

PTACHC Meeting

Homewood Center March 6, 2017

Meeting called to order at 7:35 p.m. By PTACHC President Reg Avery. Quorum confirmed.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report – Ricardo presented the minutes. A motion to accept the minutes was seconded and approved by majority vote.

Homewood Assistance - Members discussed the conversations they had with their locals. There were various opinions; however, everyone wants to be able to help. There are schools that have been volunteering with Homewood/ARL. All schools, except elementary schools, have students that filter into Homewood.

There were 3 motions about this topic:

- The first motion was; "Increase the dues for the local PTAs from \$170 to \$200 for the next fiscal year".
- Two votes were taken regarding this motion:
1st vote: 22 voted yes, 22 voted no, 4 abstentions.
2nd vote: 23 voted yes, 24 voted no, 2 abstentions. The motion failed.
- The second motion "PTACHC creates a line item in the budget for next year and future fiscal years to earmark monies for hospitality for Homewood and ARL.
Vote: 14 voted yes, 25 voted no – the motion fails.

There was discussion that monies cannot be earmarked. It is unlike the scholarships because scholarship monies go into a separate fund. PTACHC Treasurer commented that she was uncomfortable with PTACHC serving in the role of pass-through funding.

- The third motion was to "Table the motion and so the Executive Board can get additional information and put their findings out to the membership."
Vote: yes by the majority – the motion passes

PTACHC will consider a special committee, where individual PTAs can submit monies to PTACHC who will coordinate. Schools can send in a separate invoice or check from individual PTAs. There is a current line item in the budget for \$1000.

Treasurer's Report – written report given, there are no questions.

Legislative Update by Donna Sudbrook

- The MD PTA convention will be in July in Columbia. PTACHC asks for volunteers to help run the event.
- There is a bill (HB 1299) to change how Howard County elects Board of Education (BOE) members. This is similar to what Montgomery County is doing. This has been approved at the local delegation level. Typically if approved locally, it will be approved at the next level.
- There is an APFO meeting on March 30th
- Maryland State Educators association is electing the music educator of the year

HCPSS Bus Transportation/Requirements – Presented by Dave Ramsey

- There are 453 buses that serve over 40,000 students (over 2,000 are eligible for specialized services) and provide service to over 100 public and non-public schools in Howard County and surrounding jurisdictions.
- All school bus services use contractors. We still do not have enough bus drivers and we need to find more bus drivers. Pay averages \$16.50 an hour. Contractors are highly monitored. A criminal check includes the sexual offender's registry. If any criminal history, they will not make it through the initial screening.
- At over 20,000 lbs., school buses are the safest vehicles on the roadways for students going to/from school.

Dave strongly recommends that when students are eligible for service, put students on buses.

58% of fatalities are Teen drivers

23% accidents with adults

1% accidents on a school bus

- All of the school buses have a 4-camera system; however, none of the cameras is external and separate legislations must be passed at the county level to add external cameras. Cameras are not on the spare buses yet. 99.9% of buses have with cameras. The cameras purpose is to make sure students are safe. Each year, surveys are sent to school administrators. It is deterring misbehavior on the school buses and cutting down on the time for investigations, since the videotape can be pulled. There was positive feedback from Worthington Elementary regarding the school being able to use the tape.

- There was a question about whether there was any discussion for increasing crossing guards? This can only be justified when the traffic engineers feel it is not safe for the students to cross. A policy is in development.

Superintendent's Report – Presented by John White, Communications Director

BOE did pass the 2017/2018 Academic calendar, Tuesday, September 5th is the start date, but Teachers will report on Thursday, Aug 24. Winter Break is Dec 24-Jan 1; Spring Break is March 30-April 6; June 14 is the last day for students, June 15 is the last day for teachers. There are 5 inclement weather days: President Day, 3 days during Spring Break and June 15th

The BOE voted to adjust start and dismissal times beginning in 2018/2019. None of the schools begins before 8:00 am or later than 9:25 am. The necessary changes will be over 18 months.

There was a breakdown of the budget proposal to the County Executive. The HCPSS indicated there is no money for Gallup student surveys or fees for some consulting services; for livestreaming events except the Board meeting and no monies to maintain school webpages. PTAs/Schools are concerned about there not being webpages, but John explained that it is due to the ongoing costs of licensing agreements and software maintenance. Canvas will still be available, but PTAs may have to pick up the responsibility to maintain their websites.

The PTACHC members proposed an agenda item for further discussion of the school websites as there should be monies to maintain websites. In the next meeting, someone will be coming in to discuss redistricting.

Board of Education Report – Cindy Vaillancourt, BOE Chair

The BOE did not make a decision about websites. \$20+ million dollars that need to be cut. Over \$40 million from last year. There was mention of their 18-person communications department with a budget of \$2.3 million/year. If the PTAs do not want the websites cut, contact the Superintendent's Office and BOE office.

The budget will have many cuts but do not want cuts to be in the classroom. The process is for the Superintendent to make a proposal, the BOE goes through and it became a joint request to the county. County Exec, Allan Kittleman, will do cutting which will go to the County Council, which can add monies in. At the end of this process, the County Council will send back a total amount of money that HCPSS will be funded. This is when the BOE will look for ways to cut monies. Regarding the Para educators, the BOE added Para educators to the budget request for an additional \$4 million over what Dr. Foose requested.

- Regarding situations occurring at school; A BOE member does not get involved with the specifics. If the issue is not being addressed through the normal procedures then contact the BOE. An individual BOE member cannot go to a principal about a particular child.
- **Policy 6010, Redistricting**, was discussed in January. A new school is opening in September 2018. The threshold of capacity is not a hard and fast rule. More than half of HCPSS schools will be at a 105% or more capacity.

PTACHC President Notes

- Maryland PTA Scholarship application is on the website. Need response by April 13th. Try and put a link on PTACHC site.
- Suggest that there be an Ethics Code of Conduct policy for local units.
- Seeking Bylaws committee members. The bylaws are up for the tri-annual review.
- There is a workshop for parents and students about bullying on March 25 sponsored by the Council of Elders at Oakland Mills
- Dr. Foose is hosting a meeting with PTA President.
- APFO action is at the end of the month. There are changes to the general plan.

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes submitted by Towanda Brown