PFC Meeting Minutes – Unofficial

November 9, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 9:15am

Flag salute

October's meeting minutes were approved.

John Menges, ASB Representative, announced that this year "Little Shop of Horrors" will be the musical. ASB will be holding the first blood drive on November 15th. Parent volunteers are needed to sign people in and handle last minute sign-ups, etc. At the end of the year, if they donate 250 pints or more, the school is eligible for a scholarship. Please contact Erin Horowitz erinhorowitz@ahsasb.com for volunteer information.

Mrs. Pat Brooks, Head Counselor, added that adults donating blood at the Blood Drive go to the front of the line.

Journalism students from Lorelei Hollister's class were introduced. **Lorelei Hollister, Journalism teacher,** said that the students would like to let everyone know what they've done and what their goals are for the year. She added that they are very thankful for the PFC support. The donation of $800 is a huge help to them.

Katie Persons, Charger Staff Managing Editor, introduced herself. This is her 4th year in the class. She started as a Staff Writer, then became Online Editor. The Online edition won 2nd place in the *Ventura County Star's High School Journalism and Internet Competition*. She and Matt Spector also won 1st place for their article, "America's declining education system fails to make the grade." Last year, they covered "Every 15 Minutes," which was an amazing experience. She also had the opportunity to interview T-Pain, a rapper who was shooting a commercial in Agoura, which was pretty wild. Overall, Journalism has allowed her to learn more about the school and community and participate in creating an AHS network to hear about news. The Charger staff really appreciates parent support. This year they're excited about a lot of things. They're aiming to have two magazines this year, with the newspaper coming out every 3 weeks. They're collaborating with ASB as well.

Lior Ayalon, Charger Staff Newspaper Editor, introduced herself. This is her 4th year in the Journalism class. She started as a staff writer, then a section editor. This is her 2nd year as Editor. "Every 15 Minutes" last year had a lot of parent support and she loved to cover something that had such an impact on people. She added that Journalism has actually helped her overcome shyness when she was younger. The Charger is really improving, and there have been lots of changes in last few years. They're really trying to make the paper more modern,

clean. They've noted that a lot of the best school newspapers are published in color. They would love parent input and suggestions. On that note, they like to have 1 or 2 non-Charger staff members contribute to the paper each time. The more people who contribute, the more people read it.

Bailey Byers & Matt Spector, Magazine Editors introduced themselves. Matt began by saying that Journalism is his passion, and he hopes to major in that in college and then pursue a career in Journalism. He's thankful that he's able to do what he loves. Bailey continued by recalling the feeling of amazement and pride she'd had when she bumped into someone who'd read and liked her article in the paper. They both wanted to thank parents for their support. Matt added that there's no greater joy than seeing something they've written published in the school newspaper. For our information, in the 1st issue, there are stories like "The Epidemic of Moms on Facebook" stories on the "end of the world" controversy, music reviews. If anyone has suggestions or story ideas, please let them know. They just love to write.

Lorelei Hollister added that if there are any business owners willing to stock the newspaper or if anyone has marketing suggestions, they'd love to hear it.

9:30am

Mrs. Kristin Marsilio, Assistant Principal, Activities & Discipline thanked everyone for their support, adding that parents have always been the backbone of every major or minor thing that they do. It means a lot. Originally, she'd meant to speak about the district's Staff Development Day, but will also speak about some of the things that have happened in the meantime. The Staff Development Day was very worthwhile. There was a change in the collaborative nature of the day. As a team, they were able to create something that the staff found valuable & productive. Sometimes, teachers worry that it won't be as productive as it could be. They focused on 21st Century skills: teaching students skills that they'll need to become successful as learners & workers. Mr. Pickett, a teacher for 17 years, went to the Model Schools Conference and was reinvigorated. He talked about how he's focused on what the kids need, how they navigate the curriculum, and Rigor, Relevance & Relationships. Middle School teachers presented information on D-Quadrant learning. AHS teachers were responsible for many of the presentations, as AHS has sent a lot of teachers to the Model Schools Conference & are in many cases already doing D -Quadrant learning. AHS is at the forefront of 21st century learning and she's proud that AHS can be the example. Many AHS teachers are already doing student driven work, focusing on higher-level thinking skills. The teachers sat at mixed tables (teachers of elementary, middle & high school classes) while they learned about the concept of D-Quadrant lessons. There were very varied discussions on what quadrant lessons would fall into, and more valuable than getting the right answers was the discussion. They did a neat thing with using the Internet & texting. Teachers could text in what they thought the results were – it was very

interactive. The day also gave teachers a chance to look at the new national standards. Jason Busby gave a presentation about what will happen as we move away from STAR testing to skills-based testing. How we're going to get to this place is a little overwhelming, but the administration and staff are focused on that and she's proud to say they're on the forefront of all that. The rich dialogue was very valuable and helpful.

On another note, they had two different assemblies yesterday (Tuesday, November 8th) with a focus on recovery, coping strategies, and accessing resources. She's never experienced anything like that, and they wanted to do the right thing. So, they brought in Al Ludington last Friday. The thing that clicked was his first question was, "What do you need?" Other agencies had wanted to help but had a script or theme, but Al really listened, and did an amazing presentation. He used some great examples of how important it is to talk about your feelings. Nurturing versus narcing: when are you helping & caring versus tattling? The freshman/sophomore assembly was less specific than the junior/senior assembly. Teachers spoke & came down before the crowd and took a pledge to support & be there for the kids. There was not a dry eye in the house. They don't want the feeling of campus unity to go away, and they see the value in that. Al Ludington is having a parent session tonight for anyone interested and plans to hold "You are not alone" groups on Sundays at his office in Westlake at no charge - all of this was at no charge. In addition, after seeing that the word *our* is in the word *Agoura*, they plan to start an "Our Agoura" campaign in early December.

Angela Cutbill, PFC Co-President, interjected that none of these events affected the other. They are three tragic, separate events. It's upsetting to hear people ask what's wrong with Agoura. There's nothing wrong with Agoura. To the contrary, what's happened at the school shows what's right with Agoura, the way the school & kids have pulled together.

9:55am

Mrs. Pat Brooks, Head Counselor, followed that by saying that AHS is like extended family: you may graduate, but AHS is still your family. Freshman meetings are taking place; if you haven't received your postcard yet, don't worry. If you're unable to make your counselor meeting, PLEASE let them know so they can fill the spot. Everyone should have received their postcards by Winter Break. They're meeting with sophmores & juniors, looking at the D/F list, and juniors who've taken the PSAT. They've tried to meet with every senior, but they can't get them all in. Even if they're planning to go to community college or the military – the counselors still want to meet with them. The deadline for Brag sheets was November 1st. Each of the counselors probably still has 25-40 letters of recommendation to write. If students need help with anything, counselors are available at support, nutrition & lunch. She then read a note from the Registrar: report cards & progress reports will no longer be mailed to families. Grades will be available on Aeries on December 5th, which will also be announced on the website. The district

is trying to do everything they can to save money & every penny counts. In response to a question, how do you know what the counselors have or haven't done with regard to seniors & college applications? Look on Naviance. The "Office status" tells what's been sent in. "Pending" means something may be missing or counselors don't have information they need to proceed. Make sure yours & your student's emails are correct on Naviance.

10:10am

Nick Newkirk & Zach Miller, City of Agoura Hills, Community Service Department were introduced. The city for the last 7 or 8 years has been saving to build a new community center. The city has purchased the former Temple Beth Haverim property with the intention of creating a city center, but they need input from people who'll be using the facility, and really want to get in touch with parents as they plan a teen center so they can build the facility with that in mind. They've had a couple of workshops, but no input from teens themselves. They're working with professionals in recreation, but if kids don't have an interest, it won't work. They'll have dedicated space for different things, which is amazing. They had a design workshop last weekend, but there are so many things up in the air with the teen component. They should have the finalized plan in January, with hopes to open in 2013. The money's been set aside, so they want to move quickly. Zach's email address is zmiller@ci.agoura-hills.ca.ur and he'd really like people to call with input. The city wants for the community – all ages – to have a place to enjoy. They're not looking for it to be an athletic facility, though there will probably be a fitness room to do dance, yoga. People need a place to go. They'll take input & have at least one more community meeting before it's finalized. They're also on Facebook as Agoura Hills Community Services Department.

10:25am

Mr. Larry Misel, Principal began by saying that this week was a singular experience: what the tragedies brought us & the incredible coming together, which has always been there but became so apparent this week. He continued that in these tragic moments was a kind of reuniting. One day, kids were so emotionally distraught it was palpable. Meanwhile, they were offered lots of help from neighboring communities & within the community. With regard to the assemblies, they had an offer for a lot of help. And he felt that there was no way to describe adequately the feeling during those assemblies. The kids were standing up and clapping when asked about joining the staff and fellow students to bring our community together. Al Ludington said, "I don't know what you've got here, but I've never seen anything like it."

Meanwhile, AHS's first Educon was held last week. The Busby/Frank group put it together and it was essentially a totally organized gathering for the community to talk about education & where it's going. It was orchestrated by the kids, and the Agoura/Calabasas Community Center

was filled. The kids were amazing. In the midst of all of this, the sense of normalcy & not losing sight of those things was a challenge. In the midst of this too, was the IBPA fundraiser, Munch Madness, which still did very well and brought the community out to the campus.

Also, Water Polo won their league, and will be having 2nd round finals tomorrow. They are asking students to come up with a design for *Our Agoura*. They held a focus group about 3 weeks ago with students, which really helps the administration get better at what they do. There's a great need to celebrate the good this Thanksgiving. Take a minute to celebrate that.

10:38am

Penny Sylvester, PFC Co-President, announced that Measure K did not pass. So, there will probably be pink slips in May.

Larry Misel, Principal, added that he hasn't put out a Spring calendar yet, which will determine the furlough days, etc. and hopefully, there will be better news from the state, but there's not much more to cut.

Angela Cutbill, PFC Co-President, said that we haven't lost personnel like neighboring districts, but may need to feel the pain before people will realize the necessity of passing a measure like Measure K.

10:45am

Next month's meeting will be on January 11, 2012 at 9:00am.

Door prizes were given.

Thanks for coming. Meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ami Kupetsky
Recording Secretary