

**LISA Academy - North**  
**PTA General Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2013**

In attendance:

Christine Archer

LaMandra Broyles

Rose Kubas

Val Martin

Scott Jackson

Shalonda G. Tillman

Randy Jumper

Arlene Chan-Mouton

A document that detailed the PTA's contributions / accomplishments for the 2012 – 13 school year was distributed.

Field Days are upcoming. Thursday, May 30 – Elementary; Friday, May 31 – Middle and High School. We can sell tumblers, water bottles, and give away popcorn and snow cones. We need plenty of volunteers. Regal Theatre will donate all the popcorn – Mike Gonzales. They give us huge trash bags of it.

Rose opened the meeting by discussing the option of disbanding the PTA and forming a different kind of group – a parent volunteer group. This is the month that PTA officers are supposed to be elected for next year's school term. This year's PTA officers were elected in September of the current school year (2012 – 13). As PTA officers, we discussed this at our last meeting and decided that it was probably a good option since parent involvement in the PTA has been minimal. We have had low attendance at meetings and the same volunteers show up over and over to do most of the work. At our last general meeting, there were only two attendees: Rose Kubas and Christine Archer. There are currently 60 members of the PTA. Statistically, our numbers are very small in proportion to the number of parents who could be involved.

Rose emphasized that she wanted a forum where more people might get motivated to volunteer and not have to pay PTA dues or feel like they were "signing their life away" or aligning themselves with a group with which they were not entirely familiar or comfortable. All of our decisions have to be made by a vote and there are sometimes disagreements and politics involved which are not desirable. There has also been back-biting and gossip. These obstacles made it harder to function and get support.

**LISA Academy - North**  
**PTA General Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2013**

In order to disband the PTA, we need a two thirds majority vote.

No one communicated to Rose prior to tonight's meeting an interest in being a PTA officer for next year. She also expressed frustration that more people did not attend tonight's meeting. It was announced in Wednesday Mail twice and an e-mail was also sent to all PTA members. These announcements specifically stressed the importance of this meeting and that all members' opinions and thoughts were needed and welcomed. The e-mail and announcements also cited the agenda of the meeting: the possibility of disbanding the PTA and forming a volunteer committee.

All PTA minutes are current and available on the school's website under the "PTA" folder. Arlene mentioned that we should try to get a "banner" announcing our events and meetings that is much more noticeable on the website.

The administration is on board with disbanding the PTA with the exception that the group, whatever its name, maintains control over fundraising and keeps a checking account for the committee. (It is difficult for the school to get reimbursed through the school's financial office due to their system of checks and balances involving expenditures. It can also potentially take a great deal of time to get moneys back.) This involves more paperwork and a need to create by-laws, a resolution, and a system for approval of all expenditures, decisions for fundraising, etc., and check writing. This brings us back to an organization very similar to a PTA, only called by a different name.

Mr. Jackson and Mr. Jumper expressed the opinion that the PTA should still exist and that we should try new ways to advertise, motivate, and get people involved. Mr. Jumper mentioned specifically that a set of goals should be written up, simple and attainable, that are publicly available and distributed to all, including school administration. These goals should also be limited in number and focused on our vision and not stray too far from that. Mr. Jumper also encouraged us to create a budget that would help us accomplish our goals and establish an official guideline as to expenses the PTA will and will not pay.

Christine spoke about some of our expenses this year. We have been asked, sometimes last minute, for funds to help the school that we could not refuse. They were approved by officers unanimously. Two examples of this are 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation expenses (\$100), and biology class dissection materials and supplies (about \$300). Even though the PTA did not have an abundance of money, we felt that the requests would directly impact students and provide

**LISA Academy - North**  
**PTA General Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2013**

them with things that were crucial to their schooling (and things they deserved.) These expenses were essentially out of our control. We made the decision to do the right thing for teachers and kids and trusted that we would recoup the costs at a later date. While having a budget is a great idea, and there are some things that we will know about ahead of time (Muffins with Moms, for example), there will always be expenses that are last-minute and worthy of our consideration.

One of the things that the school administration seems to expect of the PTA is funding for playground equipment. This endeavor would cost minimally \$150,000 (but realistically more than that to get the right amount of equipment and ground cover that is code.) Rose did get a parking and playground area proposal submitted to the City of Sherwood and awaiting for final approval. The next huge steps are getting proposals, accepting bids for the work, and then getting all of that approved by the City of Sherwood as well. The PTA has never had funds even close to this amount.

Shalonda commented that some of this year's expenses were for PTA dues – current year and prior year. We have to pay dues every year. The \$5 dues that we collect are almost entirely submitted to national and state PTA. Valerie said that dues from a current year are payable through November of the NEXT year. Thus 2011 – 12 dues were paid from 2012 – 13 funds. (Quite a few of our expenses were from last year and even further back.)

Our current account balance is \$953.74 with one invoice pending of \$452.62 to B & D Solutions for LISA tumblers.

The main fundraiser that was established because of member vote in the January meeting was the Marco's Pizza Fundraiser. It was unanimously supported in that meeting. Due to barely any participation, this fundraiser failed. Only two order forms were submitted. We do not really know why this fundraiser was not successful. After the initial two weeks we agreed upon to sell Marco's Pizza Bucks, we extended it a month past that date in order to hopefully garner more orders.

Rose spoke about the stigma of the PTA. As a school, our PTA has been considered a non-viable option for some due to their less than favorable view of the organization. Some of this is out of our control. A few of us who were at the school from the beginning, (i.e., the very first PTA meeting ever held), have felt that the exclusive attitude and "non-team playing" individuals who ran that meeting literally turned some people away from ever wanting to join. Rose

**LISA Academy - North**  
**PTA General Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2013**

thought that if we did away with that stigma, calling ourselves a PTA, that we could garner more members who simply want to accomplish things at the school.

In having a volunteer committee, we could ask people to give “us” permission to send them e-mails if they wish to volunteer at the school. Then, every volunteer opportunity available could be posted, and those that are able to serve, can. Someone would probably need to be a liaison, an organizer, between the school and this group.

Mr. Jackson spoke of having more presence at events, school registration, and through Wednesday Mail. He suggested PTA t-shirts that could be worn at everything the PTA is involved in, thus letting more people know that “this is what we do.” (We have mentioned this idea in a previous board meeting as something we would like to do for next school year, starting with school registration. We would also like to advertise our motto on the shirts – Pay it Forward.) For instance, many people might not know that the PTA is the organization that puts on Muffins with Moms and all similar outreaches. Valerie pointed out that there was a PTA table out front at each of these school programs. We asked for parents to sign up and get involved well into the school year. Mr. Jackson said that when he attended Donuts with Dads that he did not see this table. However, he also mentioned that the lobby was very crowded and that it might simply have been hidden to him.

Valerie, PTA president for the two years prior, said that at school registration, some parents have bluntly refused to be a member of this organization. “That’s not what I do.” “I don’t want to be a part of that.” She also detailed complaints that were leveled at her because she was the PTA President and that it was not easy to handle. People criticized her vociferously for fundraiser orders being incorrect and for school traffic flow problems, among other things.

Mr. Jumper informed the group that he was on the LISA North Advisory Committee. He is the parent liaison between the school and the Board of Directors. The Committee works with the LISA Board of Directors in helping them to establish relevance of parents’ complaints and suggestions and to give them more information on the happenings and pervasive attitudes of our school community. He suggested that any future disgruntlements and complaints be directed to him.

Arlene brought up the idea of an off-shoot group of the PTA. This group would specifically deal only with volunteering opportunities. Mr. Jumper added that we could possibly organize a PTA with officers that have a minimum of meetings, run fundraisers, and keep control of the

**LISA Academy - North**  
**PTA General Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2013**

checking account. This, however, presents the immediate question of manpower. If we do not have many people attending meetings or volunteering, then where would our numbers come from to form an alternate group or a sub-group of the existing PTA? Also, would there be discord and overlap between two groups? Ultimately, we all want the same thing: the betterment of our school and more parents involved.

People need to be motivated to attend meetings, according to Mr. Jumper. Voting on an expense or an upcoming fundraiser does not appeal to or motivate people. He cited the Donuts with Dads event and how well Dr. Kimbrell, the Commissioner of Education, spoke. Dr. Kimbrell focused on inspirational anecdotes about education, his own experiences, and how dads have a responsibility in their children's schooling. People walked away motivated to take some action. Perhaps the PTA's role could be to provide the opportunities for people to serve and make that crucial difference that they truly desire.

Mr. Jackson mentioned that he would check with his wife about what level of involvement she desired with the PTA in the upcoming school year. Mr. Jumper said that he knew his wife, Heidi, would definitely want to be a part of volunteering for the PTA but that she would not desire to be an officer.

Mr. Jumper volunteered to be the organizer of a new volunteer group: Watch D.O.G.S. This group enlists the help of fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other men of the community who might want to come to the school and simply be exactly what the name of the group implies: watch dogs. Information about the group can be found here:  
[http://www.fathers.com/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=60](http://www.fathers.com/content/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=60)

Men who decide to join this group could buy a t-shirt designating their membership and help at the school according to the guidelines of the program. Mr. Jumper asked specifically if men other than fathers of the students could be involved and everyone agreed. Retired military personnel, retired and current civic officers (police officers, etc.) might be a very welcome addition to our school's culture and help provide a safe and orderly environment. It would also help in giving fathers purpose at their children's school and an opportunity for mentoring.

Mr. Jumper said that he would like to see us give the PTA another year with more commitment from members present and a set of goals and budget in place by the start of the next school year. If we give it all we have for one more year and still do not have enough involvement or

**LISA Academy - North**  
**PTA General Meeting Minutes**  
**May 16, 2013**

success from fundraisers to pay for the things the school already expects from us, then we should consider disbanding the year after next.

Mr. Jumper made a motion that the PTA continue for another year with the current PTA officers in place with the above caveats. The motion was seconded. Rose asked that if people agreed to this motion to say "aye." There were numerous "ayes." Rose asked if any were opposed. No one spoke up or raised their hand. The motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned.