

**Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc.**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors (as approved on December 3, 2013)**

**October 15, 2013**

**Location: New Leaf Venture Partners, 7 Times Square, New York, NY**

The following directors were present and constituted a quorum: Anthony Barbetta, Sydney Butts, Kimberly Eaton, Rishona Flesichman, Gerald P. Halpern (by phone), Christina Juva, Malcolm G. Largmann, Selina Lee, Jordan Leeds, Kimberly Lo, Tanya M. Odom (by phone), Nily Rozic, Craig L. Slutzkin, Vincent Yuen.

Guests: Rafal Olechowski

I. Craig Slutzkin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed the directors. Mr. Slutzkin began the meeting with a moment of silence in recognition of the passing of former Principal Tom Cunningham.

II. **Approval of Board Meeting Minutes**. Mr. Slutzkin asked the Board for any comments or questions regarding the minutes. There was one spelling correction (Jordan Leed's first name). The motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Vincent Yuen, seconded by Selina Lee and unanimously approved by the Board.

III. **Executive Committee Report**.

- a. Video Project: Interviews of original faculty are ongoing.
- b. Fundraising: No long term funding solution for the Hebrew class has been made to date. The short term plan to fund the class is to use a budget surplus from this year while continuing to search for future support. The school needs \$27,000 for the year to sustain the two sections of the class.
- c. Membership Dues: 720 dues payments have been received so far and reminders will go out in December. To track contributions, we may begin to advertise the percentage of dues contributions from each class or decade.
- d. Newsletter: A THAA Newsletter is in development.
- e. 2013 Commencement: The Annual Founders Award was presented to Sue Appel, Founding Assistant Principal of Science. Kimberly Eaton gave the keynote address.
- f. Annual scholarships: Most have been paid to recipients.

IV. **Events Committee Report**.

- a. Events Completed:
  1. 5/10/15/20/25<sup>th</sup> year reunions were each held.
  2. Brooklyn Cyclones Game – July 21
  3. Legal Professionals Networking Event – August 8 (12 people attended)
- b. Events Pending:
  1. Founders' Day – October 25
  2. Open House – November 4
  3. General mixer event – November 6
  4. Lean-In Event – Later in the Fall with Alumni panelists
  5. Annual Meeting – TBD
  6. Other various professional networking events - TBD

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- V. **Principal's Report.** Principal Barbetta updated the board on several developments and introduced Rafal Olechowski, the Assistant Principal of Humanities. Both presented the following:
- a. **Queens College:** Principal Barbetta reported that a good working relationship has been developed with the new QC liaison.
  - b. **Technology:** Faculty are using electronic grade books.
  - c. **Recurring Programs:** The election simulation is ongoing; this year, the students are focused on municipal elections including the Mayoral race.
  - d. **Language Programs:** There has been renewed interest in exploring the establishment of Mandarin Classes. There is concern that other specialized high schools (including Stuyvesant) are attracting students who want to have the opportunity to study Mandarin which Townsend Harris may be losing. Mr. Slutzkin questioned whether having such a class would dissuade students from taking Japanese, which has been a long-standing tradition at the school.
  - e. **Admissions:** Enrollment of Special Education students and resources for IEPs represent a potential challenge for the school
  - f. **AP classes:** Mandated AP history classes beginning in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades- there is a sense of some resistance among students and parents. Training of teachers for AP courses is also important in keeping them motivated to teach the coursework.
  - g. **Humanities:** Mr. Olechowski gave his assessment on the status of the Humanities Departments. The English Department is very strong. The Humanities Seminar can be strengthened including (a) better collaboration between Townsend Harris faculty and Queens college collaborator/faculty and (b) standardization of the curriculum amongst various sections of the seminar.

VI. **Treasurer's Report.**

- a. Craig Slutzkin reported that the fiscal year runs from September 1- August 31.
- b. Individual allocations amongst subfunds were reviewed. The budget and discretionary spending proposals were reviewed. A motion to accept the budget was made by Selina Lee and seconded by Kimberly Eaton, and passed unanimously.

V. **Old Business.**

- a. Mr. Slutzkin noted that a membership survey is in development.
- b. Mr. Slutzkin noted that a website upgrade is in development.
- c. Mr. Slutzkin noted that he wanted to do a re-draft of the by-laws.

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- VII. **PTA Report.** Jordan Leeds gave a brief presentation on PTA activities.
- a. Phone-a-thon started last week. Fundraising efforts were stronger than expected last year, despite Hurricane Sandy.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sydney Butts