

Westborough Fine Arts Education Association

Meeting Minutes – September 22, 2020 Zoom Virtual Meeting

In attendance: Beth Kinsky, Kelly White, Alyssa Dver, Chris O’Keefe, Katrina Banks-Binici, Chris Martin, Connie Hastings, Jennifer Niece, Lisa Chace, Michelle French, Jessica Crandall, Pauline Sciarappa, Debra Cushman

Treasurer’s Report – Chris O’Keefe

Expenses:

- o Normal “summer” expenses: \$19 for Filing the annual report with the Attorney General’s Office (same as last year), tax filing fee of \$35 (same as last year) and \$150 for the renewal of PO Box rental (increase of \$10)
- o Waiting on the Accountant Expense (est \$750)

Income :

- o No Income to speak of – received the funds from Mr WHS (\$5810) which I will now turn around and write checks to WHS and the Food Pantry totalling the same amount
- o \$10 from Amazon smiles
- o There is one membership totaling \$75 that I have not yet added to books

Meeting Minutes – Katrina Banks-Binici

Minutes from the June 9 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Fine Arts Director Report – Chris Martin

- Ms. Jaz is on leave for Fall term but will hold weekly workshops such as how to audition, improv, etc.
- Gibbons will have a fall play (Miss Nelson is Missing) involving a small cast, double cast and a green screen. Tickets will be sold to a live streamed performance. There will be opportunities for tech such as costuming, etc.
- There is a limit to how many students can be in each fine arts class (must be less than 25 students maintaining a distance of 10 feet), so some larger ensembles will be separated into smaller sections (by instrument, vocal part, etc.)
- Mill Pond – 6th grade ensembles will start first, hopefully by mid-October. There will be a virtual Petting Zoo for 5th graders in which seniors will demonstrate each instrument and talk a little bit about it. Orders will be placed via online form with curbside pickup at French’s. Once this has been completed, sectionals will be assigned and will hopefully be around November 1st.
- A new chorus teacher, Michael Patterson, has been hired for in person instruction at Mill Pond.
- Mr. Tomashefsky has not fully retired and is teaching part time (0.2 position). With the addition of a new teacher, Doug Dufresne, this allows 5th grade band to be divided into sectionals.
- High School: Orchestra has been able to begin rehearsing because they can mask while playing. Currently band and chorus are focusing on rhythms, and anticipate they will begin rehearsing outside during the first week of full hybrid.
- Elementary: There will be a 3rd grade strings program with virtual lessons after the holidays.
- Upside of the pandemic: D-Wing has been thoroughly cleaned and organized; art room has been streamlined with individual stations throughout the rooms.

- HS Remote learning: art, band, orchestra and chorus are now offered for full credit.
- Gibbons Remote learning: 8th graders will take health and tech and the 7th graders will take music and art. These electives for remote Gibbons students will run in 2 semesters, while the in-person students will have their electives in trimesters, maintaining the traditional specials for 7th (robotics, music, and global issues) and 8th (health, art, and tech).
- HS extracurriculars: Chris M. will gauge student interest through sign-ups. DESE guidelines will mandate which, if any, of the music extracurriculars will run. He would like to start on October 5th.
- Activity Fees:
 - High School \$100 for athletics and fine arts; \$75 for clubs (no charge for Tri-M because it's service)
 - Gibbons: \$50 for everything
- Disney trip refund has been received from World Strides and Chris M. will begin processing checks to return to families once the school year has fully started. Students will also be receiving a travel voucher.
- Many WFAEA members expressed interest in there being a communication to parents of the fine arts programs and their status. Kids need reassurances that their activities matter and are important. Little information has been communicated, while athletics has been sending a lot of information. It was suggested that the fine arts reopening plan be sent out to families, with the graphic of what the fine arts look like at each grade level.
- Heaters will be used in outside music practice areas during the colder months.
- WPS is purchasing a Smart Music account for all fine arts students so that they can participate on remote days.

Membership

Membership levels have been streamlined this year; higher levels of giving (\$100+) include a seat of recognition.

Fine Arts Guide

Karen Amlaw and Dunkin Donuts have reached out wanting to support us. A committee will be formed who will reach out to existing advertisers to offer "ads" at a reduced rate. (Jess Crandall and Lisa Chace offered to help reach out to businesses.) Higher giving levels may include special recognitions on our social media. Chris M. suggested including additional recognitions of advertisers on the back of performance programs throughout the year.

It was suggested that we recognize those businesses who have supported WFAEA over several years (5, 10, 15 years) with a special designation.

Deb Cushman offered to help with the Guide.

Restaurant Fundraisers

With the colder months coming, more restaurants may rely on takeout and restaurant fundraisers may be an attractive option for increasing business. Some of the restaurants suggested: Westboro House of Pizza, Central House, Mandarin, Uno's, Arturos, Roccas, Yummy Mummy, Mooyah. Another option was a singing candy gram, potentially with candy from Sugar Shack. It was suggested to put a call out for volunteers in our newsletters to help with this fundraiser.

Newsletter

Monthly newsletter sent to families. We hope to include the first edition with the membership appeal letter to give parents a sample of future editions. First edition is targeted for October 15th. Some

examples are: faculty spotlight, fine arts updates and alumni “where are they now” section. We hope to include items for each school. Chris M. will push out the newsletter to parents initially and WFAEA will send subsequent editions out by email. Chris M. may also push out to faculty, staff and via Twitter. Deb Cushman volunteered to take on the faculty spotlight section. Chris M. will write a Director’s Update for the Fine arts department, Denise Whitehall is willing to help with alumni connections, and we will look for others to take on individual columns.

Members would also like to make sure that we do something special to recognize and thank the Fine Arts staff this year.

Adjournment: 8:46 pm

Motion to adjourn; seconded; all approved