

**Valencia Elementary Home and School Club**  
**October 15, 2008**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order and Welcome:**

Wendy Clarke called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Wendy explained the meeting format. She noted that every parent at Valencia Elementary School is a member of the H&S Club, and that everyone present at the meeting has an equal vote.

**Present:** Wendy Clarke, Karin Kerber-Smith, Michelle Young, Stephen Young, Alison McKenna, Jessica Giuffre, Jan Candau, Jody Cole, Lisa Mella, Dori Galster, Kate Sandersky, Kim DeSerpa, Christina Taylor, Karen Richmond, Kim Ferrell, Dianna Higginbotham, Nathalie Manning, and Heather Jones

**II. Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from 9/10/08 were reviewed. Michelle motioned to approve minutes as moved, Nathalie seconded the motion, and all approved.

**III. Proposed Amendment to Bylaws:**

Karin passed out a proposed Amendment to the Bylaws that explained why the quorum requirement should be modified to also include an option for “a majority of active board members.” After a brief discussion, Kim motioned to approve the Amendment as moved, Stephen seconded the motion, all approved, and the motion was passed. Article 3, section 2(h) will be amended to read: “Any meeting of the Board of Directors shall have (4) members, or a majority of active Board members, to constitute a quorum. No member shall have more than one vote.”

**IV. Principal’s Report: Dianna Higginbotham**

Dianna was pleased to report that the 2008/09 school year kicked off with an excellent running start. She briefly commented on a number of issues. The bathrooms are being remodeled per ADA requirements. Parent/Teacher conferences are going well. She raised the possibility of combining a Site Counsel meeting and a Home and School Club meeting. The Smith Family fundraiser was a great success! They lost their home, and the rest of their belongings in the Trabling Fire. Wendy mentioned that, if possible, the Smiths were still hoping to get Baileys 2007-08 Yearbook replaced. Dianna said she would look into getting that done. Everyone agreed that we are fortunate to have such a pro-active and giving community. Lara Foy, the new Spectra Arts teacher is working on short ‘Vignettes’ with the primary classes. The ‘Vignettes’ will be performed by the primary kids for each other’s classrooms.

**a. Reading and Technical Support:**

- Our classes are full. The primary grades are so full that the district gave us an additional teacher. We got the new teacher after the kids were already settled into their classes, and so the staff collectively decided to utilize the new teaching position by dividing it into two separate morning reading positions for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades.
- Last year, when the budget was up in the air and the Librarians job was cut, the H&SC passed a motion to contribute \$13,000 to keep our Librarian. Since we did not lose our Librarian, H&SC reallocated those funds at the Sept. meeting to help pay for a lower grade reading specialist. Since then, as reported above, we have been able to cover lower grade reading groups with out having to hire a reading specialist. Dianna asked if we could use the 13K to hire technology support instead. Kim DeSerpa gave a brief history of the computer labs, teacher’s computers, etc, pointing out that there had never been any technical training piece included in the budget. After brief discussion, Alison moved to approve the motion, Kate seconded, all approved and the motion was passed.

**b. District Budget Update:**

- The District Budget finally passed. We are doing all right so far, but we never know what might happen. All of the Principals in the PVUSD have been advised to keep spending at the

bare bones level. This means that the school can only buy simple supplies and pay for the necessary teacher conferences.

- a. **Student Counsel Popcorn Machine Update:** The student counsel wants to buy a popcorn machine to sell popcorn as a fundraiser. They are hoping to get their seed money from the H&SC. Right now, our budget has allotted them \$100. Diana asked for a motion to increase that amount for up to an additional \$200 if needed, which the student counsel will pay back. A brief discussion followed that included Wendy reminding the Club that we already give them \$100 each year. She added that she sees no problem with lending them the extra money because they are going to pay it back. Alison said she has observed students fundraising by selling popcorn in another Santa Cruz County Elementary School with great success. Karin made a motion to transfer up to \$200 from the General Fund to the Student Counsel, if needed, Stephen seconded, all approved, and the motion was passed.

V. **Presidents Report: Wendy Clarke**

a. **Goals**

- Wendy clarified the intent of last month's discussions related to our fund raising goals for this school year. Earlier this year, the H&SC Board met with Dianna to get her input on the fundraising goals. Diana had previously met with teachers and they all agreed that **technology was an important goal.** In addition, everyone felt that beautification of the campus, the playground, and adding more tables and benches to provide more working space for classes and parent volunteers were very important goals. Following last month's meeting, Wendy received some valid questions from parents asking for more clarification about who is setting these goals, needs, etc. Dianna answered by saying that the staff, as a whole, comes up with the schools requests. She stressed that these were not her wishes as the Principal of Valencia. Rather, they were the hopes of everyone on staff at Valencia.
- We want to be on a cycle that upgrades/replaces all of our technology every five years. Parents have a right to know how much things cost and why we purchase them. They need assurance that the money we raise is being utilized appropriately. Wendy reiterated that every Valencia parent has a voice and we encourage as many parents to come to our H & S Club meetings as often as possible. Smart boards cost about \$2,000 and a decent computer costs about \$1,100. Michelle made a motion to adopt technology and outdoor beautification as general goals. Karen seconded, all approved and the motion was passed. Dianna said "THANK YOU!"

b. **Update on Sally Foster Fund Raiser**

- So far, we have deposited \$14,032 from Sally Foster sales. That deposit, combined with internet sales and orders currently being reconciled, will bring the grand total of money that the Valencia School community raised up to a whopping **\$16,700.**
- Sally Foster gives 1/2 of what we sell back to us, making the total amount that we get to keep approximately **\$8,350.** Sara Walls still needs help working on the distribution when the orders arrive in November. If you are able to help, please call her at 689-0909. Thank you for all of your hard work Sara!

c. **Advertising/Sponsorship policies and procedures for the Valencia View and our Website**

- We need to set up policies and procedures for advertising on our website and in the View. Stephen suggested that we require that anyone who advertizes in The View, or on our website, give a percentage of their profits back to the school. Michelle Young volunteered to get a committee going that would prepare proposals for consideration and approval by Dianna and the H&SC. Organizing and implementing new policies and procedures is not an easy task, and she will need all of the help she can get. **Please contact Michelle Young at 331-9118, or at shelliepip@yahoo.com, if you are interested in joining this committee.**

**d. The Garden and School Beautification**

- Karin Kerber-Smith invited Karen Richmond, who oversees The Garden, to attend this months meeting because a lot of interest was expressed last month by several parents about implementing a school garden program. Karen Richmond will require **dedicated Committee members to create a plan and set up a schedule.** Right now, student/garden participation is set up so that any teacher who wants to participate can send their students to learn in the garden after school. She wants to give all of the students at Valencia School the opportunity to utilize the garden. One of her goals this year is to have a sign up sheet that involves teachers bringing their classes to the garden during the last 45 minutes of the school day. They would work in Learning Centers of about 15 students, geared towards learning various aspects of Plant Science, including how to grow food. In addition to needing volunteer help in the garden after 1pm, Karen is regularly looking for supplies, including having a present need of a hose reel timing drip system. The H&SC has allotted The Garden a \$1,000 for this school year, and it was suggested that she could use some of this money to buy the system, if necessary. They are growing many things in the garden. Karen was excited to announce that she and some students had made pesto from the garden that will be served at the Harvest Festival Pasta Dinner! Karen sent out a huge thank you to Phil Richer, Dale Berman and all of the other volunteers who worked so diligently last year to make The Garden the extraordinary place that it has become. **If you are interested in helping Karen set up The Garden Committee, please contact her at 722-8487.**
- Jan Candau asked if she/others could paint the Kindergarten Basketball area. A discussion followed and she was encouraged to work with other kindergarten parents and make it happen.
- Kim Ferrell requested a discussion of beautification projects. Michelle responded by saying that a beautification committee had been formed this year and that those ideas should be brought to that committee for consideration. Since the committee does not have a chair yet, Dianna agreed to chair the first meeting to get things started, with the understanding that **the group would need to elect a Chairperson to take it from there.** Please contact the H&SC Committee if you are interested.

**VI. Treasurer's Report: Karin Kerber-Smith**

- **The 2008-2009 Working Budget and requests for transfers was reviewed.** Karin presented the working budget established last year and explained that due to the uncertainty of the State and District budgets, it had not been finalized. She added that since these budgets are now final, we should finalize ours as well. Karin proposed that we adopt the working budget as a final budget with the following changes: (1) a reduction in the anticipated auction income from \$55k to \$35k, commiserate with the current auction budget; (2) an addition of the \$5k transfer from the General Fund to the Outdoor and Recreation Fund that was voted on at the September meeting, including adding in \$30k in grants received this fall to the Outdoor fund; (3) reallocation of \$13k from the Literacy Fund to the Technology Fund as per the vote earlier this evening. Kate motioned to adopt the amended working budget as a final 2008-09 budget, Nathalie seconded, and all approved the motion.
- **The Financial report was reviewed.** Karin explained the layout and this months highlights of the Balance Sheet and the Profit and Loss by Class Statement. She noted that the Class of 2008 would be closed now that the class' project was complete and paid for, and that the remaining balance will be transferred to the General Fund, following past precedence. She asked if the club would like to continue to receive personal copies of all of the financial reports at the meetings. Jessica suggested that the reports be presented via projection rather than in paper. Discussion followed and everyone agreed that all future P&L by Class statements would be presented by LCD projection. Balance sheets shall continue to be passed out in paper copy. Karin reminded everyone that copies of the financial reports are on file in the office and can be requested by contacting her if any one is interested in receiving their own copy.
- **Science Assembly Discussion.** This year we have \$2k allocated towards Science Assemblies. More \$ than in the past. In previous year's we have had only one

assembly. We are hoping to bring in two programs this year. Both are very educational and exciting. The first, to take place in December, will consist of a series of interactive marine biology and ecology classroom workshops. The second, being held in May, will include school wide assemblies presented by “Wildlife Associates.” The total cost of the two assemblies is \$2,420. Karin requested that we allocate \$420 from the General Fund to the Science Assembly Fund. Kate made a motion for the transfer, Heather seconded and all passed the motion.

**VII. Fundraising Report: Michelle Young**

- **The Toyota Raffle** ends today but folks have until 3pm this Friday to turn in their money and tickets. Lisa Mella was pleased to report that our Valencia family came through and that, to date, we have raised more than \$10,000! It is the most money we have ever raised for this raffle. Karin noted that we raised \$4,200 last year.
- **The Harvest Festival** will take place on Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 - 8:00pm. Jody Cole reported that there will be many fun filled, family oriented things to do. There will be a dunk tank, a haunted house, the book sale, cotton candy, a bake sale, and several other exciting events taking place during the festival. Tickets are being pre-sold, and will be sold from 5:30pm to 7:00pm during the festival. She said that several responsible Aptos Jr. High and High School students will be volunteering during the event.
- **eScript and Gift Cards.** There were questions about how to sign up for **eScript**. Wendy and Krista explained how to do it and offered to assist anyone who needs help signing up. There are so many ways to make money for our school by using eScript. **Our website lists all of the vendors who take eScript.** This is the first year we are selling gift cards. Some of the gift cards we are looking at offering are Toys-R-Us, Chevron, Marie Calendars, and Jamba Juice. Michelle asked for a motion to approve \$250 to be taken from the general fund and used to order/sell the gift cards. Heather motioned, Alison seconded, all approved and the motion was passed. There will be an article in The View about the Gift Cards.
- **Auction.** Nathalie reported that the auction will be held at the Chaminade on March 21, 2009. This year’s theme will be “Hollywood Nights.” Preparations are underway and the first working meeting of the auction committee will take place sometime during the last week of October following the Harvest Festival. If you would like to help, please contact Nathalie Manning at 325-1992, or Jennifer Nowark at 768-9922.

**VII. Volunteer Update: Wendy Clarke**

- We still need to fill the Volunteer Coordinator Board position. Please contact the H&SC if you are interested.
- Earlier today, Karin Kerber-Smith asked Alison McKenna if she would consider volunteering to become the Recording Secretary. After a brief discussion, Alison agreed. Karin made a motion, Wendy seconded, all agreed and the motion was passed.

**VIII. Misc and Wrap-up:**

- **Playground Update:** Kim De Serpa got three more grants totaling \$30k for the playground this Fall. Everything is going very well. She explained and answered questions about the lay out of the structure. John Moorehouse, a kindergarten parent, has volunteered to build out the playhouse box that will accommodate the installation of a bank of swings. Rick Candu has volunteered to excavate the area, saving the school over \$3,700. There was discussion about the cost of the main structure and the planned swings. Kim pointed out that the anticipated costs have fluctuated throughout the project, and shared that the main structure came in under budget! The playground will be finished and ready to play on with-in a month and the Dedication will take place in 6 – 8 weeks.
- The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm and the remaining items on the agenda were tabled until the next Home and School Club meeting.