

## West Point Parents Club of MA

### Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2010

A meeting was held at St. Luke's Church in Westborough, MA, prior to assembling Halloween boodle boxes to be delivered to the Yuks.

**In attendance were:** Cindy Yeo, George Jedras, Nicole Burkel, Jo Anne and Carl Vercollone, Tricia and Larry Cronin, Nina Johannessen and Prescott and Deb Wright.

George Jedras conducted the meeting in Bill Yeo's absence.

**Introduction of New Members:** Jo Anne and Carl Vercollone are new Co-Secretaries, Henry Tabur (not in attendance) has joined the board as Membership Chair and Prescott and Deb Wright will be coordinating the Mentoring Program.

**Membership Update:** Nina Johannessen informed the board about membership status. At this date there are 123 members three of which are classified as "Friends". There was some question about the acceptance of out-of-state members, which was brought to light with respect to a cadet from a Wisconsin family on active duty, whose home base is Massachusetts. They have been granted a full membership. While the Club's policy is to not actively solicit membership from out-of state, we will review these instances on a case by case basis.

**Financials:** Nicole Burkel informed the board of her efforts to recreate past financials based on inconsistent information. Her belief was that she will be able to accomplish this and that going forward the Club will have a better automated paper trail due to the implementation of Quicken, extensive use of PayPal and online bill payment. She has also created standard expense reimbursement form in Excel for future use.

**Non-Profit Status:** Carl Vercollone updated the board on the steps that need to be taken in order for the Club to receive a Sales Tax Exemption Certificate from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Club never filed a form 1023 with the IRS at its inception to be recognized as an exempt organization pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the IRC. Carl is in the process of filling out the application and will need back financial information which Nicole will provide. It is unclear as to what

the annual filing requirements of form 990 will be for the Club. Hopefully, the filing process will be completed by the end of December.

Carl stated he will also update the officer list filed with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**Donations:** Nina informed the board that in the past the Club has supported West-Point.org with semi-annual contributions. She explained that the Club uses west-point.org's Listserv for our communications as a club. It was also discussed that the lists they host and run (prospective.net, plebe.net, and Parent Forum) are all valuable resources for parents.

Nina moved that the Club continue these donations contributing \$250 each for the spring of 2010, fall of 2010 and spring of 2011 for a total contribution of \$750. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Columbus Day Bus:** Tricia Cronin explained the bus situation in detail, citing that this was one of the busiest weekends of the year and the bus company, Brush Hill, subbed out to another bus company. We all agreed that the bus ride home was a disaster resulting from a confluence of events beginning with the bus not being on time to pick up the cadets at West Point. There was an incident that closed down Route 84, tying up traffic for hours, and the bus driver did not stop at Sturbridge to drop off passengers because the only person still awake on the bus (a parent) told him to keep going. It took an additional hour for him to turn around and return to Sturbridge. The bus arrived at Riverside at approximately 3:45 am. Although we conceded that some circumstances were beyond the bus driver's control, we were disappointed with Brush Hill's service. Bill Yeo reached out to Brush Hill and shared with them the Club's frustrations and sought a financial consideration. Brush Hill stated that they performed within the terms of their contract and they would give no concessions to the Club despite its loyal patronage. Tricia's read of the contract was that Brush Hill had the right to make last minute changes to the service provider without the need to inform the Club. We discussed the pros and cons of changing bus companies. For comparison purposes, Tricia presented us with other bus company options. Brush Hill is the cheapest at \$1,375 for a 47 passenger bus and \$1,550 for a 55 passenger bus. Peter Pan is \$1,665 and seats 56 passengers with no option for a shorter bus and Yankee is \$1,850. Peter Pan has GPS, WIFI and DVD player.

Nina made a motion for us to try to book Peter Pan for the next four buses (Thanksgiving and Christmas) and to use Brush Hill if they are not available. The

motion was unanimously approved. [ Note: Peter Pan is not available for the above mentioned trips. The Club will be using Brush Hill.]

Nina also made a motion to give a \$20 voucher for any future trip as a goodwill gesture to the cadets who were inconvenienced. The motion was unanimously approved.

The board also discussed a few other ways in which to avoid another “trip from hell” which included the bus company notifying the Club if they are going to subcontract out to another company and informing the CIC if they are going to be late. The board also discussed establishing a policy of a ten minute grace period in the event a cadet is late for the bus and hasn’t informed the CIC of his/her situation. That way the bus does not end up waiting for extended periods of time for a cadet that may have made alternate arrangements.

The meeting was adjourned by George at 2:30 pm. The next meeting will be held the end of January or early February in celebration of the Cow loans.