

# Neil Cummins PTA

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## Minutes from "General Meeting" on 03/14/2007 - 8:00pm

Tue, 08/28/2007 - 9:40am — Sheri Mowbray

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**Minutes for:** General Meeting *from* 03/14/2007 - 8:00pm *to* 03/14/2007 - 8:30pm

**Attendees:**

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Neil Cummins PTA

Minutes of General Membership Meeting

Wednesday March 14, 2007, 7:00p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Neil Cummins Music Room

**Attendees:**

Laura Anderson, Co-President; Dominique Harroch, Co-President; Julia Ritter, Vice President; Lisa Donahue, Vice President; Cindy Traverso, Vice President; Sheri Mowbray, Secretary; Karen Dunn, Treasurer; Cathie Guthrie, Financial Secretary; Lisa Klein, Historian; Susan Christman, Parliamentarian; Marilyn Clark, Principal; Lisa Poole; Dorian Carlisle; Kelley Ryan; Lynn Werner; Margot Segal; Wolf Gutecher; Cookie Morin; Pete Ritter; Kris Wade; Gail Legallet; Sarah Notter; Andrea Pierpont; Deloris Leiter; Pam Bittner; Karen Bond; Heddy Chapman; Carla Caleron; Barbara Sarazen; Dawn Matheson; Blaine Corren..

**Meeting Notes**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Co-President Dominique Harroch.

**Review of Agenda**

**Principal's Report**

Marilyn Clark told attendees that a new no-homework trial policy is being implemented through the end of the school year and to look for a letter that is coming home in backpack mail on Monday. This is in response to two things: 1) research that shows that at the elementary level homework is not proven to make a difference academically; and 2) Parent concerns about a lack of family time and not enough downtime for kids. Marilyn and the teachers have been talking about this all year and she feels that the teachers are supportive of the plan. Reading logs will still be encouraged as reading is the most important educational activity kids can do at home. Reading makes a huge impact on vocabulary development and success in school.

## Superintendent's Report

Valerie reported that many District Advisory Council committees will be making reports next week about many important topics, including GATE, Health and Safety, and Arts Education. The teachers have a staff development day on Friday that will be focused on Arts Education. The district has submitted a grant to the Marin Community Foundation that would make NC and Hall pilot schools for a new program that would expand on our current art program.

Valerie also talked about what is happening with the school board. They are working on the issue of transportation and with a need to cut back, the funding for transportation might be cut back a bit. Also, a new committee has been formed that will look at facilities, land use and enrollment and make recommendations to the board about potential solutions to our growth issues in the district.

## Treasurer's Report

Karen Dunn reported that we have approximately \$4,000 in our checking account and approximately \$57,000 in our money market account. We will also be receiving \$112,000 from the district for the second lunch session which will change our cash situation quite a bit. The Spellathon brought in almost \$21,000 which is the most ever for that event. Thanks to Lisa Poole and Alicia Kepler for their efforts. We are starting to pay for many budgeted items including instructional supplies for teachers, field trips, etc. Karen estimates that we will have \$67,000 at the end of the year in unbudgeted funds. This is a conservative figure. We carried over a lot of money from last school year because of successful programs and because many projects, including the Kindergarten Beach, cost less than anticipated. We have a chunk of money now to spend that we may not have again, so it makes sense to do a single project since we cannot depend on having these extra funds every year.

We need to ratify all expenses for the last two months.

Cindy Traverso moved to ratify expenses January 18-March 13, 2007. Cathie Guthrie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## Approval Items

- Minutes from January 18 & February 15. Susan Christman moved to approve the minutes from 1/18 and 2/15. Lisa Donahue seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### - First Grade Courtyard Project:

Dominique Harroch gave the background that the recommendation for the renovation of the first grade courtyard is the culmination of a long due diligence process involving the PTA board, the administration and the teachers. We are in a unique situation because we have a large amount of money available to spend. In the fall, a wish list was created and the board researched many options for how the money could be spent. Many of these items were subsequently funded, including the kindergarten beach and cover; an increase in instructional supply money for teachers; cubbies for every classroom; outdoor ed for 5<sup>th</sup> grade; money donated to Hall for playground equipment for fifth graders; funds to start a recycling program, EcoHawks; and the list goes on. The one item that kept coming up as the big one was the first grade courtyard because it is the last area on campus that is truly in need of attention and beautification.

Julia Ritter is the VP in charge of this project. She has worked tirelessly on all of this, working with so many parties to get to the place we are at now. Julia reviewed the process she has gone through, from hiring Robin Moller as the landscape architect; to getting bids from 5 contractors (many more were contacted). The bids all came in within \$10-15k of each other and all were in the \$70,000 to \$80,000 range. However, the board felt that \$50,000 was a reasonable amount to spend and is an amount we have to spend. So, the plans are being scaled back to accommodate a \$50,000 budget. This may eliminate the seating walls. However, Julia will be working to see if a supplier might donate materials to us or give us a discount. Either way, when finished, the project will look complete. The goal is to start on the project right after school ends in June and it will be done before school starts at the end of August. Wolf Gutscher, the facilities manager for the district, has been involved because of the size and scope of the project and has given Julia very astute guidance.

Marilyn Clark spoke about how when she got to NC, the major remodeling project was just being completed and that this is the last area needing attention. She feels that this is the perfect opportunity to finish the job. She gave kudos and thanks to Julia for all her hard work. The first grade teachers and Chad have been very involved in the development of the plans and are wishing for it to happen.

Lisa Poole moved that we approve \$50,000 for the first grade courtyard project. Carolyn Caindec seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### Additional Business

- Release of Funds. The following funds need to be released:
- Honorary Awards                 \$300
- Programs Stipends                 \$2,500
- Staff Appreciation                 \$1,250
- Volunteer Appreciation             \$400
- First Grade Courtyard                 \$50,000

Cathie Guthrie moved that we release above noted funds. Susan Christman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### Nominating Committee Update

- Susan Christman announced the proposed slate for 2007-08 as follows:

Laura Anderson and Cathie Guthrie - Co-Presidents

Julia Ritter - VP1

Linda Henn - VP2

Andrea Pierpont - VP3

Pam Bittner - VP4

Carolyn Caindec - VP5

Sheri Mowbray - Secretary

Kris Wade - Historian

Debbie Arnowitz - Financial Secretary

Joanie Costamagna - Auditor

We still need to identify a Treasurer and are working toward that goal.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Mowbray

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Neil Cummins Elementary School programs and activities shall be free from discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.