

Ridgewood High School Home and School Association
June 12, 2007 Meeting

Call to Order – Beth Jorgensen called the meeting to order. She announced that Project Graduation, at BF, would be open the evening of Graduation to the general public from 5 – 11 pm and urged all to go and see it. Jr. Class parents will be helping to watch it. Also, Graduation is at 5 pm—please spread the word.

Secretary's Report – The minutes from May were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report – Cheryl Alterman gave the report. Total revenues were \$55.88.

Expenses for the month of May totaled \$295.45, including a donation of \$200 to Guidance for the REF Speakers Series. (The REF donated \$200 as well.)

The Gift Committee presented their final proposal for the year, totaling \$16,980. They suggested an additional \$20 be donated to the History Dept's Chernobyl Project for the purchase of 2 copies of their video. (Please see last month's minutes for a list of items in the gift proposal.) The gift budget was seconded and approved.

President's Report – Beth thanked all for a great year, expressing her appreciation for the tremendous level of volunteerism in the HSA. Vickie Hamilton, outgoing Secretary, thanked Jack Lorenz for attending each month and speaking about the state of the HS.

Principal's Report – Mr. Lorenz spoke about the Senior Prom—all went smoothly, there were no behavior issues and the prom was smoke-free. He stated that this Sr. class has been a good role model for the RHS underclassmen. He also offered that the key to RHS' success is its dedicated staff.

Board of Education Report – Joe Vallerini and Michele Lenhard were in attendance at the meeting. They spoke at length about the decision of Martin Brooks not to take on the job of Superintendent of Schools, an announcement that took many in attendance at the meeting by surprise. (His decision letter is posted on the RPS Website.) Brooks was apparently made to feel unwelcome by a number of parents in the district, through letters, calls and emails. The BOE will now have to appoint another Interim Superintendent, and it will be a year before a new permanent Supt. will be in place. This delay is going to cost the district a considerable amount of money, as well.

Michele Lenhard spoke about the TERC math controversy in Plainview/Old Bethpage, Dr. Brooks' district. Apparently, the controversy around this math program had escalated far beyond what Ridgewood is dealing with currently. Regarding Dr. Brooks, many slanderous comments were made about his wife and him. Blogs were posted which called into question the integrity of his character.

Several individuals spoke on the need for a community-wide petition to fight back against this type of bullying behavior. An organized plan to address this behavior was cited as necessary. Mr. Lorenz spoke about the difficulties in finding the right educator for our Supt. position. He suggested that community members need to be present at upcoming BOE meetings to express their shock and dismay with the behavior of some community members. He stated that the BOE had carried out an excellent search process and made a good decision in appointing Martin Brooks as Superintendent.

The HSA needs to bring any issues that it is aware of to the BOE early in the decision-making process so that the BOE is not “blind-sided” later on. Better communication between the community and the BOE is needed. What can be done going forward: 1) Attend the June 18 BOE meeting, 2) Build a groundswell of support in the community, and 3) Support Dr. Brooks, letting him know how dismayed we were by the treatment he received from a few citizens.

RHS teacher, Sean Turkington, was one of 4 NJ teachers selected to participate in a Texas Instruments national program.

President's Thank-Yous--

Beth thanked her board members individually: Joanne Stolfo for taking on the job of inaugural webmaster, Sara Erwin for undertaking the Directory, Ann Malaspina for her HSA Newsletter editing, and Nina Vaccaro for serving as Hospitality Chair for over 2 years.

Beth announced that a Development Committee is under formation. Anyone interested should let either Beth or Vicky Herbert know. She then turned the meeting over to incoming HSA President, Frances Ekblom, who thanked Beth for her service and announced the Board for the upcoming year: Elizabeth Resnick-VP, Wendy Wong-Treasurer, Hilary Jones-Secretary, Ruth Parks and Donna Antonellis-Faculty Reps, and the numerous parent class reps.

Faculty Report

On behalf of the entire RHS faculty, Ruth Parks thanked the assembled HSA members for the faculty breakfasts which were enjoyed all year.

Jamboree—Jamboree parents will be marching in the July 4th parade and singing at the Kasschau shell during the evening ceremony.

Webmaster Report—Sara Erwin thanked Joanne Stolfo for all her work in setting up the RHS Webpage. She also spoke to the need of setting up a positive Ridgewood blog.

Old Business—Beth mentioned the need to make sure that we renew our State of NJ Gaming License in August, in order to make sure that it is in place for any upcoming raffles in the 07-08 school year.

The meeting was adjourned. Next RHS HSA meeting will be held Tuesday, September 18 in the Library at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hilary Jones

Attendance List for June 12

Caroline Barr, Marge Geraghty, Sally Ann Felsenstein, Eileen Haynes, Wendy Wong, Joseph Vallerini, Michele Lenhard, Joanne Stolfo, Elizabeth Resnick, Tracy Autera, Carol Rapaport, Dixie Taylor, Ruth Parks, Cheryl Alterman, Vickie Hamilton, Vicky Herbert, Jaime Frederick, Frances Ekblom, Yvonne Francis, Eva Branton, Deborah Edghill, Beth Jorgensen, Jack Lorenz, Sra Erwin and Hilary Jones

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