

Tewksbury Twp PTA
GENERAL MEETING
Monday, February 5, 2024 ▪ 7:00PM
Tewksbury Elementary School

Presentation TFARS – 7:00PM:

5 members of the Tewksbury First Aid and Rescue Squad shared a brief presentation about their organization and upcoming opportunities to get involved in.

- Looking for more volunteers in the community. Many opportunities are available from drivers to EMT, you don't need to have experience. Self-funded organization. Currently raising money for a new ambulance, \$350,000. Asking PTA to get the word out into the community.
 - PTA will repost anything that the rescue squad posts on social media.
 - PTA will brainstorm a free event that the rescue squad can collab on.
 - TES loves having a field trip every year and the police academy is a community favorite event.
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- Introduction & Call to Order – 7:24PM – Jen Prisco
 - i. 17 community members in attendance
- Reading and Approval of Minutes – Jessica Cooper
 - i. Minutes approved from October 2023 General Meeting.
- Officer Reports
 - President's Report – Jen Prisco
 - Summary of events for school year to date: Kindergarten Playdate, Welcome Back Breakfast, BTS Nights, Fall Spirit Wear, & Harvest Fest. Created Welcome bags for new families and helped find volunteers for Hay bale decorating at TES. Hosted Candidates Night and Trunk or Treat. Fall After School Clubs had record enrollment. Hosted 2 free family events this year: puzzle night in September, and recently, Bingo night in January—which was a big hit. Holiday Shop and the Gingerbread Workshop are school favorites, and both ran very smoothly.
 - Fulfilled Grant requests: Gaga Pit at OTS, Wobble stools for OTS, Grant for TES Nurse, Playground supplies for TES, Penguin Visit for 1st/4th grades, Flexible seating for Mrs. Peticari and Mrs. Gentile, and supplies for Ms. Polinger for music classes. PTA also fulfilled a grant for Mrs. Tibak and Mrs. Kinsel for sensory items for their resource room classrooms. A grant to support the 8th grade students at OTS was already given to put towards the Leadership Conference/8th grade trip. Logistics still in the works for OTS Courtyard Planting (to be done this Spring).
 - Upcoming PTA/School events: Valentine's Day Workshops, OTS Dances, Scholastic Book Fair at TES, and will be supporting TES in the Tewksbury's Got Talent Fundraiser in May.
 - Goals for 2023-24 school year: community events, spend money on school improvements!
 - School events, family nights, experiences
 - Increase fundraising: adding Spring flower/bulb sales, Square1 Art and Spring Spirit Wear are coming. Also, possibly the School Supply Kits.
 - Membership Report – Jess Petrognani
 - 179 members currently, on par with last school year.

- Treasurer's Report – Jessica Shalhoub
 - Summary of new grant requests and approval status
 1. See President's Report
 - Separate Bank Account with Peapack Gladstone for TES Playground Fundraising
 1. This will keep the money raised for this specific fundraising into a specific account for the playground and not lumped in with the rest of the PTA budget.
- New Business
 - Upcoming Fundraisers:
 - Spring Spirit Wear, TES Pack Gear
 1. Separate weeks, so it doesn't get confusing.
 - Square1 Art
 - Spring flower/bulb sales
 1. Delivered in time for Mother's Day
 2. Will either be an online sale or a google form order
 - School Supply Kits
 - Has been very successful in other districts and has been requested by several families within the district.
 - It can include the academic needs as well as the household supplies (baggies, tissues, hand sanitizer, etc.)
 - Lisa Moore was in support with this and has requested that the information be sent to the teachers as soon as possible.
 - Read-A-Thon – Will consider doing in the Fall as a district wide fundraiser.
 - Upcoming Events / Meetings
 - Valentine Workshops – TES and OTS
 - OTS Dances – Feb 9, next dance in April
 1. PTA will work to confirm a date in April.
 - Book Fair – March 4-6
 1. All information has been placed on the PTA website. An email will also be sent out to all families tomorrow with book fair information as well as after school clubs.
 2. It will take place in the cafeteria this year and not in the library.
 3. Classes will not be visiting the book fair as a group this year; the book fair will be open one morning and three evenings.
 - Spring Clubs
 1. Information was sent out today on the PTA website as well as the flier.
 2. Registration is open Saturday, February 16.
 - Social Media Night
 1. Typically held in the spring at OTS. Dr. Mitchell is going to change the format this year, so there is not a date for that yet.
 - Tewksbury's Got Talent @ TES
 1. Thursday, May 2, 6:30pm

2. All classes have a parent volunteer to coordinate their portion of the talent show.
 3. It is a fundraising event for the TES playground, open to the entire community.
 4. The school and the PTA need to promote the event. It was suggested to send a flier home in backpacks to the TES students.
 5. PTA will also have a concession stand at the event.
 6. Will continue to brainstorm ideas to raise additional money during the event, for example flowers for purchase for the kids performing.
 7. PTA will also be putting a donation toward this effort.
- Member Discussion – What you would like to see from the PTA
 - How does the PTA and the endowment work?
 - The normal fundraising of the PTA goes into a general fund. That money is used to pay for the normal things to help with the school. The grant requests are submitted by teachers or administration from the schools and the PTA looks at each one and vote on if it aligns with the goals. If a parent wants to donate specifically for the playground, they need to note that on their check or email and then it will go into the specific account. TEF is a separate organization, and they have their own bank account and fundraising efforts. People can't donate directly to a public school, and they are not allowed to fundraise, but TEF and the PTA can partner with the school to help with what they need.
 - Grant requests are first submitted to the principal, then to the superintendent and then will come to the PTA for approval.
 - Will consider setting goals for fundraising and keeping that visible on the website, so parents are aware of what has been brought it and what has been spent.
 - It was noted that the community would like to know a date or a goal amount for the new playground at TES. Parents would like to make larger donations, but they need to know what is needed. The improvements are not to replace the existing playground, but to add more. TES has lots of space and new equipment could help utilize that area. It was suggested that a pledge campaign may be beneficial.
 - It was suggested to share the grant request information within the community. It can be on the website, at a community event, as well as on social media. Some community members may resonate with some of those and want to donate after they learn what is being done and what is needed.
 - It was suggested that there be hand to hand information given out at events.

- It was suggested to have Dr. Shouffler share about the grants or a presentation by the PTA to share with the community.
- Candidates Night Criticism
 - It was stated by a community member that there needs to be a place for public comment.
 - Jen stated the reason for the event was an introduction of the candidates to the community, but also a lesson for the 8th grade student council students in government. It was decided in the last couple of years to not have a public comment session because of the hot topics and 8th grade students being present. The community was able to submit questions ahead of time to be asked of the candidates. The purpose of the PTA is to provide events for students and families and the reason that the event is held is to give the students an opportunity to be within a community event experiencing citizenship. If a community member has a serious issue about a specific candidate that needs to be held in a different forum, not in the presence of children.
- Announcements
 - SEPAC Meeting – Feb 28 @ 6:30 on ZOOM (will be shared with the community because many don't know that this exists)
 - Tewks Egg Hunt – March 23, 10-12A (rain date March 30)
 - Haytown Adult Spelling Bee – May 15
 - Tewksbury's Got Talent @ TES – May 2
 - TEF Barn Dance – May 18
- Adjournment – 8:24pm

Future General Meeting Dates:

May 20, 2024