


W. T. WOODSON PTSA SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES

September 15, 2009  Woodson Library

Attendance: *Nonmembers*—Arlene Pripeton, Jesse Binnall, Debbie Kilpatrick, Beth Mulloy, Robert and Michele Sta. Maria, Milagros V. Cole, Evalyn Holman, Amy Mackay, Elizabeth Donaldson, Lorraine Reilly, Eri Bales, Malcolm B. Coate (plus countless others who did not sign the attendance sheet, including the PTA’s other representatives). *Members*—Ann Ames, Jeanne Baker, Alexander Barron, Claude Barron, Sandy Barron, Joyce Bouchard, Peter Brandman, Maureen Cameron, Bea Campbell, Derrick Chamlee, Vicki Chamlee, Pamela DeSmidt, Margarita Foster, Rita Funaro, Beth Gilles-Whitehead, Alan Goldberg, Donna Greer, Mark Greer, Irene Hagemeyer, Wendy Hecker, Sandra Hoch, Chris Hoover, Nell Hurley, Claudia Kieffer, Cheryl King, Sam King, Jennifer Lewis-Cooper, Rita Manfredi-Shutler, Anne McConahy, Susan Morningstar, David Nebhut, Kathleen Nebhut, Eileen Nelson, Maureen Nemece, Elise Patton, Phyllis Payne, Dung Pham, Carole Post, Catherine Potter, Lisa Rampino, Matt Schneider, Sara Schneider, Teresa Schuckman, Alan Schwartz, Annie Schwartz, Stefan Schwarz, Mary Ann Shock, Meg Stofko, Ellen Stucker, Bill Tuceling, Karen Van Giezen, Donna Yudkin; Jeff Yost

I. Call to Order—President Nell Hurley called meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and read announcements.

- A. Robert’s Rules will be followed.
- B. Woodson Leadership Students will act as timekeepers.
- C. Speakers should raise their hands and wait to be recognized before speaking.
- D. Aside from the main speakers, each speaker should state his or her name for the official record and will have one minute to state an opinion.
- E. The proceedings are being videotaped.
- F. Turn off all electronic devices, including cell phones, please.

II. Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Quorum—President Hurley confirmed with Vice President and Membership Chair Donna Greer that we had a quorum.

IV. Agenda—Adopted as printed.

V. Motion—President Hurley recognized Recording Secretary Vicki Chamlee, who read the Motion:

I move that the W. T. Woodson High School Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) be dissolved effective November 1, 2009, and that a new 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization be formed immediately and such organization shall be called the W. T. Woodson High School Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO), and that all existing assets and funds currently owned by the PTSA be transferred to new accounts that will be owned by the PTSO.

VI. Review of Rules—For the Leadership Students’ edification, President Hurley reviewed the proper form for asking speakers questions, based on *Robert’s Rules* (10th edition), and pointed out that the time would be deducted from the speaker’s allotted time.

VII. Speakers

A. Debbie Kilpatrick, Northern Virginia PTA District Director

1. Thanked attendees for coming.
 2. Introduced PTA—The oldest and largest child advocacy group in the world—as volunteer driven at the local, council, state, and national levels. Its mission: to protect, care for, and educate children. Stressed that its administrative staff and professional advocacy group are all people (mothers, fathers, etc.), just like the assembled group.
 3. Discussed the three items for dissolution of Woodson’s PTA unit: dues, bylaws, and PTA positions:
 - a. *Dues*—All monies collected for state and national dues go to benefit children, and the associated benefits are listed on Woodson PTSA’s website. “You must step through the door and seek them.”
 - b. *Bylaws*—Designed to protect units’ nonprofit status in Virginia State law and the funds raised for the children. Can debate them at the state convention and decide the PTA’s direction; majority present at the convention approves bylaws.
 - c. *Position*—While not all will agree, members do vote on them at the local level, and they are implemented afterward. Examples of PTA positions:
 - i. A member approached PTA about moving energy drinks containing alcohol to the alcoholic beverages’ section in stores. Adopted position, which was picked up at the state and then the national level. The National PTA will now approach Capitol Hill with similar proposed legislation.
 - ii. At the November convention, will discuss youth suicide prevention and teen dating violence. Will be debated on the floor, but only members may participate.
 - iii. At the Department of Education’s public hearings at four locations in Virginia (September 30), PTA will reiterate its support for keeping staff funding to prevent 14,000 jobs from being lost.
- Information flows from national PTA down through hierarchy to local units’ level. Positions are broad based, and local units can take a stand. Reminder that the PTA advocates for all children in the district and the state.

4. Read comments from *Michelle Menapace, County Council of PTAs*
 - a. Membership dues have paid for toolkits to support and expand home-school partnerships.
 - b. Would like to improve communications, both ways.
 - c. Reminder that our local unit is a part of a family of PTAs.
5. Closing: Look at what has been done through the PTA. Future Woodson students should have the same opportunities that current members' children have enjoyed through the PTA.

B. Past Woodson PTSA President Catherine Potter

1. Discussed dissolution, its history at Woodson, and why it has been raised again.
2. Issues
 - a. Cost—Discussed dues. Also pointed out many volunteers donate funds instead of paying dues to the PTA hierarchy to keep the money at Woodson. The Woodson PTSA keeps its dues low to accommodate members, and the benefits don't match.
 - b. Control—Bylaws are the governing document of the Woodson PTSA, but we cannot change them. The State PTA's micromanagement does not allow dissent. Examples: If the state takes a position on year-round school, Woodson PTSA cannot deviate from that stance. In current state-mandated bylaws, any change to a line item of \$300 or greater in the budget must be approved by the general membership. Further, the State PTA just notified the Woodson PTSA that its bylaws submitted in 2009 have not been approved. In the local unit bylaws, Woodson PTSA wanted its treasurer to be available to take questions during the mandated annual audit, but the state won't allow it.
 - c. Relevance of PTA/PTSA system—The trend nationwide is to go with PTO/PTSOs. In the past, parents did not have direct access to legislators, so the PTA was important as a lobbying group. In this age, that group is not as necessary any longer. "Join the nation and go PTSO."

C. Past Woodson PTSA President Arlene Pripeton

1. Discussed lengthy and extensive past PTA affiliation and importance of participating with and helping students become involved community members.
2. Explored history of PTSO issue during her tenure as Woodson PTSA President.
3. Explained position on issue today: dissolve unit and go PTO
 - a. Cost—Need to be good stewards of funds and help children. The state's dues are about to go up 33 percent with more than 54 percent of the funds going to administrative costs.
 - b. Issues—Woodson PTSA also collects for other schools and lobbies the School Board and the county and state legislatures for proper environments for our children. During the renovation, Woodson asked for help from the PTA, but at all levels, no one would get involved. Personally ended her affiliation with the County Council because of its lobbying for political candidates, which could jeopardize the 501(c)(3) status.
 - c. PTA benefits—First, its training is inaccurate and elementary; moreover, the same information can be obtained through the Internet today. Second, the PTA's discount programs are also available through the Booster clubs. Next, only one student has

received a PTA scholarship (\$1,000) in recent years, and Reflections is not a big program at Woodson. Fourth, the PTA's insurance has not changed in years. Further, its provider wants all-night grad parties to be held at the schools. Woodson's president and treasurer researched the issue without the State PTA's help. Finally, issues regarding the 501(c) (3) status can be addressed in bylaws.

4. Read a statement from a Woodson PTSA volunteer who will not join the PTA because of perceived bias.

VIII. Debate—President Hurley read the rules for the debate concerning the motion (*see above*).

A. Eileen Nelson—spoke in support of PTO and about the Cavalier Cruise issues.

B. Wendy Hecker—spoke in support of PTA. Feels the issues presented are “nitpicking” and that everyone is in this together as the PTA supports all students.

C. Mark Greer—spoke in support of PTO and asked about the PTA's late support for the FAIRGRADE and bell schedule issues. PTA representatives interrupted his question.

D. Phyllis Payne—spoke in support of PTA. Introduced self as cofounder of SLEEP and indicated County Council did support FAIRGRADE's efforts. Expressed concern that the School Board has given more power to the Superintendent, and we need to stay together to have a voice.

IX. Vote (7:10 p.m.)—President Hurley announced the motion (*see above*) and that, in accordance with *Robert's Rules*, the doors would be closed. Members (designated by having been issued numbered cards) voted by raising hands. Parliamentarian Jesse Binnall, Principal Jeff Yost, and PTSA Volunteer Coordinator Phyllis Payne counted the votes. Because of conflicting vote counts and upon advice from the Parliamentarian, vote became a serpentine vote with members still raising hands and counting off one by one.

Final vote: 42 votes for dissolving PTSA and establishing a PTSO; 7 votes opposed (remain PTSA).

X. Motion—Adopted.

XI. Announcements

A. PTSA meeting immediately afterward in same location.

B. Introduced South County High School PTSO representative Nell Henderson, who spoke briefly.

XII. Adjourn—7:16 p.m.

Next regular meeting: September 15, immediately afterward, Library.

