

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
TOWNSEND HARRIS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors of the
Townsend Harris Alumni Association, Inc. held at the offices of
Shereff, Friedman, Hoffman & Goodman at 919 Third Ave, New York
City on Sunday, March 31, 1985.

Present were:

- Abraham Bein
- Alvin P. Dobsevage
- Lester Freisner
- Irving Gerber
- Carl Goldmark, Jr.
- Julius W. Graber
- Gerald P. Halpern
- Eugene J. Heil
- Malcolm Largmann
- Morton Lisser
- Melvin Moore
- Theodore Peck
- Henry D. Shereff, Presiding
- Kenneth Shorter
- Harold S. Spielman

Also attending was: Robert Haan

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 AM

Lester Freisner reported on the upcoming reunion. We have
invited Chick Chaiken to be the principal speaker. Stanley Lowell
will represent the Fiftieth Year Class of '35. The event will take
place at the Plaza Hotel on Sunday, June 2nd at 12 noon. The master
of ceremonies will be Ken Shorter. Stan Lowell has permitted us to
use his name in a fund raising drive with the Class of '35.

Irv Gerber reported that our treasury has approximately \$39,000.
in the bank. The costs of the newsletter going out next week are not
included.

Mort Lisser requested additional funds for his committee in order to make security arrangements for two rooms at THHS. This is a requirement of the Board of Education for a facility to store computers. The funds provided by the Board of Education are not enough to get a contractor to do the job. A contractor currently working for Mort's company is willing to do the job for \$2800.

Other disbursements approved by this committee generally followed the items in Mal Largmann's original \$10M request. Mort Lisser did note a \$150. reimbursement to a teacher who had advanced this sum to purchase practice time for the Tennis Team. The committee had declined to appropriate additional funds for the Tennis Team believing this to be a cost to be borne by the Board of Education and/or the P.T.A.. Mort asked the Board if his committee needed their (Board) approval to expend beyond the original \$10M.

Mal Largmann told of additional funds needed, especially in the area of Physical Education. Examples being the Swimming Team uses the Franklin K. Lane pool because of difficulties in getting the Queens College facility. We need transportation costs. Mal urged the Board to reconsider financing the Tennis Team for the balance of this year

There was a general discussion about who we can approach at Queens College to get more cooperation in scheduling the use of facilities.

Mort Lisser said that the committee's concept of the use of Alumni funds was to limit their expenditure to major items including college scholarships. Smaller day to day items should be obligations

of the students, parents and the Board of Education.

Abe Bein thought that we should foster a sport program at THHS, especially the non "big time" sports. Abe referred to Tennis, Swimming Fencing and the like.

Ted Peck said that we should look to individual alumni to sponsor a sport team.

Les Freisner proposed sending a questionnaire to alumni asking for interest areas and support.

Irv Gerber didn't think alumni should get involved in "trivial" non academic activities.

Mel Moore pointed out that the current interest on our funds (10% of \$40M) could provide funds for these trivial pursuits.

Mal Largmann was of the opinion that the \$10M voted for in an earlier meeting was meant to cover these expenditures.

Gerry Halpern believes thst in the long run the P.T.A. will pick up on these expenses, but for now, alumni should pay for these costs.

Henry Shereff said that we appointed the committee to deal with the \$10,000. grant we received. He suggested that the committee scope be enlarged to cover all expenditures on behalf of the school. He considered the current committee members to be "tough people" who would keep a lid on expenditures and permit us to raise the long term funds we need.

Mel Moore made a motion to approve funds for the Tennis Team for the balance of the year. Motion was seconded and approved.

Henry Shereff made a motion to expand the powers of the com-

mittee to supervise all expenditures for THHS and our relations with the P.T.A.. The duty of this committee would also include an obligation to look for other sources of funding in the event the committee denied money to a worthwhile activity.

Discussion:

G. Halpern-There is a volunteer who is willing to represent the P.T.A. at Board meetings. General discussion was that we had best not have a self appointed volunteer represent the P.T.A..

A. Bein- Committee must report to the Bosrd.

J. Graber- Committee can only act on pricipals laid down by the Board.

H. Shereff- We have no such set of guide lines. Can Graber take on this job? Bein and Gerber will also serve on this committee.

E. Heil- Our guiding principal should be the academic function of the school, not physical education.

K. Shorter- We cannot override a committee and expect it to continue to function.

T. Peck- We should use the committee as a screening body, reporting to the board.

M. Lisser- There should be someone between the committee and the Board, which meets infrequently. Is there an Executive Committee?

H. Shereff- The Program Implementation Committee was designed to be an Executive Committee but its current membership includes almost the entire Board.

M. Largmann- What was purpose of the \$10M appropriation if the

Board is reviewing each expenditure?

H. Shereff- The items in the letter were approved, all others must be similarly approved.

M. Lisser- Believes it the committee's function to make sure that any given expenditure should not be paid by the Board of Education.

G. Halpern- What good is a Board's right to review if it is the fact?

H. Shereff- Board will review only those cases where the committee denied funds. All items approved by the committee will be expended.

M. Moore- What does Board of Education cover?

M. Largmann- The Board of Education provides a fixed sum per student for extra-curricula activities. All other expenses must come from outside sources.

M. Moore- Suggests that Largmann make a detailed analysis of next year's extra-curricula budget; subtract the Board of Education allocation and request the balance from the Board.

M. Largmann- Pointed out that the school is in a developmental stage with increased needs. He believes the need for funds will not continue at this level.

T. Peck- Our function is enrichment. Enrichment of students not the Endowment Fund. He is in favor of having a more liberal policy with our money.

M. Lisser- We have a temporary problem at THHS. When the school has 1000 students, this should be eased.

M. Largmann- Expects some improvement in the future, but does not believe all areas will be covered by the Board of Education.

H. Shereff- Added a "softer" man to the committee, Ken Shorter.

I. Gerber- As a matter of practice, the committee will approve all the principal's requests.

A. Bein- We should sponsor sports activities in addition to academics.

M. Largmann- Students want sports.

E. Heil- Guiding principle in making any decision should be academics not athletics.

R. Haan- Will requests for funds for teacher courses go through this committee and will this request need to be repeated each year?

Consensus of the Board- Yes. There was a general discussion on the nature of courses taken by teachers, but no conclusion was reached.

There was a call for a vote. The motion was carried.

Julie Graber reported on a problem facing the Alumni Assn. on June 30, 1985 when we must submit data for a final determination by I.R.S. on our Tax Exempt status. Because of the way grants are being received, there is a possibility that we may be classified as a "Private Foundation". This will create problems in trying to develop an Endowment Fund.

Henry Shereff reported for David Henkle on the Internship Program. Every student who wanted a placement has been placed.

Mal Largmann told of the work done by Ms Orner in the Guidance Dept. Placements were made at Queens Hall of Fame, Museums and Playwrites Horizons.

The Board pointed out to Mal that The Museum Of Natural History and Playwrites Horizons were alumni referrals.

Abe Bein said that good publicity was essential to THHS. While Jonas Salk was perhaps our most famous alumni, Abe suggested that Reuben Fine could be the next. He suggested that the Chess Club at THHS be named after Mr. Fine.

Irv Gerber reported that there was little progress in working with Mr. Mailman (Democrate Party leader in Nassau Co.) to replicate THHS in Nassau Co.. Gerry Halpern is working with Mr. Mailman to apply for N.Y. State funding for this purpose.

Henry Shereff told us that he will address a meeting of the South Florida Chapter of the Alumni. At that time he will present a charter (designed by Ted Peck) to that group.

Henry also informed us that Eugene Lang has pledged \$1000. per year to the Alumni. Gene Lang is also setting up a scholarship of \$1000. per year to a worthy student of THHS who attends the Eugene Lang School at the New School.

Henry then introduced the subject of whether THHS should be an Examination School. The options are basically:

- 1) Do nothing- Continue admissions as in the past.
- 2) Apply to the State Legislature to have an examination be the sole criteria for admission to THHS.
- 3) Use an examination as one of several tests for admission.

Any decision that we may arrive at will be held in abeyance pending Henry Shereff's meeting with Donald Mannes. We don't want any precipitous action on our part to interfere with the primary object of a THHS building on the Queens College Campus.

Mal Largmann described his difficulty in selecting the Sept. '85 entering class within the present system. The school is limited in the number of students chosen from each high school district as well as other restrictions imposed by the Board of Education. In view of this Mal is thinking seriously of a test school, something he did not favor originally.

Gerry Halpern read a section of the NYS Education Law which indicated that the Board of Education can expand the number of schools which grant admission by exam only. These schools can also maintain a "discovery" program for disadvantaged students. These students take the exam and get some undefined preference after taking a summer prep course and being recommended by their elementary school principal. Gerry has spoken to a state senator who is willing to sponsor a THHS exam bill in the legislature.

A question was raised as to the probability of getting a mixed group of students as an exam school. Mal Largmann thought this was most probable, especially from Queens.

Julie Graber told of a chance meeting in Albany with the legislative assistant to the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee. He was told that all bills re THHS would be referred to the Board of Education for advise and comments.

Ken Shorter noted that Senator Collandria (referred to by

Gerry Halpern) could guide a bill through the Senate, but would face great difficulties in the Assembly. Ken favors a test coupled with an opportunity to evaluate other factors.

Bob Haan wants the authority to deviate from exam scores to rest solely with THHS administrators.

Mort Lisser called attention to the opposition THHS faced at the vote for establishment of the school. There was a general discussion of the opposition to "elitist" education by certain members of the Board of Education and others and the effect of a request for an exam school would have.

Mel Moore discussed the possibility of giving disadvantaged students a scale of extra points similar to veterans allowances on civil service tests.

Mal Spielman Questioned whether we have any evidence that a test is the best method of admission selection. He pointed out that colleges are drawing back from sole reliance on the S.A.T. exams. Tests encourage good test takers and in a sense favor conformity.

Henry Shereff said that the use of an exam as a screening device would eliminate the problems of using the exam as the sole criteria.

Mal Largman noted that the public perceives an exam school as more prestigious. He also pointed out a current problem of potential students who decline THHS admission because of travel problems.

Al Dobsevage said that in 20 years at West Conn, the highest

S.A.T. scorers were the best language students.

There was a call for a vote. Results were:

Do Nothing-----	0
Exam School-----	7
Exam as Screening-----	10

As agreed beforehand, all action will be postponed until an appropriate time.

Mal Largmann told us that Donald Mannes and two Queens State Legislators had been at THHS at different times to talk with P.T.A. and students. All expressed interest in having a new building for THHS at Queens College.

Henry Shereff has learned that the exchange visit to a Japanese school we agreed to fund was available for girls only since the school is for girls only. Saul Cohen is working on a similar program with an Israeli school.

Mal Largmann is uneasy with "boys only" or "girls only" programs. He would like us to consider only activities open to all students.

Ted Peck reviewed a mock up of a fund raising brochure made up by Mort Lisser, Bob Haan and himself. There was a general discussion as to where to have this printed. Queens college will do the job at no cost but there are problems of timing as well as quality.

On a motion by Abe Bein the Board voted to pay for the printing at an outside shop.

The board discussed whether there should be a P.T.A. representative at our Board meetings. The consensus was negative. We have Alumni representatives at P.T.A. meetings also at meetings of the

Consultative Council (which consists of Parent, Teacher, Community and Alumni representatives). This should enable all interested parties to keep up to date on our activities.

Henry Shereff reported that April 2 was open school day at THHS. The school can be visited by interested alumni on most Thursday mornings--please call in advance.

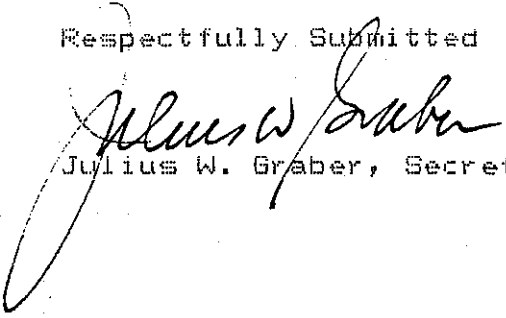
Les Freisner suggested that we invite a student to the June 2nd luncheon. Ted Peck, Gerry Halpern and Julie Graber spoke in opposition

On a vote the board decided not to have any students at this time

The next meeting was set for April 21.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted



Julius W. Graber, Secretary