

Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors (as approved on May 21, 2019)

March 20, 2019

Location: New Leaf Venture Partners, 7 Times Square, Suite 3502, New York, New York 10036

The following directors were present and constituted a quorum: Michael Byc, Principal Brian Condon, Karen Curzio (by phone), Irina Kimyagar, Malcolm G. Largmann, Dr. Selina Lee (by video), Craig L. Slutzkin, Lara Traum (by phone), Aquib Yacoob, David Zarowin (by phone)

Guest: Franco Scardino.

- I. Co-President Craig Slutzkin called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM and welcomed the directors to our fourth meeting of the academic year.
- II. **Approval of Board Meeting Minutes**. The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 9, 2019 meeting. Corrections were made with respect to the date of the Class of 1988 reunion in the *Events* report. The motion to approve the minutes (Motion: Malcolm Largmann; second: Brian Condon, as corrected, passed unanimously.
- III. **Executive Committee Report**. Craig Slutzkin, Selina Lee and Lara Traum reported the following activities and led several discussions.
 - A. The Alumni Association continues to participate in SLT discussions. Ms. Traum is the co-chair. The SLT is currently working on the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) whereby the various school constituencies craft goals including, but not limited to, reevaluating diploma requirements and restructuring programs to have “majors”.
 - i. With respect to the concept of having “majors,” students would now have an endorsement, such as art or math.
 - ii. This will not change the Humanities seminar or Classical Languages requirements.
 - iii. The school is reaching out to students to solicit their opinions on the matter.
 - B. The Legislative Breakfast took place on Friday, February 8. Students, PTA representatives, staff, and alumni will address the legislators who attend.
 - i. Aquib Yacoob represented the Alumni Association and relayed his personal story to the legislators and their representatives.
 - ii. Students led the guests on a tour of the building. The school uses this occasion to pitch capital improvement projects, such as upgrading WiFi.
 - C. David Zarowin will be organizing a web meeting for students who got into NYU, discussing his mindset when he was entering the school. This program would be a prototype for potential expansion next year.
 - D. Career Day is this week; there will be a panel discussion led by Gary Mellow.
- IV. **School Relations Reports**.
 - A. **School Report**. Principal Brian Condon reported.
 1. The superintendent visited the school recently and observed nine classrooms, expressing her impressiveness in particular with the physical education department; She was also quite impressed in with the various social studies classes, where there were Socratic seminars. The department is working with the school librarian on these types of programs.
 2. The school instituted a new “Genius Hour” program whereby students can investigate anything each week and report on their findings.

3. The faculty has been supporting other schools in their own faculty development; for example, Franco Scardino is advising two schools on the implementation of an AP Capstone program.
4. There will be a focus on “Formative Assessment Strategies” during the 2019-2020 academic year.
5. As a reminder, there was a new class schedule implemented during the 2018-2019 academic year; thus far, this has been well received by the students.
6. Teachers have been working very collaboratively this year; many teachers have shifted from being solely “experts” to actual “learners.”
7. Ben Fung suggested to Principal Condon that companies such as his could hire interest. Principal Condon agreed to look into and work with Mr. Fung.
8. High school admissions results are still pending; it is already known that there will be an increase in Special Education matches this year.
 - a. The school has been active in its recruitment efforts to woo higher performing students.
 - b. The strategy has been to reach out to several organizations, parents and other educational contacts.

B. **PTA Report.** Mrs. Irina Kimyagar, the PTA Liaison reported.

1. She reiterated that Career Day was this coming Friday and said that she would look into whether the panel discussion could be Live-Streamed.
2. The PTA has been working with Mr. Mellow on shadow mentorships.
3. Fundraising has been going well, and the PTA is not far from its annual goal.
4. The PTA Dinner will be held on June 13; alumni board members are welcome to join.

V. **Treasurer’s Report.** Craig Slutzkin reviewed the Treasurer’s Report.

- A. Mr. Slutzkin reviewed balances, assets, dues, receipts, expenditures and changes in market values.
- B. Our endowment investment portfolio experienced a rebound, with the TIAA-CREF portfolio appreciating 6% in a two-month period; total assets now exceed \$2.3 million.
- C. Board members should have remitted dues by this meeting; most have.

VI. **Other Committee Reports.** Various members of the board presented.

A. **Events Committee Reports.**

1. Karen Curzio reported on reunion events. Reunions for classes of 1994, 1999, 2009 and 2014 have been planned, while the reunions for the classes of 1989 and 2004 are still pending.
2. Selina Lee reported on several other events that have happened or that will happen over the next months.
3. The THAA Mets Yankee event will take place on July 3.

B. **Social Media Report.** The report was deferred.

VII. **Old Business.**

- A. **Compliance Report.** The report was deferred.

VIII. **New Business.**

- A. The Board took a moment of silence for Mark Soffer, a longtime Humanities teacher who recently passed away.
- B. Mr. Scardino noted that both the school and the Board should have a conversation about a model whereby the school transitions from a two semester to a four quarter system.

The motion to adjourn was made by Malcolm Largmann and was seconded by Michael Byc. Motion was passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Craig L. Slutzkin
Acting Secretary of the Meeting

