

MSU PARENT/FAMILY SPRING BOARD MEETING

May 22, 2010

Roll Call:

Jodie DeLay –Assistant Director of MSU Public Relations

Tricia Wylie - President

Jon Esslinger - Communications Director

Diana Blend - Secretary

Deb Redburn

Jim Taflan

Liz Taflan

Lance Lerner

Teresa Lerner

Excused:

Sue Hiedeman – Vice President

Call to Order: President Tricia Wylie called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: Wylie asked for the approval of the minutes from the Boards meeting in the Fall of 2009. Jon Esslinger moved for adoption of minutes as presented. Diana Blend seconded the motion. All approved.

Old Business:

Phone-a-thon: Wylie asked Jodie DeLay to report on the Phone-a-thon results. Jodie said that the Phone-a-thon exceeded our goal of \$60,000 in pledges with a total of \$62,465 in pledges. This was an increase of 12.5% over last year. With the collection rate increasing from 84.3% to 89.7%, DeLay reported that \$56,000 has been received to date this year. She anticipates receiving another \$2,000 in the very near future from a company match for a donation that was received in the last week. Jon Esslinger asked if the \$43,000 2010 total on the spreadsheet include the \$2,000 expected. DeLay replied “no, it doesn’t” but she expects it to come in soon since the source is a corporate match from a company that has a clear gift match policy and has come through over many years.

Allocations:

- Office of Communications and Public Affairs- DeLay explained that the \$15,000 which has been allocated to the Office of Communications and Public Affairs in each of the last 8 years is used to cover PFA management and operations expenses including staff time, student employment, general office supplies, phones/computers, etc. as deemed necessary. This year some of the funds will assist with costs for graphic design of the new parent web site and updated resources

for families and other university constituents including an email/calendar notification system. The OCPA has not requested an increase in funding since a flat fee was instituted in 2002, despite adding a host of new communications features for the PFA including the monthly newsletter, parent website and A-Z guide (produced with student affairs). DeLay indicated that for budgeting purposes, this fee has generally been improved for a two year period so is asking for \$15,000 for both this fiscal year and next.

- Other allocations: Wylie asked if everyone had read the 3 separate requests for funding as follows: \$2,000 for The Day of Student Recognition Scholarships, \$2,000 for The MSU Leadership Institute, and \$1,000 for the Museum of the Rockies. There was discussion that the requests reflected increases of \$1,000 for the Day of Student Recognition and the MSU leadership Institute both of which facilitate student success and leadership. The Museum of the Rockies requested an increase of \$500 for the changing Fall 2010 exhibit and for extending the 2-for-1 admission to parents and students to include both Parent/Family Weekend and the Fall 2010 Move-In weekend. This will give families very, very affordable access to the “Leonardo da Vinci; Machines in Motion” exhibit, the first of its kind in the country.

Wylie also mentioned that there were no requests for the Students for Danforth Park, the 10,000 Hours Project or the Library, beyond its (4.78%) tithe, this year. She mentioned that currently the PFA reserve is \$8,200 and asked if the PFA Board wanted to maintain that amount in the reserve. Discussion followed. DeLay said she was comfortable with the reserve at \$8,200 as it is really only needed in the event that the Parent/Family Weekend expenses exceed revenues and she indicated that staff is very careful to insure that doesn't happen.

Esslinger moved that the board vote on the allocations as a whole, that is to allocate \$43,000 to the four line items with \$23,000 of that going to scholarships. As for the \$2,000 and other funds to come, he suggested moving those funds to the reserve. Deb Redburn, who works with the scholarships for MSU's College of Education, expressed that her department needs to know now what the scholarships are going to be, so they can show up on the students' bills this Fall. Jim Taflan suggested the board move the excess expected into scholarships now.

Wylie asked Esslinger if he would amend his motion to request **\$43,000 of the 4 line items with the 23,000 going to scholarships and add the \$2,000 to come to the \$23,000 to total \$25,000 to scholarships, leaving \$6,000 in reserve.** Esslinger amended the motion. Redburn seconded and all approved, so the motion was carried forward.

Jim Taflan brought up that we needed to vote on the allocation to Communications & Public Affairs for two years, not just one year, so he moved that for the fiscal year of 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012) that the Board allocate \$15,000, subject to availability of funds. Esslinger seconded. All approved.

In summary, 2009 Fall Phone-a-thon allocations were approved unanimously as follows:

\$15,000 for the Office of Communications and Public Affairs (Providing the 2010 phone-a-thon raises enough funds, the Office of Communications and Public Affairs will also receive \$15,000 in FY2012.)

\$2,000 for Day of Student Recognition

\$2,000 for The Leadership Institute

\$1,000 for The Museum of the Rockies

\$25,000 for the Scholarship Fund

New Business:

Review of Bylaws

DeLay asked that the board come up with an approved version of the Bylaws at this meeting, so the Bylaws could be posted on the PFA website between now and the October 24th meeting.

It was unclear to DeLay and some members under Section 5.0 of the proposed Bylaws, who was a member of the Association and who wasn't. DeLay said that the one vote per family phrase would be problematic to track since OCPA wouldn't know if a vote came from the mother or father or wife or brother of a current student or whether multiple family members were voting or even if the person had a student officially enrolled. Esslinger stated that the vote should be made by a parent or guardian. More discussion followed. Someone pointed out that the students themselves were their own guardians since most were over 18 years old. Others wanted to be more inclusive with the language since it was a Parent/Family organization. The question was raised if having a requirement that the voter be a parent would change the PFA to a parent organization rather than a parent and family organization. It was also mentioned that we were fortunate to have any involvement in these meetings, whether it be parent or family members and the question came up as to whether we really needed to worry about too many voters.

Wylie suggested using the Student ID as the identifier for the vote. Diana Blend asked if a family with two students would then get two votes. There was considerable agreement with this idea. DeLay thought that using Student ID numbers might be against the privacy policy of the University and become quite cumbersome. The group acknowledged that getting people to participate has been a challenge and that for now, the family name and e-mail address to indicate one vote per person should suffice.

Esslinger proposed a vote could be based on a simple majority of the members who are present. The question remained as to whether only one person per family could vote. Further discussion ensued. Redburn reiterated that the PFA membership includes parents and family. Esslinger suggested a solution by striking the sentence "Each family will have one (1) vote." from Section 5.0 and 6.0 of the Bylaws. This would effectively allow for a simple majority vote of those participating in the meeting/election. Wylie reminded the group that by-laws could be updated if this turned out to be a problem and suggested trying Esslinger's suggestion for a year.

Lance Lerner asked if we had the ability to track who electronically pulls up the Bylaws. DeLay said she would ask the web director to add Google analytics to the page so we could track hits. Wylie explained that what we draft today would go online and would be discussed and voted on, under the old Bylaws, at the next meeting (October 24, 2010) and would take effect for the year 2011-12.

Jim Taflan mentioned that under Article 3 of the Bylaws ex officio members were not included as they had been in the previous bylaws and he wondered why. Discussion ensued regarding whether PFA membership ends when your student graduates or leaves school. It was agreed that given the breadth of parent experience on the board that such volunteerism was greatly valued and needed. Liz Taflan and Teresa Lerner both indicated that even with their students graduated they would like to participate in an advisory capacity and lend their skills to the group. It was discussed that we don't necessarily have enough people involved to be turning away willing participants. Esslinger stated that he didn't think ex officio members should be on the Board, specifically the governance arm of the Parent/Family Association. Taflan said that under Article 3 of membership, we should also add that ex officio members are not able to vote but are welcome to attend board meetings, act in an advisory capacity, and volunteer in PFA activities. Wylie reminded the group that bylaws are intended to limit powers and define responsibility and that they don't generally include anything but the basic rules of the organization. She added that the Bylaws could be amended later if need be. Esslinger and the group agreed. Providing too much detail now could in fact limit the ability of ex officio members who wish to volunteer, more so than by simply indicating that they are not able to hold office or have a vote. Esslinger proposed the following definition of ex officio and the group agreed to add it to Article 3 as follows:

3.0 Membership. Membership in the Association shall be parents and family members of students currently attending Montana State University. **Parents and family members of former students are ex officio members of the association and are not eligible to vote or hold office.**

Jim Taflan asked about the term of office for the board. Blend warned that when board meetings occur after graduation, the PFA may not have a full Board, since parents of those students who graduated would now be ex officio. DeLay said ideally meetings should occur before graduation. All agreed that setting the term of office was important. DeLay indicated that she felt having an experienced Board be on call during the summer and for orientations would be a value to the organization. The group discussed various terms and ultimately agreed that the term of office should be from Sept 1 through August 31. Elections would be as defined in the bylaws Article 6 but the new Board would be officers elect until the next fall semester began. Specifically, any voting needed between the election and Sept 1 would be done by the outgoing board – even if students of those members officially graduated in May.

Esslinger suggested placing the term as a separate item under Elections as #6.2 as **“The term of office for the board member shall be from Sept.1 through August 31st.”**

Liz Taflan mentioned that there still is a need for members to speak to incoming families and suggested more face-to-face with them in the marketing efforts. She also suggested using distinct name tags to make PFA members more visible at functions such as the student orientations. DeLay couldn't agree

more. She stated that it was critical that one-on-one opportunities be provided and that it was just as important for members to be identifiable with shirts or badges. Also, she felt it was important to give recognition to the Association and introduce the board during PFA events. Jim Taflan punctuated this thought by suggesting that we have an introduction of the Board and the Association at our next Parent Family Weekend dinner in Fall of 2010.

Returning to the proposed Bylaws, Wiley reviewed that there would be no changes in Articles 1 and 2; that the ex officio definition, **“Parents and family members of former students are ex officio members of the association and are not eligible to vote or hold office.”** would be added to Article 3. No changes were made to Article 4. In Articles 5 it was decided that the **board would strike the sentences “Each family will have one (1) vote.”** The board also agreed to **remove a similar sentence at the end of the paragraph of Article 6 (“Each family will have one voted in the election”).** And the board decided to add a section 6.2 as follows: **The term of office for board members shall be from Sept.1 through August 31st.** There were no changes in Articles 7 and 8.

Essingler moved that the board accept these editorial changes for further consideration by the PFA by putting this edited version of the Bylaws online for the general membership to review. Redburn seconded. All approved. This new draft of the Bylaws will be posted on the PFA web page. DeLay mentioned that this will give the PFA ample opportunity to review and provide further input to the Board. Voting for formal adoption of the PFA Bylaws will be included in the agenda of the next PFA meeting to be held in the Fall of 2010.

Summer orientations: The PFA will partner with Student affairs and the Admissions Dept. for Summer Orientations and Family Receptions. DeLay stated that the location has been changed this year to the Alumni/Foundation Building at the corner of 11th and Lincoln in the Foundation Great Room where the food is not restricted to MSU catering. DeLay said that beer and wine could be served at this location. She suggested that Teresa Lerner would be a great caterer. She also requested parent involvement and that all PFA members are welcome to attend. The events are to be held June 15 & 29 and July 13 at 7:30 - 9 p.m. and August 25 at 8:15 – 9:30 p.m. Redburn and Lerner said they would be able to make some of the meetings and offered to be on a subcommittee with DeLay for this effort.

Communications

DeLay asked for a few volunteers to step forward to work closely with the student summer intern, Laura Esslinger, to help her identify content and organize an updated Family Newsletter format, website, etc. This would involve more of a contribution over the summer. Blend offered to help with the website portion and DeLay mentioned all board members would also be included in providing feedback. Blend mentioned she will be ending her term as of Sept. 1st.

Calendar Notification Project

DeLay explained that this project would involve the purchase of a calendar notification service in which parents would sign up to get reminders sent to their e-mail or as text to their phone. This would include reminders for tuition fee payments, residence hall closures and class registration opening dates. As a budget related line item, there will be no charge for this service, though some of the \$15,000 already allocated to the Office of Communications and Public Affairs may be used.

Parent Family Weekend

DeLay mentioned the date we had chosen for the PFA Weekend is Oct 22-24 SUB which coincides nicely with the football game scheduled for that Saturday. Wiley asked for discussion regarding the locations for registration and the dinner. There was a general consensus that the Hosaeus Health Center was the right location for the registration process. Advantages mentioned were that the fitness center offers plenty of space and there was lots of interest in our auction there. Also the location provides an opportunity for everyone to see the gym and parking is readily available.

Blend stated that the SUB ballrooms would provide a nicer venue for the PFA dinner than the Brick Breeden Fieldhouse. Wiley mentioned that there might be repairs scheduled for the SUB at that time, but that if we asked early enough, we might get the repairs scheduled around our event. Off-campus locations for the dinner were mentioned, but the Fieldhouse seemed to be the only other dining location on campus large enough to facilitate our group. Everyone agreed that the fitness center was the preferred location for registration and that the SUB Ballroom, if available, was best for dinner.

Regarding the menu for the dinner, DeLay talked with the Food Services Director and discussed serving a pasta bar including items such as lasagna and spaghetti that would appeal to most of our guests. Everyone agreed that we should not serve paper thin hamburgers, like last fall, for the price that was charged. Wiley volunteered to meet with DeLay and catering while in Montana over the summer. She and DeLay will also speak with the Director about speeding up the movement of the food line.

Due to poor attendance, DeLay reminded the group that at the Fall meeting we had decided there would be no parent information seminars or panels offered during the Registration. But she suggested a PFA Board Presentation could possibly be added at 4:00 on that Friday if the group thought it would be beneficial. Discussion will continue.

Other suggestions for the Parent Family Weekend were also entertained as follows:

- Blend proposed resurrecting the various academic dept open houses, such as Honors. DeLay mentioned it might be wise to invite the smaller programs. She said her office could include the open houses within their marketing materials.
- Wiley suggested that it needed to be easier for guests to identify faculty members at the PFA Reception. We will work on making it more clear which MSU personnel are in attendance.
- A bus tour of the community and its businesses might provide an opportunity for parents and their families to learn about the community. Large employers may also be willing to host such tours. Real estate agencies were mentioned as one source. The idea of renting trolleys for the

event was also offered. Blend wondered whether we could partner with the Streamline Bus system for such a tour. Wiley thought that perhaps they would work with us on creating a special route for the day.

- The president's breakfast at the end of the PFA weekend has been at the GranTree for many years. The Holiday Inn recently indicated to DeLay that they had a large enough space to host. Lance Lerner didn't think that was the case and offered to follow-up. DeLay will get quotes from both if both are able to accommodate the numbers.

Election of Officers

Since the Board is still operating under the old bylaws, it was given the go ahead by Wiley to proceed with the election of officers for 2010 - 2011. Esslinger was willing to remain Communications Director and Wiley said she was open to continuing her position as president. Redburn offered her service as vice president. No one came forward with a nomination for Secretary. The post needs to be filled since Blend is stepping down by the end of August. Wylie asked DeLay if any of the parents interested in coming on board to the PFA this fall might be interested. DeLay said she would inquire of the four who are interested in attending the next meeting and felt confident that one of them would be interested.

Jim Taflan made the motion to accept the following as the slate for PFA officers for 2010-2011:

- Tricia Wiley - President
- Deb Redburn – Vice President
- Jon Esslinger – Communications Director

Esslinger seconded the motion. All approved. It was discussed that the position of Secretary could be nominated and voted on at a later date.

Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted June 3, 2010,

Diana Blend
Secretary