



Southington Education Foundation

December 13, 2022
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Zoom

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

11 Directors - Jerry Belanger, Ellen Bellinger, Lisa Cammuso, Jan Galati, Paula Knight, Michelle LeBrun-Griffin, Joyce McAloon, Nancy Rogers, Ann Taylor, Dianne Quinn, and Katie Wade

0 Volunteer Members

1 Administrator – Frank Pepe

Call to Order – Paula Knight called the meeting at 6:36 pm.

Paula took a minute to thank and praise all who participated in the Grant Night event. The teacher-presenters were an inspiration to us all!

A. Approval of October Minutes

There were no additions or corrections made to the 11/8//22 minutes.

Joyce moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Nancy R.

There were 2 abstentions. The minutes were approved.

B. Treasurer's Report

- Deposits included a \$5,000 Quinn Foundation donation, \$1,010 in ticket sales from Trivia Night, \$75 in honorary donations, receipt of the \$750 HHC gala donation, \$521 in returned unused grant funds, and a \$41 Amazon Smile donation.
- Expenses included chamber dues and an insurance policy payment.
- Not yet reflected in the report - \$3,000 received from the drive-in committee.
- CHECKING-- \$44,758.19
- TOTAL ASSETS—\$77,888.89
- Jan moved to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Ellen. The treasurer's report was unanimously approved.
- Use of remaining CFGNB grant money (\$85) to purchase return address envelopes or labels was discussed. Nancy R will investigate options.

C. Committee Work

1. Grant Committee Report

a) Grant Celebration

- Jan offered praise and gratitude to all who helped to make the event a success, especially the grant recipients who put their heart and soul into their projects.
- Comments by Steve Madancy that evening reflected what we all felt: “Our teachers are gems- risk takers, creative thinkers, and time-committed.”
- Ten people registered on the Google form. It is unknown whether the event generated enough interest for potential new members.

b) Fall Grant Cycle

- One grant application was received, returned for revisions, then re-submitted.
- The committee will reconvene on this application on December 15th.
- If approved, the application will go to the board no later than January 3rd for a vote of approval at the January 10th meeting.

c) Winter Grant Cycle

- Grant application information was sent out from central office to SPS professional staff before Thanksgiving with a January 4th deadline.
- Committee members will receive any blinded applications in time to read and score ahead of the January 16 grant committee meeting.
- Approved winter grant applications will be sent to the board in time to review before the February 14th meeting.

2. Program Committee

- Michelle explained how an SEF program grant is different from a regular SEF grant. A *program* is broader in scope (\$5,000 or more) it involves a partnership; and it continues over a period of two or more years, with the intention that it be picked up by the BOE for future funding.
- Examples of past programs were given. (Emotional Intelligence and Science at Sloper’s)
- Inspired by presentations of diverse classroom libraries at the Grant Celebration, Michelle explored the possibility of expanding the concept to the program level with Stephanie Lawler, ELA coordinator, who had previously met with other SEF members about a possible grant.
- In the absence of the usual *letter of intent* to initiate a program request, Michelle was requesting verbal approval from board members to move forward with developing a formal proposal (by February) and seeking additional sources of funding with the Main Street Foundation (in March).

- Joyce made a motion, seconded by Lisa, requesting the board of directors' approval to move forward with the concept of a program grant for diversifying classroom libraries.
- The discussion included questions about current levels of diversity in classroom libraries, and how the program might be perceived by the community at large.
- Frank Pepe addressed the need for more diverse libraries and the impact it would have on student engagement.
- Diverse student libraries might include literature with protagonists who are persons of color or of different cultures, different abilities, or different identities - representing *mirrors and windows* into our world.
- Action: All in favor - the motion passed unanimously.
- Committee members might include Frank Pepe, Stephanie Lawler, Amy Zappone, Michelle, Katie, Jan, Denise, Lisa, and Paula.

3. Events Committee

a. Holiday Shopping

Approximately \$500 was raised from shopping at Just-For-You-Gifts.

b. Gala

- The date (May 5th) venue (Mtn Room) and band (Stay Tuned) are all set.
- There was consensus for Paula to go ahead and talk to Betsy about Tops handling the catering.
- Planning will begin in earnest at the January Events Committee meeting. (There will be no events meeting in December.)

D. Other Business

a) Cyber Knights Robotics Team

- First Robotics Team thanked us for last year's sponsorship and asked for SEF to sponsor them again this year.
- The team's various levels of sponsorship were discussed with a favorable response to the \$2,000 level that would put the SEF logo on the back of their t-shirts.
- Joyce made a motion, seconded by Jerry, to sponsor the Cyber Knights at the \$2,000 level. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Marketing our Grants

- Jan asked if we could make better use of our email blasts to better market SEF by highlighting each of the wonderful grants that have been awarded.
- Concerns were raised about being careful not to bombard people with too many emails, especially during times when other events are being promoted.
- There was general agreement to move forward with highlighting our grants more broadly, and that social media would be the best platform for this.

c) New Website Design

Jerry surprised the group by unveiling a new, more modern look in the works for the website. It was very well received by all!

E. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:48pm.

Next Meeting – January 10, 2023, 6:30 pm on Zoom

Other Dates to Calendar:

- **December 15** Grant committee reconvenes.
- **May 5** SEF Gala dinner, Mt Southington Ski Area, Mountain Room, Cinco de Mayo

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Bellinger

Recording Secretary

Mission: The Southington Education Foundation, Inc. is committed to instilling a life-long love of learning in all children through innovative, creative learning experiences that expand upon existing educational opportunities. The Foundation will partner with the community to secure resources, inspire excellence, and enrich student achievement.

Core Values: Innovation, Learning, Equity, School-Community Partnership, Integrity