

DISTRICT PARENTS' COUNCIL MINUTES SEPTEMBER 18, 2003

Present: Karp, Hill, Savino, Carpenter, Fletcher, Tengi, Weeks, Kley, Seitz, Williams
Galiano, Kahme, Bruno, Stevens, VanSelous

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 AM by Judy Karp.

SHERYL STONE – HEALTHY COMMUNITIES/HEALTHY YOUTH

Mission Statement: The Hopewell Valley Municipal Alliance facilitates coordination and communication between community groups, municipal governments, schools, and faith communities as together we collaborate to address substance abuse issues and promote healthy communities and healthy youth in Hopewell Valley.

- HCHY Brochures are being handed out at all back to school nights.
- HV Mayor's Breakfast – Saturday, October 4, 2003, 8:30 AM – 10:30 AM at the HV Golf Club. Please feel free to invite anyone from your school who may be interested in attending. \$5.00 contribution at the door to help cover the costs.
- Executive Committee of HCHY – School Sector
This committee is comprised of a parent representative from each school, a teacher/guidance counselor from each school, and a student representative from the middle school and high school.
PTO presidents should check with their respective principals to verify their school's participation.
First meeting of school sector of HCHY will be 9/24/03 at 4:00 PM at the curriculum office.
- A member of Parent District Council will sit on the Executive Committee of HYHC. Judy Karp and Judy Hill (PDC convener & recorder) have been asked to participate.
- Hopewell Valley Night Off – March 2, 2004 – Tuesday evening. With the support of local school officials, sports leaders, parents, community and religious leaders, all sports practices, classes and homework will be cancelled on this special evening. It was designed in response to the increasing demands of work and school on personal and family time.
- Sheryl Stone has requested that all PTOs advise her of School/ PTO Newsletter deadlines each month in order so that she may submit the insert "Ideas for Parents" for publication.

RECREATION FOUNDATION – ATHLETIC FIELDS BEHIND TIMBERLANE

- The plan includes the development of 2 baseball fields, 2 softball fields, 5 all-purpose fields, two detention basins and a parking lot. This project will be divided into four phases.

- The Planning Board has approved the master plan for this project. All permits have been obtained. Still waiting on wetland approval which affects the development of one field.
- Phase I has begun with the development of 2 all-purpose fields and a detention basin. It is planned to have the fields playable in the fall of 2004. Funding in the amount of \$490,000.00 has come from the Recreation Foundation. Phase II will entail developing a large detention basin and bringing on one field at a time. Lights have been taken out of the plan. Phase III will include a parking lot. Prior to a parking lot, individuals will park at Timberlane and walk across to the fields.
- Recreation Foundation Fundraiser – “Become a Planter”
This fundraiser was developed in order to help cover the budgeted cost of \$50,000.00 for 300 trees and shrubs at an average cost of \$150.00. Individuals can make a permanent contribution to the project now as a Planting Partner! The HVRF is inviting the community to plant with them ... and be recognized on a plaque at the site! \$150.00 ...Planter - \$75.00...Supporter...\$1,000...All Star. The tax-deductible gift to the Recreation Foundation of Hopewell Valley, Inc. can be mailed to P.O. Box 491, Pennington, NJ 08534. Any questions can be directed to Kim Bruno at 737-0918, kmbruno@aol.com.
- Author James Vollbracht’s book “Stopping at every Lemonade Stand” is available for purchase at the Superintendent’s office for \$10.00. Mr. Vollbracht was the guest speaker at the teacher’s workshop on their first day back to school.

CAN SYSTEM UPDATE

- All parents, secretaries and nurses have access to the student data as of today.
- Out of a total possible 3800 students, we currently have information for 3000 students and are awaiting 800 students to be logged on. District has mailed out 2nd reminder letters and principals have sent out reminder memos and e-mails encouraging parents to log on ASAP. District personnel will make reminder phone calls to parents not logged on after we see the response to district/school reminder letters and e-mails.
- John Hager has assured us that the CAN system is a secure database and that he has the required certification for security.
- Each school has their own copy of the database in Win School and will be required to print out hard copies of student information to be used in case power is lost. These hard copies will contain all medical information as well.
- The district will run a test of the CAN system which will make emergency phone calls to the two numbers provided by parents for the purposes of running through the process with district secretaries, etc. Community will be alerted ahead of time that the test is being run.
- Nick Lorenzetti has offered to the principals additional secretarial help if needed to input hard copies of Student Emergency Contact information. This is a priority.
- Student directories will be produced from the information contained in the CAN system. Only the student data of those parents who have not opted out will be contained in the directories. PTOs are still waiting for a higher percentage of student data to be collected before producing student directories.

BACK TO SCHOOL UPDATE – NICK LORENZETI

- Opening of School Enrollment data was passed out. Total in-district students were 3,808; 1,076 at High School; 947 at Middle School; 1,785 at elementary schools. Total students receiving special education services were 571.
- Nick reported that there was a smooth opening of school. Transportation issues were minimal. There were some glitches in the new automated system being used in all school cafeterias, particularly at the high school. The kinks have been worked out.
- Demographic projections from the last two years were somewhat different than actual numbers. At the elementary level, Nick stated that it was impossible to have an equal number of students per class at all schools. He stated the current class size research indicates that class size impacts K-3rd graders and not 4th graders and up with respect to learning.
- In November, Steve Cochrane will be giving a report to the School Board on the short and long term recommendations for Timberlane middle school.
- The school district is currently gathering more information regarding the Traditional Neighborhood Development, which is proposed to be built in the southern tier of Hopewell Township.
- Currently the district is at an impasse with four district staff associations – the secretaries, paraprofessionals, technicians and transportation. Nick is hopeful to come to some resolution with two of these associations. The district has filed the paperwork to go to mediation with these four groups if necessary.
- The shade of gold, which is being used in the new gym, is slightly different than what was used before. For clarification purposes, there has been no change in school colors at the high school and no new uniforms will be ordered.
- John Bach is investigating whether they could add lockers in the team rooms due to the concerns raised about high school students having to carry their own gym clothes, locks and sports equipment with them throughout the day. The students can only use the lockers in the gym during their respective gym period or when they are at sports practice. The new lockers are large enough to allow all students to safely secure all their belongings during their respective gym and sports periods.
- September 23, 2003 is the new date for Back to School night at Bear Tavern due to having to cancel their original date because of Hurricane Isabel.
- Project Democracy is up and running and more information will be forthcoming regarding this initiative in the near future. We will be making a concerted effort at all back to school nights to get parents registered to vote. Voter registration forms will be made available for all parents. Parents will be reminded about the use of absentee ballots.
- At the board retreat this weekend, September 20th & 21st, the board will be making a decision about whether or not to move forward with football. One quarter of the football budget will become a part of the school district budget this year.
- Nick Lorenzetti will review with Pat Priesing the status of the Gifted and Talented Committee and will review with Susan Weinman the status of the Language Arts Committee.

