

**Meeting of the Board of Directors
Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc.
1760 Third Avenue - 18th Floor
New York, NY 10029**

MINUTES

DATE: March 10, 1996
TIME: 10:20 AM
PLACE: Florence Nightingale Nursing Home

Attending:

Ted Peck (Presiding), Norman Bernstein, Lester Friesner (Recording Secretary, pro-tem), Irving Gerber, Julius Graber, Tehsing Niu, Marvin Leiner, Charles Puglisi, Henry Shereff, Craig Slutzkin, Thomas Sweetin.

Meeting opened at 10:20 AM, Ted Peck presiding in loco Saul Grossman, currently enjoying the California sunshine.

First order of business: financial report by Treasurer Julie Graber. He informed the Board that the NIAS Foundation increased its annual grant by \$5,000, from \$20,000 to \$25,000. The NIAS directors expressed their pleasure with the accomplishments of the student grantees. The \$24,000 gift from Joseph Flom for a new van is still reflected in the report, since the school has not yet solved the problem of ownership and insurance responsibility. (see Dr. Leiner report below.) Julie Graber reported that as of the end of the fiscal year, the Alumni Association balance sheet shows assets of \$491,658.

In the course of giving his report, Julie Graber commented on how he would like to find a "recent" graduate who could work with him now, and eventually take over as the organization's treasurer. At this point Tehsing Niu '89, revealed that she is an accountant with the New York Stock Exchange, and would be interested in working with Julie. After some discussion, Tehsing was unanimously elected Assistant Treasurer as Julie Graber beamed. (The question of whether or not she has to first be elected to the Board was put off for a future meeting.)

Charlie Puglisi reported that the Townsend Harris PTA is alive and well; membership is good and meetings are well attended.

Dr. Marv Leiner, our liaison with Queens College, presented his usual thorough and informative report. Despite the many cutbacks, T.H.H.S. students and faculty are coping. Teacher training is progressing. The alumni grants are helping offset other losses. Harris students may be able to take some four credit courses at Queens College next semester. Dr. Leiner noted that in his meeting with the new Queens College president, Dr. Sessoms, the president was interested and cooperative.

Although the ownership of the transportation van is still in limbo due to insurance problems, Dr. Leiner is pursuing new approaches at the college. The Financial Vice President who rejected the request to include the T.H.H.S. van under Queens College's overall vehicle insurance coverage has retired. Dr. Leiner reports that the woman who replaced him seems willing to explore possible solutions to the impasse.

Dr. Leiner pointed out that if there is no favorable solution to the bridge year problem, the school will need an additional \$100 for each for the students taking certain college courses. Ted Peck suggested checking with various foundations for specific grants for these funds.

Board member Craig Slutzkin '90 announced plans for a reunion of his class.

Two new board members were voted in unanimously. They are Gerald E. Maslon '40 and Prof. Harvey L. Shulman '39. Both have impressive curricula vitae, as is to be expected of T.H.H.S. alumni.

Tom Sweeten, our H.S. liaison, was asked by Ted Peck to remind principal Mal Largmann to make plans for the establishment of a Hebrew language program for the coming year. Sufficient funds earmarked for this specific purpose are now in hand, according to Ted. Tom noted that there will be an open house on March 16th at the H. S. for the 500 prospective students who have applied for admission.

Irv Gerber read several interesting letters from alumni. He also read an excerpt from New York magazine which included Leon Levy '42 in a list of the 100 "smartest" New Yorkers.

Ted Peck suggested that the newsletter could be made more interesting -- and better reflect the wide interests and capabilities of both new and old alumni -- if each issue had an article, story, or report by an alumnus on whatever subject he or she wished. Irv Gerber agreed to include a few lines requesting such articles for publication in the next issue of the newsletter

Ted Peck reported on recent THETA contributions, and plans to renew efforts to raise funds in 1996.

At this point, there were discussions of the current difficulties with the Florida chapter. Ted Peck reported that he had spoken with Norman Merino, and that Norman gave it as his opinion that members of the Florida Chapter wished remain part of the national Alumni Association. He indicated further, that the problem with New York was not a significant difference in policy or objectives, but a continuing series of annoying errors, slights and broken promises which seem never to end. He pointed to the listing in the newsletter of active members as "missing" and living, dues-paying members as dead. He again brought up the question of a current membership list which is often

promised but never produced. According to Ted, Norman felt that a solution could be achieved if a serious and constructive effort was made without rancor and placing of blame. Ted promised to bring this up at the Board meeting. (Which he obviously did.)

At this point Irv Gerber and Julie Graber asked to review the letter to Florida members which Ted Peck had promised to prepare for this meeting. Ted read the letter and asked for comments. Julie Graber suggested that the letter ought to make clear that the officers of the Florida Chapter are not only keeping 80% of the dues they collect, but more importantly, they are not using the funds for the purposes for which the Alumni Association was granted incorporation and tax-exempt status. Ted agreed to include a line to that effect in the letter.

Irv Gerber wanted the letter to be more aggressive and to let it be known that anyone whose dues are not sent directly to New York, is not a member of the Alumni Association. Irv pointed out that the reason we have "missing" members is because we never see the dues response from Florida alumni. Ted reminded the Board that his suggestion of a letter and a return postcard was not to argue or threaten, but rather to find out whether or not the positions taken by the Officers and Directors of the Florida Chapter reflected the views of the membership. Since our President, Saul Grossman and our legal adviser, Jerry Halpern were not present, Ted suggested that any action be delayed until those two had a chance to comment on the matter.

Dates for the next meetings were set for April 21 and May 19.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20

Respectfully submitted by Lester Friesner.