

# NEW SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION (NSPA)

## NSPA ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES, 5/21/08

**1. Call to Order:** NSPA President Lorie Nierenberg called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. following 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Representative Nancy Vibert's thanks on behalf of the Board to her and the other outgoing Board members, Vice President Sarah Flanagan and Webmaster George Richard. Ms. Vibert, who is also the incoming Vice President, presented the three with gifts from individual Board members.

The President distributed the meeting agenda previously sent via email (copy attached). She welcomed the incoming Board members attending the meeting and thanked them for volunteering to serve next school year. She reviewed the accomplishments of this year's Board and the NSPA.

**Other Board Attendees:** Sarah Flanagan, Kathy Ginsberg, Maril Levy, George Richard, Betsy Sue Scott and Nancy Vibert

**Board Members Absent:** Robin Boniface, Dianne Boothe, Melissa Dana, Richard Delmar, Janet Dopsovic, and Patti Oehmke

**Other Attendee(s):** Joanna Cole, Clare Dean, Lisa Doyle, Ross Gorte, Donna Kraemer, Brenda Mutchler, and Kathy and Steve Welty

**2. Approval of the April Annual Meeting Minutes:** The April Annual Meeting minutes were approved.

**3. Treasurer's Report:** The President distributed the Treasurer's Report prepared by Acting Treasurer Patti Oehmke. The Report covered the period September 1, 2007 through April 30, 2008. Ross Gorte, who will serve as Treasurer of the NSPA next year, asked what the legal fees represented. The President and Vice President explained the advice of counsel sought with respect to the NSPA scholarship. Additional discussion ensued on the Gala, Prom, Cardinal Bank account assets and Long-term Fund.

#### **4. Old Business:**

**a) Teacher Appreciation Day:** Today was Teacher Appreciation Day at the school. The Faculty Representative Maril Levy expressed the thanks of the faculty for a wonderful event. She and the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep reported that, first, a gathering took place on the patio near the Art Room. The organizers, led by Judy Laufman, offered glasses of champagne with a raspberry and served a great deal of exceptional food as hors d'oeuvres. Each teacher received a gift certificate, which matched last year's, and grab bag gift certificates were distributed too. A delicious lunch followed at Villa Mozart in Fairfax. A suggestion was made to consider inviting more parents to the patio party next year.

**b) Cappies:** The Vice President related the success of the Cappies event on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> in conjunction with the New School performance of “A History of American Film.” She explained that the New School hosted fifty Cappies, a group of Washington, D.C. metro area students in a program run by the *Washington Post*. The Cappies review plays and productions at schools throughout the region during the school year. At the end of the school year, the *Post* holds an award ceremony at the Kennedy Center for best reviews and other categories. The VP’s email solicitation of assistance for the event elicited more food and desserts than the 50 Cappies and others could consume, as well as \$395 in donations. The Vice President offered to provide the incoming Volunteer Coordinator with information concerning those who volunteered for the event. The President noted that several people mentioned that they had not been called after volunteering to help. The incoming Volunteer Coordinator reported that she has built a database for the Rudolph Run and that she will use it for volunteer information. It was also suggested that the NSPA could help fund this special Cappies event without jeopardizing its non-profit status.

**c) Scottish Fiddle Concert:** The Vice President reported that the Gala auction item of Liam’s Scottish fiddle concert will be held on Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup> at her home. She also reported that that attendance is above capacity and indicated that the fund-raising goal may be met.

**d) High School Prom:** The President related that she has received emails from student Nora Daly, one of the Prom organizers who attended the last Board meeting to discuss Prom preparations. Nora has advised that 26 tickets will be needed for faculty and their companions for the Prom, which will take place on Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, at the Star Lounge on Little River Turnpike in Annandale. The President calculated the cost of these tickets to be \$1,040 and reminded the Board that it had agreed, via online deliberations, to fund these tickets. The President conveyed the Acting Treasurer’s suggestion to offset this amount from the \$1,825 advance made by the Board to the Prom Committee. This would result in a balance of \$785 owed by the Prom Committee to the NSPA. Alvin, the faculty advisor to the Prom Committee, has made a down payment to the Star Lounge and signed the venue contract. One attendee noted that at least one public school deemed the Prom a school event and signed the venue contract. The President questioned whose responsibility certain of the Prom functions were, the NSPA’s, students’ or parents’ of students, in the context of the major time commitment the Prom preparations usually take. One attendee queried whose liability the event was. Joanna Cole, a 2003 New School graduate, current school library assistant, and incoming Alumni Representative to the Board, outlined the origins of the Prom. She explained that the Prom began in 2001 and that the NSPA handled it at P.J. Skidoo’s in Fairfax. In 2003, a parent took charge of the Prom, which was held at the Holiday Inn in Fair Oaks. In 2004, it met at Jammin’ Java. Suggestions for next year included starting Prom preparations earlier. The Faculty Rep informed the Board that one junior class began Prom preparations in November and the students used money raised in sophomore year in addition to funds raised during their junior year.

**e) Scholarships:** The Webmaster advised that he has posted the scholarship applications on the NSPA's website along with policies and procedures. The President reported that no applications have been received to date. The Vice President noted that a decision needs to be made concerning the allocation of funds for next year's scholarships at the June Board meeting.

**f) Graduation:** The President related that Joan Bardee is arranging the NSPA-sponsored post-Graduation reception on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, and seeks assistance from additional parents. It was noted that this is the 16<sup>th</sup> graduating class at the New School.

**g) 2008-2009 NSPA Board and Other Vacancies:** The President observed that, between the NSPA's and John Potter's efforts, the Board and other vacancies for the 2008-2009 school year are almost all filled. Those remaining open are 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Representative, Website Coordinator, Newsletter Editor, possibly an Assistant Secretary and one of the two Parents Council of Washington representatives. Lisa Doyle agreed to continue as one of the latter, as well as Rudolph Run Chair. The current Webmaster reminded the Board that he had registered the domain name and webhosting for three years. Discussion followed on whether a student could service the NSPA website with faculty oversight. The Webmaster advised that he spent approximately one hour a week on the website and that it is fairly easy to update. A suggestion was made to discuss student involvement further with Janis Trizna. Donna Kraemer said that she would speak with her son David about possibly helping with the website. The current Webmaster agreed to stay on through the summer.

**h) NewsWorthy Newsletter:** The President asked whether the newsletter should be a collaborative effort between the school and the NSPA. Other discussions on the subject included whether the newsletter should continue and whether the next Board should decide this question. The Board reached no conclusion.

**i) NSPA Survey:** The President noted that the Acting Treasurer/Volunteer Coordinator drafted and sent out to the Board a survey seeking feedback on this year's Gala Auction. The incoming Alumni Rep explained that, in her school years, all students were invited to work on the Auction and Seniors worked in return for partial funding of the Prom. One incoming Board member mentioned past Auctions where students could also attend. The Faculty Rep noted the evolution of the event from the involvement of Seniors to the current NSPA-organized status. The President posed the question of whether it, like the Rudolph Run, is a community-building event or a fundraiser.

**j) Adopt-a-Program:** The President expressed concern that, like last year, the Adopt-a-Program concept would again not be ready to be implemented at the end of the school year. Two Board members voiced concerns with the program as structured. Discussion of the program followed with suggestions running from implementation, to appointing a Coordinator, to wrapping the program under the established Program Committee. It was noted that no parent has stepped forward to serve as Coordinator or to head the program. This followed a parallel discussion at the April meeting. A suggestion

was made that the new Board, with its own perspective and creative ideas, consider the program along with any new concepts that could enrich the school experience for the community.

Next-year-new-parent Steve Welty offered to create an environmental and green program for the school beyond the existing Recycling Program. The Faculty Rep offered to put him in contact with Juana on the concept. He requested a copy of the Parents Council of Washington Best Practices material on Going Green: Sustainability Programs at member schools.

## **5. New Business:**

**a) D&O Liability Insurance:** The President reminded the Board that we had not submitted an application for D&O liability insurance although we had considered it on several occasions. She said that she would prioritize the reminder when transitioning the Presidency to Tom Grumbly.

**b) Buzzard Award:** The President conveyed a proposal by faculty member Janis Trizna that the NSPA establish an award for a graduating senior to honor long-standing and departing faculty member John Buzzard. The Board reviewed this proposal at length, especially the desire to honor John. Several members considered the singling out of one student with an award, however, as outside of the New School's philosophy. The Secretary proposed in place of a student award one for a faculty member along the lines of an enrichment stipend similar to that granted to Culver Fortna. Upon further discussion, the Board recommended that the award apply to a course, professional development or other enrichment activity that a faculty member desired to pursue during the summer break. It would have the same *caveat* as the NSPA scholarship of no replacement for New School funding. The Vice President added the restriction that the stipend could not be used for professional licensure requirements. The President posited that an application deadline of January would provide ample time to make a decision before graduation. The Board approved the John Buzzard Award for Faculty Enrichment as well as the Scholarship Committee's drafting of a proposal to be circulated online for the announcement at this year's graduation of the creation of the Award in John's honor.

**c) Field Day:** The traditional Field Day will take place in early June. It consists of a cook-out and outdoor activities. The NSPA provides lunch and the students play until 2:30 dismissal. Parent Jennifer Hill has agreed to organize the event this year.

**d) Alumni Affairs:** The incoming Alumni Rep reported that she will also serve as point person to the nearly 250 alumni of the New School. To that end, she has already created a MySpace and Facebook webpage for alumni. Incoming parent Steve Welty inquired whether there is a Homecoming event to which the reply was that there was not. The Rudolph Run Chair/PCW Rep suggested holding such an event concurrently with the RR race. Alumni traditionally are invited to the school in May, when they are home from college, so they can talk with HS students about the college experience.

**6. Next Meeting:** The Board discussed its next meeting as possibly June 18<sup>th</sup>, but reached no agreement. The 18<sup>th</sup> is the date currently showing on the school's web calendar. The President stated that she would consult with the incoming President who could decide whether he wished to conduct a meeting in June. She advised the incoming Board members to look for an email concerning the next meeting.

**7. Adjournment:** The President adjourned the Board meeting at 8:55 p.m.

**Minutes prepared by Betsy Sue Scott, Board Secretary**

**AGENDA  
NSPA BOARD MEETING  
May 21, 2008  
7:00 p.m.**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of April Annual Meeting Minutes
- III. Treasurer's Report
- IV. Old Business
  - A. Teacher Appreciation Day
  - B. Cappies Play
  - C. Fiddling Concert
  - D. Prom
  - E. Scholarships
  - F. Graduation
  - G. Board & other vacancies
  - H. NewsWorthy
  - I. NSPA Survey
  - J. Adopt-a-Program
- V. New Business
  - A. Buzzard Award
  - B. Field Day
  - C. Next meeting (June 18?)
- VI. Adjournment