teach these classes charge a fee, as would our own teachers if we engaged them to hold enrichment classes on weekends, after school, or during the summer. We do have many software programs and the computer lab available for enrichment and will most surely continue and expand our present enrichment program as we are able. The best we could probably do is to break even. Louis Saint-Cyr asked Mr. Saucedo to prepare a description of how

such a program might work, including the probable costs, probable fees, and number of students who would have to enroll for us to realize a significant profit.

3. Vicky Villegas reported that the PTA Grants Committee has raised \$2500 max in each of the last four years. Several teachers have benefitted from these awards, but the committee has seen a lack of follow through on occasion. Some teachers find themselves too busy to plan for the requirements of the grants, particularly as the awards are rarely available until the following year and teachers understand that they may be placed at another grade level by then. The average grant offers between \$5000 and \$8000. Some have strict guidelines and some are given for almost anything. Mr. Saint-Cyr asked that Mrs. Villegas provide samples of those “almost anything” grant offers and identify the funders of such grants. He also asked Mr. Saucedo to find from HSTA and other sources who is available to be hired to search for and write proposals for grants that may apply to Lanikai. Further discussion included alleged amounts raised by other schools.

Kanoe Turner presented a letter that could be sent to parents requesting donations to the school to fill next year’s gap. The school has approximately 250 families. The board discussed sending out a letter asking parents if they would be willing to donate at specific levels. Various comments: “If we got 50% donating, we’d be lucky.” “This can be easy money.” “If we send out a letter, we need to be specific.” “Maybe between \$50 and \$150.” “The process must be simple and transparent.” “The letter should be about why you’d donate.” Mrs. Cobeen, a parent, said she had been waiting for two months for the school to send her an IRS form to use with a donation. Others said the PTA has those forms. Mr. Saint-Cyr tasked Ms. Turner with developing a brief (1-3 question) survey that could be placed on the Lanikai Elementary School website to get some sense of parental and/or community interest in making donations to the school.

4. The fifth source, but related to donations, is branding. Mr. Hinz explained that he wears his Lanikai T-shirt with pride at all school functions and rarely sees others — particularly adults—wearing one. The conversation revolved round ways to promote the name and vision statement (Lanikai School - A Path to Excellence in Learning and Life) in the Kailua community. We can sell school-based products on the website. Might have design contest for T-shirts or other products. Bumper stickers, maybe. Louis Saint-Cyr agreed to work on leveraging the name of the school.

IN SUMMARY: Mr. Saint-Cyr asked that anyone who has ideas or knows people whom we might tap should please contact him or Jake Hinz.

Best ideas remaining on the table:

- professional grant writer -- get info on this
- letters to parents, alums, others in Lanikai area (Chris Harrison, parent, volunteered to work on those letters.)
- possibly a website application for donations
- continued PTA events

4. Student Council Report: none given

6. Community Input: Personnel matter deferred to closed session

7. Principal's Report;

- A current concern is relevance. Our teachers may be teaching interesting material, but it may no longer be relevant for 21st century learners. School Synergy, Inc. and WASC have helped us identify areas that need our focused attention.
- As funding becomes scarcer, we may rely more upon parent involvement.
- We need a new math curriculum to prepare these students for a globally competitive world. He hopes to have curriculum decisions made by the end of April.
- The WASC Visiting Committee will spend four days on our campus the last week of February.

9. Enrollment Committee Report.: No report.

10. Facilities Committee: Jaime Higgins, Chair,

- Mrs. Higgins presented a handout to board members detailing a comparison of offers and opportunities from a number of solar voltaic vendors. She recommended that the school become an investor in a system that the school can own in 5-6 years. "This option will give the most financial benefit to the school in the form of money saved by reducing our HECO payments and hedging against the probable increase in cost of energy."
- Her second choice would be to enter a PPA agreement with Mercury, the company with the flat cost per watt and no escalation. The school would still have the option to buy the system at year 20.
- She also repeated for those who did not know that the wait for shade covers for the Learning Center lunch areas continues until we get approval of the permits. The reason for the hold-up is that the school grounds are alleged to be an historical site. Perhaps we will get a waiver for the Environmental Impact Study and move ahead.
- The JK playground is almost finished and has been accomplished completely with donations. We are seeking a 3Rs grant from the DOE to continue replacing playground structures for other elementary grades.

11. Health & Safety Committee Report: H1N1 vaccine day was held successfully. The aide is always available during school hours.

12. Policy Committee: no report

13. Strategic Planning Committee Report: No report

14. Finance Committee Report: Jake Hinz reported that the actual expenditures for personnel were less than we had anticipated. This will be reflected in the next budget update at the end of the quarter (after December 31). Hinz said Mr. Saucedo is doing an excellent job of managing expenses for subs and other personnel.

As we plan for next year there is the potential of a further cut of 10-15% in per/student allocation.

15. Board Liaison Committee: Janny Gibson reported that it is difficult to get parents to attend meetings. Her goal is to build trust between parents and the board, but that beginning last year about 20 parents have approached her to say that they feel the board and administration do not listen to them and nothing changes and most of those parents left the school this year. She said the parents and school have to be appreciative of the staff and their hard work and most of the parents in attendance this night are there in support of Mr. Ramos.

- Mr. Saint-Cyr remarked that personnel matters are not to be discussed in an open meeting. He added that the board will not be motivated or distracted by rumors or by the constant complaints of the same small minority, and that decisions will be made objectively, not emotionally. If people have problems, they should begin by going to the person they have the problem with—Mr. Saucedo if he is the one, or the teacher. There is a board policy for how parents must handle differences with a teacher. It was sent home last spring and can be sent again.
- Mr. Vierling reminded all that committee reports should be written and submitted to board members, preferably before the meeting.
- Mr. Saucedo added that he and the staff are working on a decision-making matrix that will bring clarity for all staff and parents about who is responsible for making recommendations and who makes various kinds of decisions.
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16. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 and board member went into closed session.

No substantive motions on December 15.

Respectfully Submitted: Ann Pederson, Secretary Cj Baehr, Scribe