



# PTO Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2020

*The PTO mission is to support the educational experience at TJHS and to foster a stronger school community for students, parents and staff.*

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**PTO Board Members in attendance:** Eileen Robinson, Krista Zizzo, Teri Hetzel, Wassila Hamitouche, Megan Perkins, Janet Willson, Brooke Bolinske, Karla Henke, Carrie Oss

**Total attendance:** 29

## 6:00 pm Welcome & Introductions

- Eileen Robinson, PTO President, welcomed Board members and parents in attendance. The meeting was held virtually, via Zoom.

## 6:02 pm Staff Wellness

- Brittany Nicolo, PE Teacher and Natalie Koncz, School Psychologist, shared information on the monthly wellness initiatives the Staff Wellness Committee has facilitated this school year. These initiatives and the support from the PTO are appreciated by staff. TJ has the lowest staff turnover among DPS high schools, and this initiative helps create community within the staff.
- Staff appreciation efforts have changed due to the remote nature of school this quarter. Mrs. Nicolo mentioned that staff would appreciate thank you notes or encouraging emails from students and parents. “Goody bags” could be distributed to staff in a drive by event. The logistics need careful consideration. Of the entire staff, 30 have health related accommodations to work 100% remotely.
- After Nicolo and Koncz finished their report and left the call, Eileen Robinson asked for the approval for the PTO to purchase a \$5 gift card (Starbucks or Dunkin’ Donuts) for each staff member. The current estimate is 136 employees, but the total expenditure will be under \$1000. This will take the place of the coffee cart that is usually provided by the PTO. There were no objections from the group.
- A volunteer is needed to lead a November “thank you card” effort. Interested parties should contact Robinson at [tjhspto@gmail.com](mailto:tjhspto@gmail.com)
- The PTO typically provides a gift to staff in December. The “goody bag” could be provided to staff as the gift. We will brainstorm ideas for the content or a PTO contribution next month. Send ideas to the PTO email listed above.

## 6:20 pm Approval of New Officers

- The approval of two new officers was conducted by Zoom poll to the 26 attendees present online at this time. Krista Zizzo was approved as Secretary and Wassila Hamitouche was approved as Assistant Treasurer. A Vice President is still needed, but all other positions are filled.

## 6:23 pm Treasurer Report

- Outgoing Treasurer Tami Patzer has been working with Teri Hetzel and Wassila Hamitouche to close the books for the 2019-20 school year. They are meeting next week to review and finalize last year’s income and expenditures. The 2020-21 budget will be set after the books are closed for last year.
  - Financial Summary:
    - Eileen gave a brief review of the PTO’s finances: As of August, there was about \$73,000 in the bank. Approximately \$20,000 is allocated for Class Accounts and other purposes including \$6,000 earmarked for reserves. All financial needs for the 2020-21 school year are covered.
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- o Last spring, 10 classroom grants, totaling \$10,000 were approved. Due to remote learning last spring and this fall, some of the funds may not be used. We are verifying the status of each grant, but about \$5,000 has been paid out to date.
  - Lisa Allen suggested that if \$5,000 was not used for classroom grants this year, perhaps the funds should be saved for next year, when needs could be greater due to budget shortfalls or an increase in requests.
- o The second largest expenditure of the PTO is Staff Appreciation efforts.
- Overview of Fundraising:
  - o The main annual fund raiser is the Online Auction. Last spring's event raised about \$20,000. Money raised at the auction funds the following year's classroom grants. Megan Perkins is the Auction Chair.
  - o A second annual event sponsored by the PTO is ArtFest, a 30-year tradition. When last held in 2018, ArtFest raised \$7,000. The PTO decided to take a break in 2019 as the event requires a great deal of volunteer support and time relative to the funds raised. The future of ArtFest has not been determined, but the event will not be held in 2020 due to the pandemic.
  - o "Passive" fundraising is provided by the King Soopers grocery card and Amazon Smile contributions.
    - About 80 families participate in the King Soopers "[Community Rewards](#)," program, which yields about \$1500 per quarter. The funds support Class Accounts and the general fund.
    - Money is allocated annually to each Class Account: \$500 per year for Freshman, Sophomore and Junior years and \$1,000 for Senior year. By Senior year, each class receives \$2,500 toward their Class Account. These funds are usually contributed in the fall, but have not yet been contributed this school year.
    - If you wish to participate in the King Soopers reward program, the PTO's Organization Name is Thomas Jefferson High School Partners. Directions for enrolling can be found on the TJ website at <https://tjhs.dpsk12.org/community/king-soopers-community-rewards-program/>
    - The "Amazon Smiles" program is not as lucrative as not as many families participate. Last quarter, a \$77 contribution was received. Shoppers who visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) can select "Thomas Jefferson High School Partners."
  - o Restaurant Nights are left for clubs and activities to pursue and the PTO does not engage in the sale of items other than Spirit Wear.
  - o Eileen reported that School Administrators suggest holding only one fundraiser per semester for Class Accounts, with a goal of having a minimum of \$5,000 by Senior year. The Class Accounts have the following approximate balances:
    - Class of 2021 - \$3,000 (plus \$1,000 from King Soopers fundraising)
    - Class of 2022 - \$3,400 (plus \$500 from King Soopers fundraising)
    - Class of 2023 - \$1,800 (plus about \$800 from recent fundraiser and \$500 from King Soopers)
    - Class of 2024 - will receive \$500 from King Soopers fundraising
    - The funds raised by the Class of 2020 were not used for activities last spring such as After Prom, due to the pandemic. Megan Perkins and Lisa LoJacono reported that the funds in the class account were used to give each senior a \$40 Target gift card. The

Prom venue gave TJHS a credit to be used for this year's prom since the event did not take place.

- Regarding class fundraising and activities, Megan Perkins will look into the status of the planning binder that may be helpful to those planning activities for the Class of 2021 and get it to their parent sponsors.
- There are parent volunteers to serve as Class Sponsors for the Class of 2024. Eileen will meet with them soon to discuss community building activities for freshmen and their parents. Email [thjspto@gmail.com](mailto:thjspto@gmail.com) if you would like to brainstorm activities or get involved.
- Classroom Grant budget for 2020-21:
  - Lisa Allen suggested increasing the grants from \$10,000 to \$12-15,000. There were no objections, but a final amount will be decided once the PTO's 2020-21 budget has been finalized.

### **6:50 pm Spirit Store Update**

- Store co-manager Carrie Oss reported that they are changing the store model from placing a bulk order annually to an online store with orders fulfilled by a local vendor.
- The store's first online sale was just concluded. There were 40 orders, which was less than expected. The markup was low, but there will be some funds generated. The positive is that we won't have a large stock of inventory to sell, which is good given that the store in the school is closed.
- The team is selling the inventory from past years at "parking lot" sales, which have raised approximately \$3,000 to date. They will hopefully have another sale soon.
- Carrie would appreciate any feedback on items or styles. The recent online products featured the TJ logo as it is more popular than the "Spartan head" or other designs.
- Items suggested in the "chat" on Zoom included: TJ mugs, iPad covers, facemasks, Hoodies (especially yellow/gold) and masks. Carrie reported that the online vendor did not have a mask, but that the Junior Class may be selling facemasks as a fundraiser.
- A suggestion was made to survey students regarding future items and to promote the online sale on the "Spartan Edition."
- Additional feedback can be sent to [TJHS.store@gmail.com](mailto:TJHS.store@gmail.com)

### **6:59 pm Food Bank Update**

- Chair Megan Perkins reported that Suzy Stone has agreed to serve as Co-Chair. They are meeting to create a process and have been "blown away" by the amount of food that has been donated. The next distribution is scheduled for October 22.
- The local Rotary Club has donated \$250 per month to support fresh food items and a grant of \$1,000 from a local company will be used in months when donations are not as plentiful.
- Megan has been promoting the Food Bank through Next Door, Facebook and the TJ Journal.
- Next month, School Social Worker Samanda Davis will update the PTO on the "Families in Need" program.

### **7:05 pm Meeting Adjourned**

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 10 at 6:00pm**