



**Stowe Community Group Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2017 ~ 6:30 PM
Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary School**

1. Call to Order/Welcome: Amy Hamilton, SCG Co-Chair

The sixth SCG meeting of the year was called to order at approximately 6:30 PM by Amy. Eight parents were present as well as Assistant Principal Josh Levy.

2. Assistant Principal's Report: Josh Levy

Mr. Levy was excited to announce that Heather Blanchard has been hired as the next HBS Principal and will start July 1. Ms. Blanchard hopes to attend some school events before the end of this school year.

Standardized testing: 4th graders will take standardized tests this week, and then this round of testing will be finished except for makeup testing for students who missed any days. There will be a 5th grade science assessment later this spring, taken with paper and pencil. Grades 3-8 will take eMPowerME tests annually, in the spring.

On Friday, April 14 the students have no school. The staff will have a professional development day, largely focused on behavior support and special education. Teachers will also begin work on class placements. Teacher assignments will be mailed home in mid July.

On Wednesday, April 5 the School Board will hold a public forum on the proposed school budget for 2017-2018.

On Wednesday, April 12 the School Board will vote on the proposed budget that they will send to Town Council.

On Thursday, April 6 at 6:30 PM will be the 3rd grade spring chorus concert.

On Friday, April 7 from 6:00-8:00 PM is 5th Grade Science Discovery Night.

Monday, May 1 is Muster Day for the 5th grade. There will be more Revolutionary War activities later in the spring.

Also on Monday, May 1 at 6:30 PM is Step Up Night for incoming HBS families, with 5th grade tour guides.

On Tuesday, May 2 there will be school day and evening performances of the HBS musical *Joust*.

On Tuesday, May 9 is the All Town Band Concert (with musicians in grades 5-12) at 6:30 PM in the BHS gym.

It is likely that Friday, June 23 will be the last day of school. [Editor's note: The School Board has officially voted on June 23 as the last day of school for 2016-2017.]

3. Co-Chair Report: Amy Hamilton (Open Co-Chair Position)

Amy shared the results (thus far) of her inquiry about SCG leader plans for next year.

Amy Hamilton: co-chair term is up July 2017

Erinn Rossignol: stepping down as treasurer; will continue with Bobcat 5k

Becky Wilkoff: current positions are secretary, hospitality and volunteer coordinator; needs to step down from one or two of these roles next year TBD

Amanda Similien: will continue with fall fundraiser

Mary Dinsmore: stepping down from events; may be interested in another leadership role

Samantha Marini: willing to continue with logo and hospitality

Billie Jo Wallace & Shawn Gerwig: will continue with Box Tops

Kim Bolshaw: will continue with sustainability

Alyssa Goodwin: stepping down from events

Denise Zavitz: possibly continuing with hospitality, TBD

Gail St. Pierre: stepping down from all elementary school craft fair

Erica Parthum Litzell & Sheryl Palese: stepping down from book fair

A lengthy discussion followed about the troubling downward trend in overall volunteer participation as well as meeting attendance and leadership recruiting. Many of our core volunteers are moving on to BJHS or wanting to take a break after several years of leadership. How do we get new parents and younger families involved? Do

people understand how many field trips and resources at HBS are supported by SCG? Can we be doing a better job of educating people about the importance of participating in and contributing to SCG so that we don't lose our field trips? How do we engage people and keep it fun and worthwhile? Do we need to trim down the number of projects and events that we do? Should we conduct a short survey to learn more about the priorities of our families and also educate people in the process?

One idea is to ask the teachers to help us spread the word to their families that SCG will not be able to continue without volunteers. Mr. Levy offered to have a few SCG leaders attend an upcoming team leader meeting. Keisha Payson, Kim Bolshaw and Becky Wilkoff will attend the staff meeting before school on Wednesday, April 26 to ask about having teachers send a forwarded message from SCG and also ask if they have any feedback or ideas.

Amy Hamilton will update and summarize the SCG welcome letter from September and include it in upcoming SCG newsletters. Mr. Levy also agreed to include this SCG update in the HBS April newsletter.

For anyone reading these minutes, SCG needs some fresh energy and we welcome your ideas!

4. Secretary Report: Becky Wilkoff

The minutes from the March 13, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

5. Treasurer Report: Erinn Rossignol

6. Committee Reports

Community Events: Mary Dinsmore, Alyssa Goodwin, Stacey Jenkins - Monday, June 12 will be the date of the annual Ice Cream Social for all HBS families followed by the June SCG meeting.

Fundraising:

Bobcat 5K - Katie Cole & Erinn Rossignol - Races will be Saturday, May 20: 8:30 AM 1 Mile Family Fun Run & 9:00 AM 5k. Erinn reports that sponsorships are coming in and there have been no new expenses. Race registration is off to a slow start but we hope it will pick up after spring break.

Box Tops & Labels for Education - Billie Jo Wallace & Shawn Gerwig

Fall Fundraiser - Amanda Similien

All Elementary School Craft Fair - Erika Lichter, Gail St. Pierre, Meg Davis (CFC), Becky Kirker (CFC)

Hannaford Helps Schools - Kym Shoemaker

Helping Hands: Terrie Cope leads this group and comes in on Tuesday and Thursday mornings to work on teacher projects. Volunteers are always needed for this very important program to help the teachers.

Hospitality (Teacher & Staff Appreciation): Samantha Marini, Keisha Payson, Becky Wilkoff, Denise Zavitz - The March luncheon for all staff during parent/teacher conferences was very well received. Thanks to everyone who helped with and contributed to the luncheon!

Logo Items: Samantha Marini

Scholastic Book Fair: Erica Parthum Leitzell & Sheryl Palese - Spring Book Fair: April 26 to May 3, 2017 - Seeking new book fair co-chairs for next year. We would ideally have them shadow the current co-chairs at the spring book fair. Please contact Erica or Sheryl or email SCG if you are interested in learning more!

Sustainability (We Compost It!, CLYNK, Harriet's Haven, etc.): Bonnie Gilman, Kim Bolshaw Noetzel, Keisha Payson - The CLYNK Maine Recycles Championship is underway through April 24, earning extra cash for our bottles and cans. Be sure to pick up a CLYNK bag or two in the HBS foyer. **A motion was made, seconded and approved to spend up to \$250 on soil and compost for Harriet's Haven (our school garden).**

Volunteer Coordinator (Walk/Bike to School Days, misc. volunteer requests): Becky Wilkoff - The next monthly Walk/Bike to School Day is Friday, April 28. Becky is seeking volunteers for the cafeteria and playground on April 13 and other days when the bus drivers are unavailable. Please contact Becky with any misc. volunteer needs for a project or event that is not already covered by a SCG committee.

Winter Gear Give & Take: Jill Ellis & Sarah McPherson - Please continue to contact Jill and Sarah if HBS families have outerwear needs.

7. New Business:

The SCG officers are still planning to review the SCG bylaws and job descriptions.

Car wash: Can we recruit enough current 4th grade families to continue having a car wash in June and September/October, to support the special 5th grade field trips to Plimoth Plantation and the Challenger Learning

Center? Becky Wilkoff will contact Mr. Dwyer and Mr. Sullivan to see if 4th and 5th grade teachers would help us organize the car wash and recruit families to volunteer. Keisha Payson reminded us about the importance of personally reaching out to families we know and asking them to help. We plan to ask all families to contribute funds for their own children and also consider contributing additional funds for those who are unable to contribute.

8. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 PM.

2016-2017 meetings (2nd Mondays at 6:30 PM in the HBS cafeteria, subject to change):

May 8

June 12 at 7:00 PM following the Ice Cream Social at 6:00 PM for all HBS families

Thank you for supporting Stowe Community Group!