

**Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc.**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors (as approved on November 25, 2008)  
June 3, 2008**

**Location: New Leaf Venture Partners, New York, New York**

The following directors were present and constituted the quorum: Julie Chan, Moira Casey, Susan Getting, Gerald P. Halpern, David M. Herszenhorn (by phone), Dr. Malcolm G. Largmann, Marvin Leiner, Donna Manion, Tanya M. Odom and Craig L. Slutzkin.

Guest: Margherita Wischerth.

- I. Craig Slutzkin called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. and welcomed the directors.
- II. Mr. Slutzkin asked the directors to review the minutes from the April 1, 2008 meeting. He entered a motion to waive the reading of the minutes and accept them as submitted, which was seconded by Gerald Halpern and carried unanimously.
- III. Executive Committee Report. Mr. Slutzkin reported on the following:
  - a. Principal Search: Mr. Slutzkin commented about the process.
    1. Mr. Slutzkin said a new Principal would be named in the next few weeks. Steps have been taken to make sure that an excellent candidate is found.
    2. Mr. Herszenhorn said there needs to be enormous support for the new Principal.
    3. The school system opened 200 schools in the past four years. Every school needed a leader. The candidate pool in New York City has been depleted as a result of this, which made the search even more challenging.
    4. The choice will be formally announced first to the members of the C-30 committee then the entire school community.
  - b. Budget Cuts. At this time, Susan Getting requested that the order of the meeting be adjusted so as to allow proper time for the budget cuts to the school's operating budget to be discussed. Mr. Slutzkin as chair of the meeting granted this request.
    1. Ms. Getting distributed budget handouts. She was not aware as to whether the Queens College budget (for the bridge year) has been cut or not.
    2. Thoughts were discussed regarding the new budget as it does not cover the full payroll. Malcolm Largmann inquired as to whether there was a special fund that could be tapped in order to get more money. Ms. Getting said there was, and that is why she would like to see a letter writing campaign initiated.

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3. Ms. Getting said that Joel Klein said that if the budget cuts had been done evenly, each school would be required to absorb a 1.4% cut. However, the cuts were not done this way. Schools like Townsend Harris are being hit harder than lower performing schools. Townsend Harris was also hit harder than any school in our peer group, including Bronx Science and Stuyvesant. Ms. Getting would like the school community to contact their respective local legislators to try to change this.
  4. Dr. Largmann asked if any attempt was being made to work with the other specialized schools to work together to fight this. He also asked if this was being used as a teaching moment to mobilize the kids at the school. Ms. Getting responded that the timing of this is terrible; the students are focused on finals and Regents exams.
  5. David Herszenhorn said that this needed to be looked at from two perspectives: one where the cuts are fantasy as they are part of political games, yet the other where schools do, in fact, need to plan now for next Fall without knowing if the city and the state will restore the funds in time. The city and the state will argue about this. Mr. Herszenhorn further cautioned against school to school comparisons because all schools are different.
  6. Mr. Halpern asked where the Union stands on this. Ms. Getting said that the most recent Union contract prevents this from being as devastating as it could be.
  7. Mr. Herszenhorn suggested that the school invite Cathy Nolan in to explain the budget cuts to the students.
- c. Meeting Venue. Mr. Slutzkin noted that Ted Peck is looking for alternate meeting sites for our Board meetings and potentially found a location two blocks from Mr. Peck's apartment on the Upper East Side of Manhattan and gauged whether this would be more convenient. Because of the time limitations (the meetings had to end by a relatively early time), the Board felt that the location would not be optimal.

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IV. Events Committee Report:

- a. Julie Chan will work on a summer event. Museum events work well.
- b. The reunions are this Saturday. 120 people are signed up to attend. Ms. Odom added that a large number of students of color are not coming to the reunions. It is not clear why this is the case, but it is the reality of the RSVPs and what we might see at the event. Ms. Odom added that we are looking for ways to improve this.
- c. The Board discussed annual meeting venues but no decision was made.

V. Treasurer's Report: Mr. Slutzkin provided the Treasurer's Report through May 2008. Ms. Odom made a motion to accept the Report, which was seconded by Ms. Chan and carried unanimously.

VI. School Report: Ms. Getting reported the following:

- a. The school is aware that it has an Intel winner.
- b. The school did very well at the Robotics Competition. Phil Jones advised the team exactly the way the rules required him to: the students produced the robots from their own ideas.
- c. Students are going to Africa and Paraguay to build homes.

VII. PTA report. Moira Casey reported the following:

- a. The PTA is focused on the budget cuts. The PTA is meeting next week to discuss.
- b. The new PTA representative to the THAA Board will be Ida Messana.

VIII. Website. Julie Chan is working very hard on the development of the website. One goal is to make the website much more interactive.

There being no other business the Board adjourned. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for October 8 at 7 P.M. at the offices of New Leaf Venture Partners.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna Manion