



**Evergreen Mill Elementary School  
PTA General Membership Meeting  
Wednesday, September 11, 2013 - 7:00p.m.**

# MINUTES

## Attending:

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. <u>Angie Tomaszewski, President</u>       | 19. Courtney Gotlin     |
| 2. <u>Kevin Arcano, Vice President</u>       | 20. Mandy Bianchini     |
| 3. <u>Maureen Kirk, Treasurer</u>            | 21. Chandra Bittner     |
| 4. <u>Lisa Krepich, Secretary</u>            | 22. Kate Alars          |
| 5. <u>Michael Pellegrino, EMES Principal</u> | 23. Gretchen Kaine      |
| 6. Daniel Lani, EMES Assistant Principal     | 24. Kate Warren         |
| 7. Shantell Evans                            | 25. Michelle Taliaferro |
| 8. Deirdre Rommelmeyer                       | 26. Lynn Colavita       |
| 9. Andy Tomaszewski                          | 27. Kelly McKnight      |
| 10. Monica Morrell                           | 28. Kathy Goodhardt     |
| 11. Shelby Adkins                            | 29. Susan Crouse        |
| 12. Heather Swart                            | 30. Anne Marie Vedaa    |
| 13. Jane Banner                              | 31. Vanessa DeBolt      |
| 14. Carol Sierra                             | 32. Lisa Hustead        |
| 15. Stephanie DeWan                          | 33. Caroline Geidl      |
| 16. Sharon Yarborough                        | 34. Kim Noel            |
| 17. Karen Gurintano                          | 35. Mike Noel           |
| 18. Jessica DiBeneditto                      |                         |

Welcome and Call to Order – The first General Membership Meeting of the EMES PTA for the 2013-14 school year was called to order by President, Angie Tomaszewski at 7:00 p.m. She welcomed everyone and marveled at the crowd (35 attendees listed above). Angie then introduced each member of the Executive Committee.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes from the last meeting of the previous school year held on May 8, 2013 have been available online and were presented at the meeting. A Motion was made by Kevin Arcano that the minutes be approved as written, and was seconded by Michelle Taliaferro. **Motion carried.**

Volunteer Training – A short overview of some of the guidelines to be followed when volunteering at the school were covered by Kevin Arcano, Vice President. Committee Chair Guidelines (attached) were distributed to all and will be available on the website. Main notes include being sure to sign in and wear a nametag; to use CURRENT PTA supplies wherever possible; to deliver cash or checks collected IN PERSON to Juana Kaszmierczak, Treasurer; and to remember your observations in the classroom are confidential. Mr. Pellegrino urges parents to feel free to visit EMES at any time time, parents are always welcome.

Approval of Goals for 2013-2014 - Angie Tomaszewski went over the proposed goals for 2013-2014 as outlined below.

1. Increase family involvement in school events through a wider variety of scheduled, electronic communication. Watch for bi-monthly newsletters, Facebook posts, Sign-up Genius, and an updated website.
2. Leverage the efforts of the PTA volunteers through a restructuring and "teaming" approach. Review proposed organizational chart and Standing (aka General) Committee Chair job description.
3. Design and install an effective, useful outdoor classroom to (with \$6500 budgeted currently):
  - Support SOLs
  - Provide a deeper understanding of scientific principles
  - Improve cognitive functioning
  - Foster a cooperative learning environment
  - Promote civic responsibility
  - Improve self-discipline and self-esteem
  - Reduce stress

Main points from the discussion of goals included a review of a new Organizational Chart for the PTA Executive Board that would include the creation of several new Standing Committees:

- Projects Ad-Hoc Committee
- Communications & Marketing Committee
- Volunteering Committee
- Staff Support Committee
- School Events Committee
- Outreach Committee
- Ways & Means Committee
- Membership Committee
- Education, Arts & Athletics Committee

Individuals to be named as head of these committees will be confirmed at a later meeting.

A motion was made by Lisa Krepich to adopt these goals, which was seconded by Andy Tomaszewski. **The motion carried** (unanimous approval).

Treasurer's Report - Juana Kazmierczak, PTA Treasurer, went over the proposed 2013-14 budget prior to the membership's vote. She indicated that the budget was posted 30 days ago, per the by-laws, and hoped that every one had the chance to review it and that committees were able to identify their line item. She noted that not all committees get assigned a specific line item, that sometimes expenses are covered by other line items, such as Office Supplies and to please check with her to make sure.

She also noted that it is important that chairs verify whether or not their event is an "expense only" (non-income generating) event or meant to be an income generator (fundraiser or program receipt). It is important to understand that distinction in advance of their event. Those who have a spending line item are asked to spend within their budgets. Those who have a fundraising line item are not expected to necessarily reach those projections but that those projections are based on previous years' results with some energy and optimism thrown in given the new initiative on the Outdoor Classroom and renewed efforts in communications.

She also asked that people endeavor to maximize success of their event from a financial perspective and it would be very helpful to run through a check list of cost-saving measures, because the more we save the more we have available to fund our many wonderful PTA programs that support education and the well-being of all EMES children. For example, if they predicted that they would have office supply expenses, to first check with PTA VP Kevin Arcano to see if we didn't already have the supplies that they needed. If they still needed to acquire supplies, that the PTA gets a discount

through Office Depot and to check with Kevin Arcano about that. She also said that we can get state tax exemptions for our purchases and to check with Juana about that. She also noted that any supplies left over from an event are the property of the PTA and should be handed over for storage in the PTA closet so that other committees can possibly use for future events. (After the fact, Juana wanted to add that chairs should endeavor to use Facebook and other tools to try to get the community to donate or lend supplies or equipment as another way to defray costs and be environmentally friendly).

Juana also said that the by-laws allow for amending the budget by amounts over \$300 and that the Executive Board (made up of the four Executive Officers, Mr. Pellegrino, and the chairs of Standing Committees) would need to get authorization from the general membership to vote in changes above \$300. She noted that if we were to add more to the budget, then we would have to account for it on the other end because we must approve a balanced budget. She encouraged all in attendance to get familiar with the by-laws, which are located on the PTA website.

Juana explained that the budget is in two parts: Program Expenses and Income. Program Expenses are projected to be \$31,588 this year. Program Income is projected to be at \$31,720. She noted that these amounts balance each other out and we would have a small "surplus" of \$132. She also stated that the PTA maintains a savings account and that amount was currently at \$37,702. She noted that while the bank balance looks robust, we rely upon it heavily to reimburse committees for program expenses and that it must be replenished - hence the importance of successful income generating events. Since the start of the fiscal year (July 1st), Juana has been asked to reimburse over \$5,000 in expenses from that account, for example. She explained that according to our by-laws, we are supposed to maintain a savings account balance that is half of all our program expenses, so if we don't have a good fundraising year, that would significantly lower our balance by years' end and would seriously affect what we could spend on next year.

She also emphasized that if committee chairs of income-generating events felt their line item was too lofty, to please not despair, that these are just projections. The projections are based on previous performance, but in some cases more amounts were higher out of optimism for the "big project", the outdoor classroom, and for renewed efforts in communications. She also noted that there are "bread and butter" program expenses (activities that the PTA pays for every year) vs. the special project, such as the outdoor classroom, and that we had some flexibility on that line item if our income-generating events did not perform up to projections.

There was some discussion as to why the amount of funds requested by the newly added Backpack Buddies committee was not included in the budget this year. Juana indicated that the BPB joined too late in the process to have their budget request included and that there is a line item of \$500 for "Community Outreach" that they could possibly draw upon. We also indicated that the PTA will help give BPB inkind support, such as the two planned food drives and recruit volunteers to help with food distribution. The food portion of BPB is primarily funded by St. James Church and other entities outside of EMES and given the high expense of such a program, will likely remain primarily funded outside of EMES PTA, but the PTA is happy to help where it can. She also told the BPB chair that the option exists for BPB to request that the general membership approve additional funding above \$300, but again, we would need to make changes on the other end of the budget in order to maintain a balanced budget.

A motion was made by Kelly McKnight to approve the budget as presented. Michelle Taliaferro, second. **Motion carried** (unanimous approval).

Juana also presented the financial audit letter that was conducted this summer of last years' financial records of EMES PTA. She informed those in attendance that the three auditors found no problems

with the 2012-13 books. The membership resoundingly approved the audit report and the PTA president added her signature to it.

Kate Warren made a motion to approve the audit, which was seconded by Kevin Arcano. **Motion carried** (unanimous approval).

New Business – A brief discussion of the PTA calendar was undertaken, noting that several Spirit Nights/EMES Eats Out may be added and that Mr. Rawls is exploring the possibility of providing a version of the calendar that parents might upload to their Smartphones. Next month we will begin reports from Standing Committee heads.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m. by President, Angie Tomaszewski.

The next PTA General Membership Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 9, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. in the EMES Staff Lounge.