

PTA Executive Board Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2019
8:00 a.m.

In attendance: Jen Robinette, Lisa Geurin, Jill DeLorenzo, William Perry, Poonam Upadhyya, Smitha Tumuluri, Tez Nettimi, Paul Pack, Alex Gray.

Event Recap: Matball

Jen – Matball was really good. I think the teachers even really liked the 4 teams because more people got to play.

Paul – We clearly defined some things, too. This year Jen and I talked and we said, hey, CDC is going to perform, and we put it in the schedule. It sounds like a no-brainer, but I sent out rules in advance. Sticking to that format would be great. The four teams definitely trimmed it down where we didn't have a mosh pit of people waiting to kick.

Jen – Keep the four for next year.

Paul – You could do college conferences, whatever... you can do anything like that.

Lisa – We could even do specific superheroes.

Jen – What did we end up making?

Lisa – I don't know what I'm missing with expenses but we made \$2,848. We went over budget but had more income coming in. We made what we projected.

Paul – Any feedback for us?

Jill – We need more than one ref.

Paul – In years past, the PE teachers did it. Alex asked Eagle Eye Dads. There was a dad who was supposed to help but didn't. Even if he didn't wear a ref shirt, he was needed.

Lisa – We ran out of pizza but that was okay.

Jen – From the teachers' perspective, the hype beforehand was huge. I know we talked about kids coming in for free, but we did send out some tickets for some kids to come in free.

William – That was a surprise for us at admissions.

Jen – It was the day before or day of.

Paul – The free lunch list (those who qualify for the federal lunch program) is confidential so I cannot hand that over to the PTA. Nannette and I talked and as long as we don't put the reason why we are doing it... That's something we had to navigate.

Jen – In the past we have given out PTA Coupon Bucks. It's a lot to keep up with, but if we can figure out how to make it happen so our friends can come and join us, that's something to keep in mind.

Paul – When Nannette runs the holiday supplies for parents, maybe she can hand out the tickets then. "Even though this will be in March, here are the tickets now."

Smitha – Maybe "golden tickets".

Jen – We have the dance and other events. Could we put it as back to school supplies?

William – They might lose it.

Paul – We could definitely set up some sort of a system where she reminds them, as we get close to the dance and Matball, send me something like that. Teachers aren't supposed to know the list either. We will think about that together and set up something for back to school night.

Jen – I do like having – in my classroom, you can see there are kids in those programs who don't come to events. A couple of mine did show up at Matball and they wouldn't have had otherwise.

Paul – You’d be surprised if you know the percentage of kids who qualify. It’s a larger percentage than you might think.

Jen – These are the experiences I want these kids to have. They don’t get Disney World, but offering something from the school...

Paul – You’re way ahead of the curve on it. When students qualify for free lunch, there’s nothing that says PTA should do anything. When we recognized the government shutdown, this PTA board is very proactive in leveling the playing field. Really good stuff for this particular year’s board that’s been conscious about.

William – Was it a family pass?

Lisa – One student and chaperone.

William – I would have expanded it to the whole family.

Jen – Yes, absolutely.

Paul – Nannette needs to get in on the conversation. Some people do take advantage of situations. We came up with the one and one so that everyone didn’t invite people to join on their “family”. Nannette gets put off when they get a big bag at Christmas and then they ask “what else?”. Awesome stuff, though.

William – Why were the expenses higher?

Lisa – Shirt order was \$3,000.

Jen – Next year we need to have more sponsors for Matball shirts.

William – More people wanted to sponsor Laps for Liberty and not every student gets the Matball shirts. We might get more sponsors if we lower it to \$500.

Jen – Matball sponsors should be a goal of \$3,500 to cover shirts.

Lisa – And we had \$1,000. I should be bumping our expense up \$1,000. Our t-shirt order was over \$3,500.

Jen – That’s right around the same amount. We tried to include teachers’ kids also. I do like we didn’t have a whole bunch of sponsors.

Jill – We can restructure the sponsorship amounts.

William – Yes, it shouldn’t be the same as Laps. Teachers get a shirt for Matball and students buying the shirt is a harder sell.

Lisa – Hardhits was \$2,064. It was more this year. We did sell more shirts this year because we had a lot more people that came.

Jen – Shirts we didn’t sell for a profit. We toyed with that also.

Lisa – Maybe they were more expensive with the different colors?

William – We forgot to print out shirts for sponsors. We did for Laps...

Jen – We only had 3 sponsors. Two of them were in-kind donations (Bach to Rock and Glory Days).

William – The financial sponsor was the big tooth (Premier Dental). I never offered or said there would be shirts for sponsored, but we should have done that.

Jen – Typically each of the sponsors gets 2 shirts.

Lisa – I don’t remember doing that for Matball last year.

William – We don’t order it for everybody. It’s a drop in the bucket. For our in-kind donations, since they are already on Laps, do we ask for a shirt for them for Matball? Like Bach 2 Rock... I don’t know if they care.

Jen – When Kravitz used to do it, it was a big deal for him to wear our shirts.

Tez – Maybe we can do t-shirts for ONE of the major events they are sponsoring, versus every event.

William – How was the dance?

Jen – It was hip-hop.

William – She did e-mail me and say they were wearing regular shirts instead of crop tops.

Jen – That’s usually the problem we have. They usually wear the skin showing clothes.

Paul – We addressed them with that a couple years back.

Jen – Ramona remembered at the last minute.

Smitha – Our fundraising is very tiered at other places I worked with. The placement on the shirt depends on how much money they give. Most of it – I go mostly for cash versus in-kind.

William – It’s just that Bach to Rock and Glory Days both have things we want.

Smitha – Sometimes if they give me more, then we get to announce the names.

Jen – This is a parent event but it’s really about the kids. Make sure the sponsors are still kid-friendly. I heard about volunteer opportunities for teachers: 3 people on popcorn versus two. Any other teacher feedback, Paul?

Paul – I usually get the endgame stuff, so I haven’t heard anything from teachers.

William – After the initial rush, we don’t need a ton of people at the front.

Lisa – We should open 15 minutes earlier because we had a huge line. If we were better prepared pizza wise, people like to eat and then get their seat.

William – It was still a half hour early. 6:30 p.m. is first kickoff. Next year Girl Scouts will be doing the flags.

Smitha – Do we pay Freedom for the gym? It’s just a matter of getting people to be there?

William – There’s a packet to fill out.

Smitha – I asked because it depends how early we can get the gym.

Lisa – We got it at 5 p.m. but we weren’t ready at 5:45. We could have been ready if we knew opening was 5:45.

Jen – The rain helped... unloading in the pouring rain was tough.

William – Sorry to miss that. I was getting the hot dogs!

Jen – I told Jill just pull into the loop! But there was no loop!

Paul – Could we go around back to be closer to the gym?

William – There are side entrances but we would have to walk; can’t pull up...

Jen – There’s an entrance back there. I’ve never been back there.

Paul – I’ll ask them about it this summer.

Jen – At 5 p.m. there were things just starting in the high school. There was baseball in the gym, drum line, etc. ...

Paul – If we have a tentative date for next year, we can put it in. The only time we have to pay to use Freedom is if it’s a non-school night.

William – For paperwork if it’s a school event vs. PTA event...

Paul – It’s the same.

Tez – For Matball, we do need waters for the teachers.

Lisa – We did run out of waters at the end but it was at a good time.

Jen – It was raining so we didn’t send someone for more water. I sent out the Remind first thing in the morning about the rain – When practices get cancelled, come to Matball!

Board Positions for Next Year

Jen – Intentions need to be clear before we head into Tuesday’s meeting so that we can “vote” and figure out what we are missing.

William – I will not be here at 3 p.m. I will be at the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Jen – Poonam was going to stay in her position. We decided that because of all the payments, tax stuff, etc., we would like to keep Lisa in her position.

William – What if we have a new person come in and say who wants to be treasurer?

Jen – Then we have a vote.

Lisa – That’s the nature of the beast.

Poonam – If they don’t have experience and they don’t know what they are doing...

Lisa – That was my experience when I first joined.

Poonam – It helps because you already have a relationship.

Jen – There was a meeting where we just decided to rotate positions. Anne was going to move into whatever position... but we wouldn’t let it continue to not exist. We had other people come in and step up.

Smitha – In the past we had an announcement sent out where I had a month to think about it. This was because people saw it and researched it. I had my time to think about it. Other than the two moms we regularly see, I doubt we will get more people.

Jill – I’ve been posting it in the newsletter for the past two months and sharing in all our groups.

William – Activities would be better. If we have a board set, we need people to run all of those. That’s the people.

Jill – I have info up on the Liberty PTA website too.

Smitha – Then we can send reminders if we are still looking for positions.

Jen – As you know, the description of positions is not accurate to what we do. It may have been that and then expectations are something different.

Jill – I’d like to know what everyone’s intentions are going in so that I can know if we need to prepare a speech.

Jen – If someone is new, they can introduce themselves. We have right now William intending to do president. I will be around to help if needed. Liberty is and always has been my heart. I’ll still be here subbing.

Smitha – We had committees, events, and volunteers. They required different skills. We never had anyone doing volunteers before the position. As a parent I never saw anyone doing the stuff specifically for volunteers. If we split the position...

Jen – Tez and Smitha, you handled Reflections and Odyssey of the Mind.

Smitha – You really don’t need a board position to lead all of the committees. You definitely need a volunteer coordinator.

William – Having a committee person is good on the board, because the people on the committees have one person to ask on exec board about any questions they have.

Jen – I like the idea of it falling under events.

Smitha – Why are you calling Children’s Diversity Night an event and Reflections a committee? Let’s put events and committees together; let’s not run into this problem every year. It’s just one person... that’s what they would be in charge of. Whatever it is that is customer-facing or parent-facing, you talk to one person.

Jen – That’s what we tried to start this year.

Smitha – It’s working well and we have to be more vocal about it.

Jen – We hadn’t had an events person for years. Sandy was events but really co-president. The president tends to get a lot of the managing of all the activities, where it really shouldn’t be. The events position needs to be taking that stuff off of the president. That needs to be clearly defined next year.

Alex – Are you realigning those and putting it on the Facebook page? Then highlighting what positions are available.

Jill – We were supposed to have the nominating committee stuff done in February, with intentions sent to them.

Jen – It’s by people you know that will continue to live up to the standards that have set up for our PTA.

Smitha – I’d like to nominate myself for events and committees position. The other thing I will say is the other position I’ll nominate myself for in case will be fundraising. I want to stick to events and committees because we are on the right track this year and I want to get it in better shape for next year.

Tez – I will stick with my position.

Jen – Corresponding secretary is really PR. There's a lot of thank you notes. We have to make sure our sponsors are being recognized at events. We have done certificates for all of them.

Jill – I intend to run for fundraising, but I don't want to step on anyone's toes. I'll slip in wherever I am needed.

Smitha – Can we combine fundraising and recording?

Jill – No.

Jen – We were talking about purchasing recording software.

Lisa – Someone will have to be in that position.

Smitha – Someone should still clean it up.

Jen – It has voice recognition too. Maybe we look for someone to come in and take that spot. The only thing we are really hardcore searching for is the recording secretary.

Paul – There will be a meeting for rising kindergarteners. I asked for a PTA presence there. If you want new members of the board, we do want you to have a presence. We picture an hour in the gym, going over ParentVue and transportation. If you're looking for new members... we will clear dates for you and then finalize the agenda.

Jen – William! You're the last person to scare people away. Having a male face in front of parents is a really good thing.

Smitha – It's important because we don't have men in other places and I know the struggles. The dads hesitate to volunteer when it's run by only women.

Jen – The reality is, nobody only has only one position. Everyone helps each other out.

Lisa – We also need someone right off the bat for Laps.

Jen – Anne said she would help as a co-chair. She needs someone that can be the daily collector and counter. Most of Laps gets done over the summer.

Lisa – So Laps and After-School Enrichment?

Jen – My personal goal is to have most of our vendors taken care of by the time we leave in June. 6Crickets was our saving grace this year. It made things so much easier and put us in complete control.

William – Except for last-minute additions...

Lisa – We need to spend money.

Paul – Just a couple things because I feel the same way that if we have a pot of money and are transparent to the public, I'd wonder, why would I donate money to Laps? A couple things that come to mind: technology is a little bit off the table. I talked to Shea about extending the murals in the building. Shea is considerably cheaper than an outside company. It looks beautiful when you have the walls that represent the learning that is going on inside the building. It's a win-win. The school gets decorated and money goes to Shea who does a lot for our school. She wanted to do high-visibility spaces. I paid Shea for the one outside the art room – and I think I vastly underpaid it... \$1,000 for that. From what I'm hearing, professional artists are way more. She never said anything. The other thing we are seeing is, in some of the classrooms you see flexible seating. We are in a conundrum because it's very costly. Teachers are either sometimes asking parents for a DonorsChoose, which is a great thing but not when competing against our own fundraising. Sometimes it's not meant for smaller children. The flexible seating movement is only spreading. In the library we have no flexible seating at all. Even Buffalo Trail has couches and things like that. If the PTA wanted to invest in flexible seating options, we could work with the PTA on how to get that into the hands of the teachers. If you said we had X number of dollars, they'd need to make a proposal and make it equitable (not first-come, first-serve). In the summer, Alex goes around and says, oh this teacher needs tables. Then we scrounge around for tables. Right now, everything is being used. Teachers would be very interested in the flexible seating. Then we can get approved furniture in the building. They won't go back and retrofit existing schools.

Poonam – The painting will take a huge part of it.

Jen – In tiering things, I think flexible seating would impact the students more than a mural.

Lisa – If we gave her \$10,000 for the mural, that would make a dent.

Paul – At Madison’s Trust, they painted the whole library. It’s spectacular. From what I heard, that father and son team charged \$60,000 to do that.

Lisa – We don’t have that much.

Paul – Shea would never approach anything like that. When I heard I paid her \$1,000, I felt, oh no... But why would we pay an outside person if we have someone on staff?

Lisa – If we have an idea of what we want to pay her, ... flexible seating is #1, but if you only want a couple grand then that’s okay. We have to spend at least \$25,000.

Jen – We will have an emergency meeting in May.

Paul – How did we get to so much of a surplus?

Lisa – We came in with \$20,000 from last year. We should be more around \$7,000. This year we made so much more with after-school enrichment, and we are not supposed to be making money off the events but we always do. The dance and Matball always make money. Bingo was supposed to be a wash but we made money on it. These little amounts are adding up.

Paul – I’m spending every dime you give me!

William – How much is flexible seating?

Jen – One little chair is very expensive.

Paul - \$25,000 would make a huge impression on the school. Alex and I would have to come up with 5 or 6 viable options and would have to price it out. We could get competitive bids from the county. I don’t know if we can open it up to every option in the world, but if we are talking \$15-20,000, it’ll drastically change the look of most classrooms.

Lisa – We shouldn’t have come in with so much money as the start of the year.

William – The mural won’t be as impactful but people will see that.

Jen – If I have no concept of what a painting costs, it just looks like a painting. If I come in and see flexible seating, though...

Paul – During the summer, we would want to put that message out. “Look at the changes...”

William – I notice when you walk into a school with nothing on the walls vs. whoa...

Poonam – Do our art teacher, music teachers, or PE need anything?

Paul – The appropriated budget from LCPS does give a nice amount to art. PE has always benefited from school requests. What I’m hearing is recess equipment is the biggest challenge. The problem is the more we buy, the more it gets left outside.

Jen – What about a big recess bin? Something we can keep to have it stored outside? Then the expectation is that it gets cleaned up. With the preschool toys, my kids have been cleaning them up.

Paul – We would have to figure out the process. Classroom equipment would be taken care of. With universal stuff... we would have to keep it locked. We could have a simple combination lock and then have to check on getting LCPS to okay a physical structure on the premises.

Jen – It has to be the responsibility of the teachers too.

Paul – Loudoun County changed the recess policy this year. Kids are outside double the amount they were last year. Teachers just want playground balls.

Poonam – Do we need something during warmer weather?

Lisa – Can we have a roundabout number of the cost?

Paul – sure. What we may want to say to Shea is to say, what we want you to do is X Y Z and then carve it out in the budget. She would love to do everything at once... if you wanted to do an outside person, she’d be okay with it but price would go up.

Alex – Teachers are asking mostly for flexible seating. The options are endless. You’ll see some raised standing desks, some dropped way down with pillows, couches, etc. We have to think of logistics. If you

walk into any classroom, you'll see things off the street which can create a safety issue and we are seeing more and more of it. Eno's room has benches for chairs and different stool options.

Jen – Some teachers do it very, very well. Some don't do it as well. It won't be identical flexible seating in every room.

William – Do I get the same stuff every year?

Alex – The stuff stays with the teacher if they move down the hall.

Lisa – We really have \$53,000 in the bank. I would say we have 5th grade... all the teacher payments (\$5,000) ... etc.

William – I agree, I think \$25,000 is a good number. I don't want to prepay Shea because what if she goes to a different school next year?

Alex – I don't know what her plans are but spring break is an option.

Lisa – She probably can't do spring break. She needs to come up with a design, supplies, etc.

Jen – Our budget goes from when to when?

Lisa – August 1 to July 31.

Jen – If she can get you through July 31, that would be good. We can pay her through July.

Lisa – Ideally by beginning of July.

Jen – The STEM camps are end of June and in July. We are trying to play Shea's time and she might not be interested.

William – We should leave the cost open until we have numbers for flexible seating.

Lisa – We still have \$3-4,000 for 5th grade, money for teachers, Teacher Appreciation Week \$4,000.

Loosely, we have \$10,000 in expenses.

Poonam – We have something for Volunteer Appreciation?

Jen – In the past it was done by Emily Parker, then Katherine Houston. Last year Lisa Morales did it. Up until last year, a teacher ran that.

Alex – We will have a lot of teachers at this Tuesday's meeting.

Other Items to Do

Items to Order

Jen – We want to be set up for next year. We have to order office supplies and computer programs such as QuickBooks, transcription software, etc.