

**Minutes**  
**PTO General Meeting**  
**Monday, March 7th, 2005**  
**7:30 pm – 9:00 pm**

**Present:**

Maria Rufo-Bueno, Co-President  
Eleanor Boschert Ambrosio, Treasurer  
Lisa Wilson, Co-Secretary  
Michelle Roover, Co-Secretary  
18 others in attendance

**I. Welcome and Introduction**

***Secretary Report//Approval of Minutes***

Minutes from the January 13, 2005 general PTO meeting were presented by Co-Secretary, Michelle Roover, and approved.

***Budget Update***

- Finalized numbers for Innisbrook Gift Wrap Program - \$9500 profit.
- PTO Support (dues) is more than \$450.
- School/Photo Rebate brought in \$1200.
- Still need to make up \$2000 in sweatshirt sales.
- Harvest Fair netted \$3000.
- Original Works netted \$2200 (budgeted for \$2800).
- Still need to see what Monte Carlo will bring in.
- Box Tops has made \$800 (budgeted \$300).
- Midwinter Coffeehouse brought in \$2,222.
- Redemption of cell phones and ink jet cartridges came to \$27.
- Gift Book sales – doubles from prior year.
- \$3500 will be taken out of the technology fund and put into a separate account (raised through the fall book fair, bottle and can redemption, gift book program, and check from Greater New Orleans Foundation)

**II. Committee Updates**

**Technology Fund Drive**

Paul Holt, a Franklin parent who will oversee the Technology Fund Drive next year, briefly introduced himself. Paul owns his own company, Group Com Systems, which provides technology equipment to schools.

## **Family Movie Night**

This first-time event at Franklin will feature Chitty Chitty Bang Bang in the Auditorium. Doors open at 6:15 pm. Movie shown from 6:30-9:30 pm. Tickets (\$4/child, adults free) to be pre-sold next week. A ticket includes movie, popcorn and drink. There will also be a raffle contest.

The issue came up as to whether families could bring dinner since 6:15 is too early for many working parents to be able to come home, eat and make it to the movie on time. The Movie Night committee will discuss this issue at a later date.

## **Monte Carlo Night**

Linda Farina gave an update on Monte Carlo Night. It is scheduled for Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> – so book your babysitters! This year, the event will be held at Post 440 in Watertown. Great donations have come in but more are still needed. The cost is \$25/ticket which includes full dinner and dancing (D.J.). Other highlights include an auction, black jack and a craps table. The Monte Carlo Night committee will meet next on Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at Mary Baker's house.

## **Spring Book Fair**

The fair will be in May. More details to follow.

## **Spring Rummage/Tag Sale**

The sale will be held on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> and is being organized by Kim Freedman. Kim suggested Franklin parents start thinking about clearing out their "stuff", including biking and sporting good equipment to donate to the rummage/tag sale. Undecided as to whether the plant sale will occur this year in conjunction with the rummage/tag sale. Maria Rufo-Bueno will follow-up with Judy Alton regarding this. The rummage/tag sale will be advertised in the TAB to generate publicity.

There will be no spring fair this year due to lack of volunteers.

## **Farina's Bike Fund-Raiser**

From April 30<sup>th</sup> to May 7<sup>th</sup>, Farina's bike store in Watertown will be doing a fund-raiser for Franklin. 10% of all bike sales during that period will be donated to the Franklin PTO. In addition, Farina's will be offering free bicycle safety training and bike helmet fittings during that period.

## **III. Principal's Remarks**

Cindy Marchand presented an overview of the proposed FY '06 budget for the Newton Public Schools. Many cuts are planned for next year, including teacher's aides (12 FTEs), teachers (9.4 FTEs), reading specialists/guidance counselors/health teachers (5.5 FTEs), library/media staff

(possibly cut in half), music, PE and art specialists (2.4 FTEs) and administrative positions within main offices (14.6 FTEs). Cuts are also planned for athletics.

Currently, there are 2000 employees in the Newton Public Schools and approximately 11,000 students.

Cindy stressed the importance of tuning into Newton T.V. to watch and better understand the budget process. She also suggested that parents come to budget meetings to share and make their opinions known. Phone calls, e-mails and letters to the School Committee are also very important in making a potential impact on the budget decision making process.

Upcoming meetings planned for: March 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> (extra date). March 28<sup>th</sup> will be the night of the FINAL VOTE.

Cindy remarked that this is the worst year ever with respect to budget cuts, with the cuts coming much closer to the kids than ever before. If the budget is passed, classes will be bigger and there may be a need to look at redistricting and other options for the future.

Cindy will keep the Franklin community posted on the status of the FY '06 budget.

#### **IV. PTO Board Nominations**

The Co-President and Secretary positions of the PTO Executive Board need to be filled for next year. Currently, the Nominations Committee is working on generating a nominations form and on compiling a list of potential nominees.

Due to popular demand, the Beggar's Bash will be returning to Franklin next year. Patrice Joyce will be Chairing this event and is need of a Co-Chair.

There is also a need for someone to assist Virginia Tow in compiling the School Directory. Next year will be Virginia's last year at Franklin (child will be graduating) and, thus, there is a need for someone to step in and be trained to take over this important effort.

Someone raised the question as to the rationale behind canceling International Night. It was explained that since many key individuals involved in International Night (i.e., Angela Coffidis) could not participate due to the unresolved teacher's contract, the committee thought it was too risky to hold the nighttime part of the event. It was suggested that all major PTO committee decisions be first run by the PTO Board in the future

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Respectfully yours,

Michelle Roover, Co-Secretary  
Lisa Wilson, Co-Secretary