

PFC Meeting Minutes - Unofficial

November 17, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m.

Flag salute

October's meeting minutes were approved.

Ziona Friedlander, PFC Co-President, introduced **Danielle Jacoby, local editor of The Patch** (agourahills.patch.com), which is an online community news site for Agoura Hills. The site's been up for 6 months. Visit the site to post free announcements and sign up for the newsletter.

Ziona thanked the Hospitality team, Katie & Stacey. Also, volunteers are needed for the Winter luncheon on December 15th. She thanked the Door Prize sponsors: **Carol Solomon's Gallery of Gifts & Framing**, featuring wonderful gifts by artists & artisans, decorative mirrors, jewelry, jewelry boxes, frames, etc. donated two \$50 gift cards. In addition, **Jamie Alcroft of Headliners Comedy Club @ Fiamme**, donated two tickets for two people each for dinner & a show. As well, **Dianne Addison** donated admittance to her cooking class.

9:20 a.m.

Mrs. Pat Brooks, Head Counselor, was introduced for a quick update. In the counseling office, counselors have been working with the seniors and have written 1,129 letters of recommendation. Freshman counselors have already met with 167 families. Course selection for next year will be finished soon. For Juniors they recommend picking up a book called Opportunities, which is available in the Counseling Office and goes through the college application process, financial aid and more. They will be meeting on Jan. 12th with the 10th graders and will go through ROP training and bring them into the computer labs to get up on Naviance. The counselors thanked the PFC for sending them to conferences. The next one is on Stress Management on Dec. 2nd. Current 9th graders will have a presentation the first week in March on Naviance to choose their classes for the next year. Counselors will fill in their plan after students choose classes at home with their parents.

9:25 a.m.

Mr. Larry Misel, Principal, spoke about how Agoura Munch Madness was an incredible event for the community, pretty spectacular.

Peggy Palmer, President of IBPA, added that they had a lot of parent help and made around \$15,000 for the Int'l Baccalaureate program. Most everything was donated. A video of the event is available on the IB website & The Patch online.

Mr. Misel continued that Fall teams have had success. The AHS football team has showed great resolve. Boys Water Polo is going to the semi-finals in Irvine today, playing Thousand Oaks High School. Girls Cross Country finished second in the

Marmonte League and may qualify for CIF. Girls Volleyball finished fourth in Marmonte League and qualified for CIF. The volleyball coach was named co-coach of the year. Tennis also went to CIF. Winter sports are looking good. The Homecoming Game was great until the end; halftime was interesting and fun. In response to a parent question, he added that the halftime fireworks were paid for through the ASB budget & game tickets, not the school or PFC budget. With regard to the Dance, he reminded parents to please know where your kids are; he said that some kids will come in the buses, take pictures, then leave. The school searches every limo & bus, which sets the tone of safety. He noted that the 10-week report cards just came out; not the final 20-week report cards, but they are used for eligibility for athletics, lunch passes, and some extra-curricular activities. He asked parents to please encourage kids to use support period, that it makes a real difference. In the Football Marmonte League, there is some dissention about unfair advantage other schools have within the league. It is being proposed to split into two divisions, one would have three playoff spots, and one would have two. A parent thanked Mr. Misel for coming to nearly every home and away game of all the sports teams.

9:40 a.m.

Dr. Donald Zimring, LVUSD Superintendent, was introduced. Ziona asked him to go over the added instructional days, among other things. He said that when negotiating last year, the board didn't want to remove instructional days, so the understanding was that if any more money were to appear, they'd reinstate those days. Very unexpectedly, another \$2 million was there. There was a great deal of discussion about it, but the board felt strongly that it would be a benefit to add back the days. The Teacher's Association was great and had an agreement in three days. The district then notified parents as early as possible to let them know that it was likely, and the additional days were voted on last night by the board.

His opinion regarding the State Budget: the budget that was adopted was a fraud. The Governor was totally dishonest in saying that no one knew it was this bad. The whole state knew it was this bad. The Governor's called a special session, but it's doubtful that anything will happen as they'll likely wait for Jerry Brown to come in. One of the major issues facing the state and why we're in a \$20 million hole is that the sales tax increase is about to expire. He thinks it will be very difficult to levy mid-year cuts on education and that next year will be worse. Another issue is that the state has deferred payments; nearly 30% of LVUSD revenue appears on the books but isn't cash. The Board is still considering a continuation of the parcel tax. Next year's calendar will reflect deficit of days again.

In answer to a question about Lottery money: the Lottery makes money for the Lottery, providing barely 2% of the school budget - a very teeny part of public education. It's been much more volatile in the past four or five years. There's also a law stating that lottery money has to be used for textbooks, which limits its benefits.

Seeing a lot of cutbacks results in tighter formulas, like staffing. LVUSD maintains by having employees take cutbacks instead of laying teachers off. The high schools took the

biggest hit in increased class sizes. Four year planning, taking advantage of summer school, is the best way to avoid tough choices in Junior/Senior years.

The Summer Program is out of district's hands and has been handled privately by LVEF. This is the last year of a five-year commitment with them and the District will be looking at multiple providers for summer school going forward. High School Graduation is set for June 17th.

One of Dr. Zimring's primary goals is to introduce foreign language in elementary school. Mr. Misel added that with district support AHS began teaching Chinese. In response to a parent question, Dr. Zimring said that for better or worse, test scores bind the district to teach in a more traditional manner, versus the track of the IB program & Mariposa School of Global Education. He noted that on Dec. 2nd, there will be a screening at Sumac of the film "Race to Nowhere" at 6:30 p.m. that, among other things, explores how the pressures of today affect kids.

With regard to the District cell phone policy, Dr. Zimring posed the question: How do kids learn today? Whether we like it or not, they are often learning in some kind of mobile/digital format. Hating the concept and accepting that that's the way they learn are two different things. The board reps don't believe in the current cell phone policy. It may be easier to cheat, but it's also a tool of learning. It can be an educational tool, a small computer, and teachers are encouraged to allow phones to be used for educational purposes.

Mary Schillinger took on the duties of Director of Special Education, allowing the District to hire Phil Scrivano as Chief Instructional Technology Officer. The recent Aeries update has been a disaster, which will be a top priority for Phil as he starts.

10:30 a.m.

Ziona saw "Race to Nowhere" and summarized some of the points it made: the movie stresses the fact that there may be an issue with too much homework, more AP classes, the pressure on kids to fit a mold to get into good university. Parents telling them who they need to be when they're trying to figure out who they are. Are we micromanaging them so much that they're not learning to manage their own lives? Some teachers did an experiment in class by cutting out homework and achievement increased. There's a pandemic of cheating, as overstressed kids feel they have to get the grades in the AP classes. Let children be children.

Kathy Chavez, Parliamentarian, noted that the District has asked the PFC to look at its by-laws, so they will be posted on the website for 30 days for review. The updated by-laws will be voted on at the January meeting.

10:40 a.m.

Door prizes were given to six lucky winners.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

The next meeting will be on January 12, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Ami Kupetsky
Recording Secretary