

Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors (as approved on June 3, 2014)

April 3, 2014

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

The following directors were present and constituted a quorum: Jesse Ash, Principal Anthony Barbeta, Sydney Butts, Kimberly Eaton, Gerald P. Halpern, Christina Juva, Jonathan Kamler, Malcolm G. Largmann, Selina Lee, Jordan Leeds, Kimberly Lo, Tanya M. Odom (by phone), Craig L. Slutzkin, and Vincent Yuen (by phone)

- I. Craig L. Slutzkin called the meeting to order at 7:05pm and welcomed the directors.

- II. **Approval of Board Meeting Minutes.** Mr. Slutzkin asked for a review of the minutes from the February 2014 meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Christina Juva, seconded by Selina Lee and unanimously approved by the Board.

- III. **Executive Committee Report.** Mr. Slutzkin and Ms. Lee reported the following:
 - a. **Board Meeting:** The next Board meeting will be in Queens, at the Queens Public Library.
 - b. **Survey:** A membership survey was sent to 3,000 alumni (sent to members of the Classes of 1988 through 2013). 220 responses had been received so far.
 - c. **Membership Dues** The number of dues paying members was up slightly this year. A suggestion was made to increase annual dues from \$25 to \$30 (tying it to the 30th anniversary of the re-opening of the school).
 - d. **Alumni Newsletter:** A format as well as content ideas is still being developed.
 - e. **Alumni Association Website/Social Media:** The website has been updated with formatting more similar to the THHS website. In addition, board director Kimberly Lo has set up an Instagram account. The LinkedIn profile for the alumni association is now active.
 - f. **Board Committees:** The Board reviewed the “Proposed Committee Structure” included in the meeting agenda. These include Fundraising and Development, Events, Social Media, Young Alumni, Membership and School Relations. The committees will be asked to give a set of goals at the next meeting. Assignment of Board Directors to individual committees was reviewed.
 - g. **Admissions policy:** Special education students are to be admitted to the freshman class this September 2014. A letter sent by the Alumni Association to Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina in February that expressed concerns about this decision by the Department of Education was reviewed by the Board. 11 special education students have been admitted to the high schools. Strategic calls between the Alumni Association and the school PTA have also occurred. Johanna Chase, Director of Special Education at the Department of Education has informed school administrators that the number of admitted students annually could be as many as 30. Ms. Chase was questioned about support that would be provided for staff trained to teach special education students. Alumni Association board members will meet with staff from the Queens Borough President’s office and the Department of Education to discuss the details of the implementation of this plan.

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IV. **School Report.** Principal Barbetta updated the board on several developments:

- a. **School Curriculum:** The AP History examination will no longer be mandatory for all students. The pass rate in the past has only been 50%.
- b. **Open House:** The open house was held for students accepted for the Fall 2014 semester. 294 students were accepted and it is estimated that 280 students will matriculate.
- c. **College Admissions:** College acceptance results were presented, which included multiple Ivy League institutions.
- d. **Student Activities:** The school play was “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum.” The annual Robotics competition will be held at the Javits Center this month.
- e. **Other:** Principal Barbetta was interviewed by reporter Yazmin Khan for NPR on sleep deprivation among adolescents and academic performance.

V. **PTA Report.** PTA concerns related to the admission of special education students were discussed, including the impact on the future school ranking; resources for the 11 admitted students and the resources that have already been expended in the preparation for the new students.

VI. **Events Committee Report.**

a. **Events Completed:**

1. Lean-In Panel Event – February 9, 2014
 - i. A panel of female alumni discussed the book and its implications. 40 people attended. A follow up event was discussed. All alumni that attended will receive a follow up contact as a way to encourage them to become more involved in the alumni association
2. Social Media Networking Event—February 27, 2014
 - i. 5 alumni attended (weather may have been a factor)
3. Family Movie—March 8, 2014
 - i. A movie was screened at the school (*Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*)
4. Career Day—March 28, 2014

b. **Events Pending:**

1. Community Service Event
2. Real Estate
3. Entrepreneurship
4. 30th Anniversary of New School and Annual Meeting
5. Reunions: The classes of 2004 and 2009 will have their reunion on June 7; 1989, 1994 and 1999 are still confirming details.

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c. Other:

1. Kimberly Eaton is one of the producers of “The Velocity of Autumn” which will start soon on Broadway. She has offered tickets at a discounted rate for alumni for the April 21 show, which will be followed by a talk back afterward.

VII. **Fundraising Report.** Ms. Eaton reported that the fundraising committee is developing aims and recruiting more people. Preliminary fundraising goals are to support the Hebrew class and 30th Anniversary celebration.

VIII. **Treasurer’s Report.**

- a. Craig Slutzkin presented the financial report for the period between September 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014. The new membership dues cycle begins in April. After review of the report and discussion, a motion to accept the report was made by Gerald P. Halpern, seconded by Ms. Eaton and passed unanimously.

IX. **Old Business.**

- a. Workman’s Compensation Claim. No update.
- b. By-Laws: Association By-Laws for review by members and possible changes as this has not been evaluated in some time. This will be further discussed at the June 2014 Board meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sydney Butts