

**Lawton Elementary PTA
Supplemental Budget Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2011, 9:15 AM
Café Appassionato, Interbay**

In Attendance: Lisa Blau (by phone), Diana Deen Thompson, Melissa Denke, Kirsten Dumo, Michelle Gonzalez, Elaine McNabb, Kimball Mullins, Connie Olson, Sarah Terry

2011-2012 Budget Update: Lisa, Kirsten, and Melissa met to revise the budget. They incorporated the changes we discussed last week, and presented a condensed version.

➤ **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to allow Lisa Blau to participate in the meeting, and to vote, by phone. Motion approved (7 votes in favor).

School Support: Kirsten distributed a summary of the school support portion of the budget, with revisions and recommendations to the Board (see attached).

Classroom Site Licenses and Computer Tech Maintenance:

Recommendation is to fund classroom site licenses at \$2,200, which is what it was raised to this year. Also to reduce computer tech maintenance to \$2,500, which is less than the \$3,000 that was requested, but is in line with this year's actual expenditures.

➤ **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$2,200 for classroom site licenses and \$2,500 for computer tech maintenance. Motion approved (7 votes in favor).

Teacher Stipends: The budget committee looked at three options for teacher stipends.

1. **Fund in full:** If we fund them in full, this is almost a 150% increase over last year. Also, we are essentially paying "bonuses." Some Board members are uncomfortable with the idea of paying bonuses.
2. **Fund in part:** Still a bonus, but not as high an amount. The budget committee recommends \$500 for all four positions.

3. **No funding:** Assuming the jobs would be done anyway, avoids the bonus problem. One problem is that some jobs might not be done. The original reason for matching crossing guard was that no one would do the job for the amount in the gold book.

Discussion: We discussed whether it would be more equitable to fund at a percentage rather than at a flat amount. Some jobs are bigger, and are valued higher by the district. We discussed various percentage levels. 25% would mean a total of \$1,726; 50% would mean \$3,553 (similar to this year).

- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$724.50 (50% match) for the safety patrol stipend. Motion approved (7 votes in favor, 1 abstain).
- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$1,056.50 (50% match) for the technology stipend. Motion approved (7 votes in favor, 1 opposed).
- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$616.50 (50% match) for the music performance stipend. Motion approved (7 votes in favor, 1 opposed).
- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$1,056.50 (50% match) for the SIT manager stipend. Motion approved (7 votes in favor, 1 opposed).

Volunteer Coordinator: We all agree that we want to support Helen's position, as she adds considerable value to the school. The budget committee recommends funding the position, but without the added benefits. This would mean \$5,303, rather than the \$6,170 requested. The Board has significant discomfort about the benefits issue. Specific issues include:

- Confusion about the actual rate. The school has asked for 16.42% for Helen, whose actual rate should be 10.84% (she is not eligible for retirement or medical coverage).
- We do not get adequate documentation from the school, and don't know what would happen to excess (i.e. if we paid a larger amount for benefits than is actually charged to the school).
- We don't want to be viewed as an employer for liability reasons. Paying 100% of Helen's salary and benefits could create the impression that we are her employer.

- Question: if we were asked to pay for a proportion of the total cost, would that be better?

➤ **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve up to \$6,170 for the volunteer coordinator. This will cover 10 hours a week for 36 weeks, and is contingent on the receipt of documentation of the actual cost of benefits from payroll. Motion approved (8 votes in favor).

Notes: We are still uncomfortable with the benefits piece. We need to steer clear of any supervisory role as far as Helen is concerned. We should begin a conversation earlier in the year with Christine about our joint responsibilities with respect to these positions.

Tutors: The budget committee looked at the total cost of the certificated tutors based on actual hours and rates. The amount came to \$18,625, \$375 less than the school requested. Although this difference is small and likely due to rounding, the committee recommends budgeting the actual rather than the estimated amount. A question arose as to whether we were being more insistent on specificity than in the past, and whether this might be harmful to school/PTA relations.

➤ **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$19,000 for tutors as requested. Motion failed (4 votes in favor, 4 opposed).

➤ **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$18,625 for 2 tutors, with the school paying the difference of \$8,143. Motion approved (8 votes in favor).

ReTeach/Homework Club: Several Board member have concerns about the program:

- ReTeach/Homework Club is designed to benefit students who are not turning in homework. At present, it serves a very small number of students, and has a high cost per student.
- There doesn't appear to be a way for students to transition out of the program. What is the overarching goal of the program?
- The cost has risen, and the program has run out of money in two consecutive years. Calls into question management of funds.

- If the program is geared toward homework support, rather than instruction, why does it require certificated teachers rather than volunteers? SSIA runs homework programs at other schools at a lower cost.

Discussion: The staff has proposed a more volunteer-oriented model to address our stated concerns. This was discussed in a staff meeting. Teachers feel that it is beneficial to have certificated teachers running the program, since they know the students and are familiar with their academic needs. The staff as a whole seems to believe the program is valuable. Additionally, the PTA membership showed strong support for tutoring on the survey we sent out.

- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$6,500 for ReTeach/Homework Club as requested. Motion approved (6 votes in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstained).

Playground Support/Hourly Tutors: Again, the calculations from the school are higher than our calculations based on hours and pay/benefit rates. The playground supervisors/hourly tutors are not eligible for medical or retirement benefits. Again, we would like to avoid paying the benefits portion for these positions. The budget committee recommends paying \$12,000 for playground supervision (in line with last year) and \$4200 for hourly tutors as requested.

- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to approve \$12,000 for playground supervision (in line with last year) and \$4200 for hourly tutors. Motion approved (8 votes in favor).

Final Calculations: Kirsten has already raised fundraising amounts by \$1,55. She added \$5,000 from carry forward back to the Grant-a-Wish program for this year. We approved (by e-mail vote) \$500 for new vacuums (this year's budget). According to Kirsten's notes, we are now \$1,800 over the bottom line total because of increases to the volunteer coordinator and teacher stipend line items. She will revise the budget and send it out for final approval by e-mail vote.

Grant-a-Wish: We discussed adding a separate Grant-a-Wish line item to avoid confusion in the future. Michelle clarified that

we do not need a vote of the general membership to add a line item, as we had thought.

- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to add a separate Grant-a-Wish line item to this year's budget. Motion approved (6 votes in favor).

Other Notes:

- First day packet expenses were increased to be in line with actual expenditures.
- Question: should we increase music maintenance to \$5,000 so it is in line with PE and library. We decided not to, since it is based on actual expenditures.
- Staff appreciation: the chairs do not want to be responsible for enforcing the equity issue with respect to gifts.

Standing Rules: Michelle is still working on revisions to the standing rules. She is trying to reconcile them with the WSPTA by-laws, which take precedence. She will send them out with changes tracked when they are complete.

Financial Review: Per WSPTA by-laws, this should happen at the end of the PTA fiscal year, not in November as we have done in the past.

Meeting Adjourned 11:50 AM

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Sarah Terry
Recording Secretary
April 17, 2011