

## PTO General Meeting of October - Minutes



### MEETING DETAILS

Wednesday October 1, 2014 – 6:30-7:30pm  
Hosmer Library

**Chaired by:** Kristen Fitzpatrick, PTO President

**Minutes recorded by:** Regina Raz, PTO Recording Co-Secretary

### IN ATTENDANCE:

<b>PTO Board</b>	<b>Officers</b>	Kristen Fitzpatrick, Gina Brennan, Eileen Ng, Ellen Cross, Regina Raz
	<b>Grade Level Reps</b>	(Not designated)
	<b>PTO Reps to Sch Com &amp; PTU Com</b>	(Not designated)
	<b>Teacher Rep</b>	(Not designated)
<b>Principal &amp; Assistant Principal</b>		R. LaRoche and M.K. Fitzpatrick
<b>Parents</b>		15 parents
<b>Teachers</b>		Katja Pearse, Anne Reid, Sara Patashnick
<b>Representatives</b>		John Portz and Liz Yusem (Hosmer parents and members of the School Committee) Brian McKenna (Social Recreation Director, Boys and Girls Club of Watertown)

### ACTION ITEMS (PTO)

*Unless otherwise indicated, the due date is the following General Meeting*

DATE	ITEM	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS

### ITEMS OFF THE ACTION LIST

DATE	ITEM	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS

### DECISIONS (PTO)

1.
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### SUGGESTIONS (PTO)

1.
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### ISSUE LOG (PTO)

1.
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### MINUTES

<p><b>1. Welcome and Introduction of Officers Present</b></p>
<p><b>2. Boys and Girls Club of Watertown – Brian McKenna, Social recreation Director</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description of mission of the Club, and offerings (including new Programs!)</li> <li>Flyers made available. For more information on the Club and its programs (Aquatics, Athletics, Arts, Social, and Education), check <a href="http://www.watertownbgc.org">www.watertownbgc.org</a></li> <li>New this year: "Power Hour" educational program offered Monday-Friday from 3:00pm-6:00pm at the Club's Education &amp; Technology Center. The Program is run in conjunction with Bentley University's Service Learning Center volunteers and offers incentives for completion of homework.</li> <li>The club serves kids ages 7-17, with many programs including After-School Program, free of charge to members (membership is \$25 per year).</li> <li>All Hosmer school buses end their afternoon itineraries at the Club.</li> </ul>

### 3. Update from the Principal – Robert LaRoche

- Good start of the year; efficient drop off routines.
- PTO Fundraisers for the school will be tied this year to specific causes; the first fundraiser has been promoted already with an Assembly in the Auditorium (Meadow Farms).
- The administration is very excited with the new staff recently hired, including half-time Librarian, Ms. Anne Reid, who will be running two new literacy programs for K-3 and 4-5.
- Some of the construction works scheduled for the summer have been completed (e.g. ramp).
- Teaching personnel has been shuffled, and intervention blocks have been created (small groups that allow more focused work with 1:1-1:5 attention).
- MCAS testing is being discontinued, with transition to PARCC Assessment (<http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-assessment>).
- Parents' and staff' input is needed for Capital Improvement needs.
- Q&A for the Principal:
  - Request to re-evaluate the existing typing instruction program: concern about its efficacy. Typing/keyboarding instruction is important, specially given standardized testing is currently computer-based –as selected by the District)
  - Watertown piloted the PARCC Assessment (Hosmer with Math, 4<sup>th</sup> grade; Middle School with English and Math). The results are not back, but the feedback from the students has been good.

### 4. Summary of PTO's Summer Survey & 2014-15 Goals - Kristen Fitzpatrick

- The summary of the Survey results is distributed:

#### Summer 2014 Survey Results

##### 65 participants in survey

- Highest level of activity participation was in social events (86%), followed by learning events (73%) and cultural events (61%). 60% participated in some aspect of fundraising.
- For PTO Meetings, most people (73%) want an update from the principal, Watertown Strong Schools/School Committee update (67%), time for open Q&A (60%). Food is not a draw (12%) and babysitting seems important but not a driver at 44%.
- Method of communication preferred is emails from the class reps (74%) followed by weekly newsletters from the PTO (71%) and letters from the principal (70%). Newsflashes (56%) and paper notices (37%) had less appeal.
- For ideas around new events, there was a theme around visiting artists or authors or thinking about more grade-level events versus school-wide events
- What should the PTO priorities be? Informative meetings about matters of concern to parents was the first at 64%, followed by fun events to bring people together (62%), fundraising for classroom and school supplies/equipment (61%) and overall school community/spirit (52%)

LOTS of people volunteered to help out this year too!

- The different summary points are discussed:
  1. Give priority to the organization of social, learning and cultural events. The first Social (Sep picnic) was reported a success. Events already scheduled are: free Movie Night (Oct. 17), fundraiser Color-A-Thon Walk Run (Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>), Kids' Café (Nov).
  2. The Principal will continue providing updates at the PTO General Meetings. Watertown Strong Schools is open to attend the meetings and provide updates. The Watertown School Committee meets usually on the first Monday of the month, and representatives attend our General meetings regularly.
  3. Preferred communications from the Principal (monthly Letters) and the PTO (Newsletters) are already in place. The network of Classroom Parent Representatives is still not established, and the role of Representative Coordinator remains open. A new communication tool this year is a Bulletin Board near one of the Hosmer entrances, maintained by Gina Brennan.

### 5. Open Q&A

- Question about BrainPOP (<http://www.brainpop.com/>) – There will be information distributed, now that the technology issues with mass mailing from the Hosmer secretary office has been solved.

- Question about “Spirit Day” – The Principal clarifies that he did not cancel it, and that it had already been out of the program when he joined. He will be looking into it.
- Parents’ praise for the fitness program and improvements in the cafeteria and menus last year.
- Overall praise for the Garden Club program (harvest in progress!)
- Question about the Gmail account that every student obtains – It is administered by the school and it is associated to each student all the way up to high school. The account does not provide access to any website that would require email verification, and it is used in higher grades for targeted instruction with software technology, or supported by web-based sites like Google Drive.
- Interest about Grant applications – The PTO Grant coordinator, Nancy Ringwood, distributes a summary of grants that were solicited last year, and a list of applications planned for the current year. There is a lot of activity planned, and Ms. Ringwood is welcoming suggestions on sponsoring Agencies as well as projects requiring, to establish the best match.

**The Meeting is adjourned at 7:30pm**

**NEXT PTO GENERAL MEETING: Wed November 5<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-7:30 pm, Hosmer Library**