



PIP Minutes 9.17.10

Attendees included Karen Herther, John Peterson, Eileen Sullivan, Janice Ward, Sue Cudmore, Zuzka Blasi, Susan Krikorian, Kate Keleher, Sunanda Sahay, Bernie Kosicki, Archana Gupta, Ann Sussman, and Mary Ann Smith.

Budget Report

Cisco donated \$1000 to the AB Science team, and Solidworks gave the Robotics team \$1000. PIP did not get the Broadcom grant, but we are using the format as a template for other grant requests.

Open Neighborhood is now at the national level for a Building Community competition.

PIP Scholarships

These will be awarded on or before Nov. 1, so students can mention them in their scholarship applications. Two PIP Lead Scholarships, which are really a leadership award, will include \$250 in cash. Many students help for years, so we would like to give PIP awards (without a scholarship) to them in the fall as well. John has 3 years of data on who has been volunteering; we get about 25 student volunteers at each event. The consensus seemed to be that we should consider the total number of events at which students volunteer, to include 7th and 8th grade help. The students' names and short biographies should be posted on our websites. This year we will have on line registration for student volunteers.

PIP Events

Our events are designed to get families involved in thinking about STEM every day. We have no trouble recruiting student volunteers, and it would be great to get more parents with younger children involved. Fifth Grade Market Math, every February, and Third Grade Market Math, every April, are well supported by Roche Brothers. Fourth Grade Star Party is a school based event, the schools recruit volunteers. Eileen

suggested that we could use a Star Party Hospitality Coordinator who is NOT a 4th grade parent, to handle contributions of chili, cornbread, hot chocolate, etc. Family Games Night (math, problem solving, puzzles, cards and dice, Sodoku) is also popular. Every other year, Discover STEM is very well attended. PIP also supports projects like the Robotics team, Galileoscopes, and green education.

Robotics Team

The Robotics Team has 25 students this year. They have built their competitive flooring in Sunanda's basement. Kay Steeves thinks the new high school technology teacher is too busy to start coordinating the Robotics team this year. The team has two sections, the Mechanics team, which works in Sunanda's basement, and the Software team, which does not need so many face to face meetings. They are selling hexbots to raise funds again this year. Their presentations, at

The Discovery Museum and the library, have drawn much interest; 60 people attended Prateek Sahay's library presentation.

PIP Event Dates for 2011

Fifth Grade Market Math will take place on Tuesday, February 8, 2011.

Third Grade Market Math will take place on Wednesday, April 13, 2011.

The Fourth Grade Star Party is scheduled for Feb. 28, 2011 if not cloudy; alternate dates are already calendared and are March 1, 2, and 3, 2011.

Galileoscopes

We have 5 of them. Last year, there was one in each of four 4th grades, and Eileen coordinated use of the fifth. It worked well, but Eileen would like someone else to coordinate the use of the Galileoscopes; perhaps the school librarians could do that. John suggested getting one 4th grade room coordinator at each school to do it; it would be like a pilot to build toward the annual Star Party and create an affinity group for parent volunteers at the Star Parties. Bernie could meet with them and tell them how to put the scopes together and how they work. We need good bags to protect the tripods and scopes. Bernie said he would get together 6 more telescope/tripod combinations (at about \$35 each) for use in the schools, and he'll write a simple guide page to go with the documentation we have now. Bernie moved and PIP members approved spending up to \$250 to buy materials (scopes, tripods, bags, etc.). PIP will also think about how to help with the email reminders to those who borrow the Galileoscope Eileen has now. Eileen will also see if the school libraries can take on

control of scope borrowing instead of doing it through Eileen's office. She will also find out which teachers (other than Merriam 4th grade, which Bernie has covered) want scopes. If each library takes one, there will be one or two left over from the present batch to give to a few teachers, and Bernie will help set them up in those few classes. If all 4th, 5th, and/or 6th grade teachers each want a scope, that will cost a lot of money and we will need to look for an outside sponsor to help cover the costs. For example, some large companies could donate 22 inch long gym bags with logos on them for advertisement.

Second Life For Kelly's Corner

Ann Sussman said that the front door of the high school is only 1/3 mile as the crow flies from Kelly's Corner, so one could argue that HS and JHS students are part of the neighborhood. Planning should be more holistic and involve all. The Cultural Council gave them \$700 to produce pictures, and Dave and Sam McCormick did the video for the national competition. Of 260 community projects, only 24, including us, made the first cut. Now it's on the national website and you can click on the video to see it. On Sept. 22 they will decide who makes the short list of 8 for an all expenses paid trip to Colorado to learn about community planning. The final 3 get \$5000 each. Second Life is a virtual reality program; you can have your avatar fly over Kelly's Corner. Fifty people made 11x17 plans of what Kelly's Corner could look like. If we make the finalist list, people would be able to vote on-line.

Acton 2020

Ann Sussman said that right now, Acton is involved in community planning called Acton 2020. Someone should approach the committee regarding asking students to help with the statistics: class sizes, percent preserved land, etc. If you involve kids, the parents show up. Sustainability is one focus of the study, and having kids involved is a huge opportunity. Students love doing real work.

Green Education

Kate Keleher is now working half time in the schools, coordinating green education. Karen said it would be good to have synergy in the following areas: green education, green backpacks to take home, green homes, and the conservation focus at the Discover Museum.

Nearby Nature

Eileen Sullivan is coordinating this program, focusing on plants and animals students should be able to recognize by the time they leave 6th grade. She has a foldable,

which can be customized. It could include plants, animals, animal tracks, a title (e.g. Acton Nature Guides), whatever one wants. Whoever helps with the finances could have their name on it (like Boxborough schools, or PIP, for example.) The biggest cost would be printing, because the minimum purchase is 1000.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on October 22, 2010, in the downstairs library meeting room if available, because the acoustics will be better. Email notices will be sent regarding the meeting place. After the October meeting, PIP meetings will be held on the THIRD Friday of the month instead of the fourth Friday.