

Thespian Backers Meeting Minutes-9/13/2023, 6:30 pm

Attendees: Kristianna Gizzi, Michelle Hoffmann, Becky Lipinski, Kristin Kulikowski, Michelle Skillings, Anne Gavorcik, Amy Berner, Lyn Dempsey, Rochelle Koerbel, Lisa Gensler, Jen McCabe, Julie Collins, Tawnya Kotenoglou, Renee Ho, Scott Blasey, Danielle Pavlik, Deanna Gallagher, Mandy Fett, Cari Williams, Amy Mattes, Jill Clydesdale, Gretchen White, Amy Racunas

Kristianna Gizzi:

- Presented information relayed by Jeanie Cygrymus, as she could not attend
 - Student Meeting-held today, well attended, and led by their student board
 - P-Rade: Wed, Sept 20 at HS, all invited (not just those inducted)
 - Will need to decorate flatbed, student officers will update
 - Cari Williams offered use of her trailer; Joe Gizzi will drive truck
 - Activity Fee: All students must submit form at \$10 to Jeanie
 - Please register on Family ID ASAP, so adults have emergency contact information
- Conference
 - Payment and documentation due today for those attending
 - Can accommodate 45 students; PTHS is usually largest student group
 - Tomorrow (9/14): will open available spots to Sophomores with most points, Jeanie Cygrymus will send invitations
 - Juniors/Seniors will perform One Act; auditions Oct. 17, 6:30 pm
 - Sophomores invited will not perform but will help with thespies and tech
 - Prep begins when fall play ends
 - Scholarships will be given at conference; students that plan to major or minor in theater and/or music will be eligible to audition for scholarships; interested should tell Mrs. Cygrymus as soon as possible
 - November 30-Dec 3-Conference
 - Note: begins on Thursday; students have permission for early dismissal
 - November 29, 7 pm: Preview night for parents
 - Board reported that for 2022 (and in past years), Backers helped with funding to conference, by providing \$3000 to cover bus expense. Averages \$67 benefit to students whose parents are Backers.
 - Motion to provide \$3000 to Conference made by Jill Clydesdale; 2nd by Julie Collins. Motion passed.
- Auditions: approaching quickly for coffeehouse, musical, and conference

- Mrs. Gizzi and Mrs. Cygrymus will hold workshop prior to musical auditions (date TBD)
 - Overview of audition format, how-to's; no specific information about upcoming auditions; meant to inform those new to high school auditions
- Improv Class: to be held by Mrs. Cygrymus, date and location TBA (updates on Band app)
- Play Reading Committee: to be formed, students will read and discuss a variety of plays and give input regarding number of students needed, types of roles available, etc. Students who volunteer will receive points. See Mrs. Cygrymus for details.
- Field Trip: Dinner and Show-Mamma Mia
 - 3/27, 72 tickets are available; sign up online (date of sign ups TBA)
 - Students from all grades are invited to sign up for a ticket
 - Discount given by Backers to those students whose parents are members
 - 2022 Field Trip-Backers gave \$30/student discount
 - 2023 Field Trip to be slightly more expensive due to cost of show
 - Discussion held regarding costs and opportunity to offer larger student discount of \$40/student. Cost per student (bus, show, dinner) is \$120. Students will make \$80 deposit. If \$40 discount given, no more will be owed for Backers' children.
 - Motion made by Joanne Gudenburr to give \$40 discount/student (Backers' members)
 - 2nd made by Jill Clydesdale
 - Motion passed to give \$40 discount per student attending show, if student's parent is a member of Backers.
- Band app-Please follow for updates throughout the year on all activities, including sign ups, schedules, etc. QR Codes for band app links were provided on back of meeting agenda. October is our audition month (conference, Coffeehouse, Musical). Band app is best resource of information
- Fall Play-Directed by Mr. Cygrymus
 - Parent meeting was held Sept 11 with play information; will be provided by email to those who could not attend
 - Mr. Cygrymus reported that cast and crew are progressing well
 - All thespians are encouraged to see the play and sign in for points
 - September 15-Tickets on sale online, assigned seating
 - September 8-Fall play merchandise orders due
 - Donations accepted for props; see Mrs. Cygrymus
- Spirit Wear Sale: New for this year, allows recognition of our program (especially during conference and other events). Form available on the Band app
 - Funds applied to each grade separately for their future Senior Trip (more details below)

- Online store closes Sept 15
- Patron of the Arts: Akin to Cultural Trust of Pittsburgh
 - Elevates the level of our productions
 - Helps support salaries of professional staff
 - Allowed us to increase number of scholarships we provide (from 4 to 6)
 - Can use to purchase extra equipment not covered by district
- Senior Panos
 - All will have pano pictures taken on 9/28 at 5:00
 - Wear jeans and white t-shirt, can add a prop
 - Panos given at banquet
- Senior Trip
 - 28 seniors going
 - Forms and first payment due 9/22

Michelle Hoffmann

- Backers' Membership dues
 - 44 members so far-names will be in fall play program
 - Please submit form (provided at meeting and online) and payment of \$100 as soon as possible but no later than 3/1/24. Can give to Anna or Michelle Hoffmann or any board member. Can bring to any rehearsals.
 - All money from Backers goes back to the kids
- New Board members will be needed next year
 - Current board is available to answer questions about any duties
 - Benefits: getting to know the kids, understanding the production process, provides support to the shows for great experience and performance
- Concessions-thank you to Julie Collins for heading committee for this year
 - Donations and volunteer sign ups are going well but help still needed and appreciated
 - Can bring donations to the school or drop at Julie's house
- Cast/crew treat bags: for parents new to theater, bags are provided at each show for each student. Bag will have name on it and anyone can drop in treats or notes. No obligation but students are very excited to check their bags after each show.

Becky Lipinski

- Aug 30 meeting minutes: available on website, paper copy available upon request
 - Requested motion to approve Aug 30, 2023 Backers meeting minutes
 - Motion to approve: Julie Collins

- 2nd by Rochelle Koerbel
 - Motion passed to approve Aug 30, 2023 meeting minutes
- Upcoming meeting dates provided (6:30 pm)
 - 8/30, 9/13, 10/11, 11/8, 12/13, 1/10, 2/14, 3/6*, 4/10, 5/8
- Emails: Provide information regarding upcoming deadlines, forms, etc. If any member is not receiving emails, please see a board member to give email address and be added

Kristin Kulikowski

- Budget
 - Updated to include \$3,000 income in September (ads, memberships, Patron of the Arts).
 - Amount deposited included deposits for Senior Trip; it will be disbursed to trip expenses
 - Expenses included gift card for photographer for program headshots
 - Requested motion to approve budget: Amy Berner; 2nd by Julie Collins
- Fundraisers
 - Fall Fundraiser is “Set the stage for fall”
 - Prize is Traeger Pro 780 Grill (value approx. \$1000), 7 piece All Clad set (donated by Taylors, approx. value \$500). Additional items provided by Ace Hardware including grill cover, sauces, rubs, etc. Ace will also deliver and set up if winner within 5 mile radius of the store.
 - Tickets are \$20 each, each family asked to sell 10 tickets to support Troupe. Students were instructed to pick up tickets and instructions at student meeting; Kristen has tickets and instructions for anyone in need
 - Return tickets and money prior to drawing at Oct 15 show. Can give to Kristianna, Kristen or any other board member. Payments can be made by cash, check, or Venmo
 - Donut Sales-reduced from 3 to 2 sales this year (11/18 and 2/10)
 - Link is live on our site for ordering; price increased to \$10 per dozen this year, to help with donut cost increase (\$7.50) and ease of collection
 - All students must attend at least 1 sale in person

- Must also sell 5 dozen donuts
- Sell 10 dozen if unable to attend either sale
- Student meeting: discussed way to make it easier to meet goals. Students suggested splitting into 10 groups and each group sells 33 dozen so that all are presold

Michelle Skillings

- Work continues with IRS to get all paperwork completed and submitted to make Thespian Backers a recognized group, aligned with all regulations and requirements. Mrs. Skillings will meet with accountant this week and will provide updates.
- Costumes
 - Progress made as Mrs. Skillings has completed many pieces this week. Will request help as needed and will be appreciated.
 - Donations were received and appreciated. Will request if more are needed.

Questions from members:

- Activity fees:
 - Where to find form and when is it due?
 - Mrs. Gizzi: form can be found on district website. \$10 fee is yearly. Form and fee should be given to Mrs. Cygrymus as soon as possible.
- Donut Sale
 - Anne Gavorcik checked website and asked if that updates could be made to include credit to student that presells. Current form allows space for instructions from customer. Kristianna Gizzi will follow up with website manager to add specific line giving student credit for sale. Another parent asked for more information about donut sale, as her child is a freshman. Mrs. Gizzi reviewed the fundraiser and reminded parents that board is always available and eager to answer any questions that new parents may have.