

**Minutes – PTO Meeting  
September 14, 2015, 6:30pm  
Manhattan Middle School Library**

**I. Welcome – Michele Marshall, Chair ([michelemarshall@comcast.net](mailto:michelemarshall@comcast.net))**

Michele welcomed everyone, and introductions were made. Those present were; Lori Winslow, Dawn Hartman, Mary Dineen, Nicole Wobus, Kim Youngren, Annelie Linder – Weterrings, Kristy Lane, Amanda Wember, Shanna Henkel, Kristin Kusmierck, Troy Thornberry, David Jones, Arlene French, Sarah Blackford, Irene Vilar, Darcy Fan, John Riggs, Loli Hudson, Dan Tomlin, and Michele Marshall.

**II. Principal's Report – John Rigg's**

Mr. Rigg's reported that the school year is off to a great start. Mr. Rigg's opened the Facebook page that Manhattan is using. Currently, Manhattan has two Facebook pages, and we are trying to eliminate the old one. Mr. Rigg's and Amanda Wember are able to post to Facebook.

Mr. Riggs also, talked about the "Success Effect", one of BVSD's new strategies for student success. This incorporates three initiatives for student success, learning, talent (of the staff), and partnerships (between parent/school). More information is on the BVSD website. Manhattan will also have a SAC, School Accountability Committee this year. This Committee will consist of 4 teachers, 2 parents, and a community member. This committee is part of Manhattan's UIP, unified improvement plan. The hope is to have a rough draft of the Manhattan's UIP for school improvement finished in November. This plan will include a literacy goal with MTSS (multi-Tiered Systems of Support), RtI (Response to Intervention) and school-based goals. Mr. Rigg's also stated that the school will update its mission/vision, which is 8 years old. What is our school message that we want to be known for?

On the school front, many exciting things are happening; a new bike rack was installed at the East end of the building. This is actually a Fix Rack, with tools for repairing your bike. There are several located in our community. Bond money was used for this installation.

A local wood carving artist, Bongo Love is coming on September 24th and 25<sup>th</sup> to carve a Phoenix in our dead pine tree in front of the school. The community is invited to attend this event; we will have food trucks on these evenings.

Mr. Rigg's made a proposal to PTO for financial assistance for the Beautification Committee. This committee consists of teachers and parents, they are looking at ways to improve the entry of the school, several ideas have been discussed, such as a musical garden or a large sculpture garden. There was positive feedback about this proposal.

Mr. Rigg's also did mention that the PTO is looking for new members, since most of the current PTO is comprised of 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents. He praised the hard working group and encouraged others to become involved.

**III. Teacher's Reports: Sarah Blackford, Mary Ellen Steele, Dan Tomlin (DT)**

The teachers each reported that the school year has started well. For each of the teachers this is their first year on the PTO and they are excited to be part of the PTO. Sarah Blackford, an ILC teacher is happy to be back at MMS after taking a year off. Each teacher mentioned the Magic Phoenix fundraiser, and how it has impacted their classrooms. Last year, Mary Ellen, a

6<sup>th</sup> grade LA teacher, purchased books for her classroom that the students requested, the students were just thrilled and even wrote thank you notes to the PTO. Last year DT, purchased several items to add to the Manhattan Zoo. This year he is teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade science in addition to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and has asked for water testing kits.

**IV. Treasurer's Report: Erica Johnson ([erica@onthedivide.com](mailto:erica@onthedivide.com))**

Erica was not present; Michele presented the treasurer's report. We do have significant money in the savings, due to a one-time bag donation from Whole Foods. We have used \$500, of the roughly \$10,000 for the science garden. The PTO last year decided that this donation should be spent responsibly, and for the benefit of the entire school. We hope to get input from the SAC, teachers, and staff and students how to best apply this money.

**V. Committee Reports:**

**Magic Phoenix: Amanda Wember, Chair ([awember@yahoo.com](mailto:awember@yahoo.com))**

Amanda reported that the Magic Phoenix Fundraiser would again take place in the month of October. The goal is to raise \$30,000, last year we raised just over this amount, and all funds were distributed into the classrooms. A question was asked about what is the recommended amount to give per child or family? Currently, we don't ask for an amount, we value all donations big and small. This year we will again track participation and dollar amount received. Last year was the first time that the teachers were actively involved in the process, and that encouraged the kids to also be excited about the fundraiser. Alaina McQueen (Art) and Zennia Jennie (Counseling) are helping come up with creative ideas for goal levels in this campaign. We have an envelope-stuffing event scheduled on September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10 to noon; everyone is welcome, as volunteers are always needed.

**Trip Tracker: Lori Winslow, Chair ([icecreamalchemy@msn.com](mailto:icecreamalchemy@msn.com))**

Lori gave a brief overview of the program. Peter Hurst started this program with a grant 5 years ago; the goal was to reduce the amount of single car trips to school, while encouraging car-pooling, busing, and alternative ways to get to school. The incentive for the kids was trip tracker dollars. These dollars are good at over 40 businesses. The businesses are paid 50 cents for every dollar that is spent. Peter continues the program with both grant money and fundraising. Manhattan has one of the highest registered participants, over 200 kids, but less than 75 report their trips. One goal this year is to increase the kids that are reporting their trips. The kids can now report their trips, which is new from last year, where only a parent could report the trips. We hope to have parents with computers available during lunchtime, to increase the recording of trips by the kids. Another goal is to count cars for 2 days during the spring and fall. Trip tracker also has staff participation, there has also been a principals challenge made by Kent Cruger of Bear Creek Elementary. Also, this year there will be an ice cream party for the school with the most participation.

**Community Dinners: Chris Goodman, Chair ([the4goods@gmail.com](mailto:the4goods@gmail.com))**

Chris was not present; Michele reported that we did well with our August Chipotle night. This money was donated to two of our families in need. We try to have one community building event a month, raising money for our school while building community. This month we will have our tree carving event on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. We are always looking for new places for these events to be held.

**Grocery Cards & Milk Caps: Kristin Kusmierek, Chair ([kusberry@me.com](mailto:kusberry@me.com))**

Kristin reported that she is looking for someone to take over both of these fundraisers, as she is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade parent. We are generating money with the grocery cards, we have both Safeway and King Soopers cards available. The potential for greater income is there, but we find that many parents do have several of these reloadable cards already. There are grocery card flyers available in the main hallway on the table. The Collection box for Milk Caps is also located in the main hallway; this is an easy task based fundraiser that keeps these caps out of the landfill. We are paid 5 cents per cap.

**School Store & Box Tops: Deanna Zimenoff, Chair ([dmzimenoff71@aol.com](mailto:dmzimenoff71@aol.com))**

Deanna was not present; Michele reported the school store is doing well. We could use a couple more volunteers to run the store. The store is open from 3:30 to 4pm daily, and currently we don't have anyone of Wednesdays or for filling in for others. The Box Tops for Education are collected in the main hallway. The submission date for the fall is in early November.

**Projects Committee: Julie Chang, Chair ([Julie@groudan.net](mailto:Julie@groudan.net))**

Julie was not present; the Project Committee has a wonderful group of volunteers and is off to a busy start. We have a few more small projects in the queue, but have already completed 7 smaller projects. These include making signs for Back to School Night, putting up student work, organizing a Chrome book cart and more. As for bigger projects, we are almost finished with covering the hallway bulletin boards with fabric. Finally we will be starting another big project this week – reorganizing the math department's storage closet.

**Science Garden: Jenn Dingman, Chair ([devding@msn.com](mailto:devding@msn.com))**

Jenn gave a brief history of the improved science garden. The garden of six raised beds replaced a mounded garden. This was worked on in late spring. The kids planted the garden before school let out, and then we had volunteer families tend to the garden over the summer. When school started the science teachers started harvesting the produce and sharing this with their classes. There have been great stories about the garden and the learning experience the kids are having. The kids enjoyed corn, yellow crooked squash, tomatoes, turnips, cucumbers (pickles), and zucchini and have harvested the pumpkins. Jenn mentioned that she would be calling on volunteers this fall to put the beds to sleep.

**Tree Carving Community Event: Kristy Lane ([klane@earthnet.net](mailto:klane@earthnet.net))**

Kristy reported on the Tree Carving Event that will be held on September 24 & 25. The 6<sup>th</sup> graders will have a bake sale to earn money for their Keystone science trip. The kids will also sell popcorn that the PTO will donate. They will also sell beverages, and some frozen treats. The PTO will purchase the beverages and frozen treats, and the profits will go into the 6<sup>th</sup> grade field trip fund. Ms. Steel and Ms. Woods are the teacher sponsors of this event. A parent asked if this would be a green event since we are a green school, at this point a decision was made not to sell water bottles as this goes against the school culture.

**VI. District and Community Representatives:**

**DPC- (District Parent Council)- Kate Lacroix ([katelacroix@gmail.com](mailto:katelacroix@gmail.com))**

**TAG DAC (Talented and Gifted District Accountability Committee) & BVGT (Boulder Valley Gifted and Talented) Kristin Kusmierek ([kusberry@me.com](mailto:kusberry@me.com))**

Kristin introduced herself as a member of both TAG DAC & BVGT. She will bring updates from these committees to the PTO throughout the year. She is also available as a resource to

members of the Manhattan community. She does work closely with Allison Woods our TAG advisor.

**SAC (School Accountability Committee) & DAC (District Accountability Committee)**  
**Troy Thornberry** ([kusberry@me.com](mailto:kusberry@me.com))

Troy reported that this is his second year on the DAC, he does represent Manhattan at these meetings. He is also on the SAC, which is in its first year at Manhattan. Troy will report to the PTO with meeting updates throughout the year. We will use the SAC reports as a resource for the PTO.

**VII. Volunteering Opportunities**

Secretary (attend the PTO meetings and take notes)  
Second Vice Chair (position of training for chair)  
Magic Phoenix (volunteers)  
Vision & Hearing Screening (volunteers on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>)  
Conference Meals (Chair, organize volunteers to bring dinners)  
School Store (volunteers to work the store)  
Winter Social (January volunteers)  
PEN representative (Parent Engagement Network)

**Upcoming Events:**

Sept. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Picture Retake
Sept. 16 <sup>th</sup>	360 at Eisenhower
Sept. 24 <sup>th</sup> & 25 <sup>th</sup>	Tree Carving Community Event 4 to 8pm
Oct 1 – 31 <sup>st</sup>	Magic Phoenix Fundraiser
Oct. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Vision and Hearing Screening
Oct. 12 <sup>th</sup>	No School
Oct. 19 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade Tall Ship Trip & 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Keystone Science
Oct. 27 <sup>th</sup> & 29 <sup>th</sup>	Parent Teacher Conferences

Next PTO Meeting TBD