

Friends of Thorp Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2012

Regulus Coffee Shop

Attendees:

Board members: Bindu Alexander, Joe Basilone, Maria Bratt, Elaine Brennan, Anu Dewan, Leslie Grimm, Katie Madden, Laura Martinelli, Colleen O'Toole, Anastasia Roilou, Lisa Weisenberger, Tammy Woods

Others in attendance: Burcu Agar, Elise Duffy, Mary Nespoux, Cheri Pates, Janelle Reilly

Guests: Mr. Toledo and Ms. Ruszel

1. The meeting began with the Treasurer's report. Joe Basilone reported that he presented Mr. Toledo with \$8,400 for microscopes and water coolers giving us a remaining balance of \$2629.08.
2. Mr. Toledo presented his vision for a new library/media center at Thorp.
 - a. He began by restating that our school needs to be excellent. People need to see excellence immediately when they enter our school. This has to do with facilities.
 - b. Ms. Ruszel presented us with a five-page document which included photo examples, specific technologies, and a possible layout within our given space.
 - c. We discussed curriculum and how the space would be used.
 - d. Stage one of the project has begun – clearing out old books and media
 - e. Mr. Toledo is looking into digital library sources including *Scholastic* and *Accelerated Reader*. We will have more information about that in the future.
 - f. Mr. Toledo and Ms. Ruszel left our meeting
3. Friends of Thorp continued with a presentation by Lisa Weisenberger and Bindu Alexander regarding their recent grant writing initiatives
 - a. Lisa has submitted a Clorox Grant for a possible \$50,000 toward a playground. Within this grant there is also a possibility of three schools receiving a need-based grant of \$25,000 toward a playground.
 - i. Voting begins on November 5. Everyone must vote every day with every e-mail address they have. Everyone must ask their friends and family to do so as well if we are to win this. Lisa/Laura/Katie to work on a flier.
 - b. Lisa has also submitted a Lowe's Grant of \$50,000 for our playground initiative.
 - c. Friends of Thorp needs to begin fundraising for the playground in order to show earnest and interest to these corporations.
 - d. Lisa discussed her recent meeting with Alderman Cullerton and several other parents. Ald. Cullerton advised us on ways to proceed and has already made inquiries on our behalf.
 - i. Unfortunately, Thorp lies between two TIF districts and is not eligible for TIF money.
 - ii. Friends of Thorp discussed monies from the Olympic bid and NATO that have been left unused to date. Mr. Toledo is going to inquire about this.
 - e. Lisa and Bindu have secured a non-for profit group, Urban Habitats, to create a drawing and plan for our playground. They will look at our school on October 30.
4. Fundraising Objectives – we decided, after much discussion, to split our fundraising objectives for the year between:

- a. Library Media Center – implement in phases with matching monies from CPS
 - i. phase 1: cleaning and removal of outdated materials, already in progress
 - b. Playground – long-term goal with matching grants
 - c. The Board voted and we unanimously decided to pursue both goals
 - d. Katie will begin working on an appeal letter to parents
 - e. We will use a tree motif as a donor recognition piece within the school – everyone who donates will get a leaf
 - f. Lisa will talk to Mr. Toledo about having students write letters to and draw pictures for Rahm Emanuel requesting use of some of the city’s excess funds for our playground (Olympics and NATO funds)
5. Upcoming fundraisers and events
- a. Family Movie Day (Joe and Laura)
 - i. We decided on using The Patio for our movie night. They believe the projector will come in late Oct. so perhaps the weekend of November 3rd/4th. Joe will check.
 - ii. Laura will check with Central Kitchen and Tap on teaming up with us for an after movie dinner (will they kick in some proceeds)
 - b. Christmas Tree Sale (Katie and Tammy)
 - i. The sale will take place on Saturday, December 8
 - ii. Katie/Laura completed a flier for the event (Mr. Toledo needs to approve)
 - iii. The PTA will partner with us on this event
 - iv. In addition to the trees we’ll have hot chocolate/cookies, caroling and someone dressed as Santa. Tammy will check with the PTA regarding possible contributions of time/volunteers.
 - v. Tammy will check on 8th grade helpers. They may also sell candy bars.
 - vi. We’ll need at least 12 people to man the tree lot
 - vii. Bindu will order large signs we can put on the fence to advertise
 - viii. Katie will organize a media/advertising blitz (with help from Anu, Laura, Joe, Cheri, Bindu etc) to drum up interest in the sale.

The meeting ran very long and we had to call it a night although we had not finished the agenda. The board convened again on October 18 to discuss the remaining items.