

## Town Meeting

4-16-15

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Precursors - none

#### Announcements

- Tom announced that the Film Festival will take place on Sat., June 6 and that so far, there are 120 entries. He reminded TM that we are still the only school in the district with our own film program and that our festival started with only 40 entries a few years ago and has grown to include professional judges funded by Town Meeting.
- Frank said that Dr. Betty Hobbs had called to arrange for Superintendent Murphy to announce the name of the new HB principal next Thursday, April 23 in the afternoon. Frank said that no schedule change will be necessary, but the student body will be alerted when the announcement is imminent.
- He also displayed the latest copy of "Arlington Magazine" which features pieces about HB's wall art and Julianne Meany's hike.
- Dave Soles called for a round of applause for Mark Dodge and the wonderful physics fair which took place yesterday.
- Eleanor announced that "A Few Good Men" opens tonight. See her for tickets!
- Eleanor also reminded all that the Cupcake Map of the World, courtesy of the class of 2019, will come to life next Tuesday, the 21<sup>st</sup>: 1:30 - 3:30 and 6 - 7pm. Donations collected will go to A-Span.

#### Consent Items

- Sophie (9<sup>th</sup>) presented a proposal by Art II for a skeleton mural to be put up by the elevator in the basement.
  - o Daniel (12<sup>th</sup>) asked if they were certain they'd be able to finish before the end of the school year, and Sophie said they were. **Consent given** unanimously.
- Akila (6<sup>th</sup>) asked that the middle school Stratford Friends be able to put up hand-print decorations on the yellow wall by Michelle's room and the Stratford classrooms. She said the Stratford teachers have given their support.
  - o Bennett (12<sup>th</sup>) asked if high school Stratford friends might be able to help, and Akila said yes. **Consent given** unanimously.

#### Motions

- Bennet (12<sup>th</sup>) made a motion on behalf of Alana and the Students Against Sexual Violence to change the schedule on Tuesday, April 28, to allow a guest speaker to present during an afternoon TA. The speaker is coming from New York City and cannot be here before lunch. The proposed schedule would be: 8:20, A, C, D, Lunch, TA, E, F and H.
  - o Emma (12<sup>th</sup>) said that the senior class had hoped to hold their Senior Auction during that morning's TA and that it was the last one before APs and senior projects. She said that Friday's TA wouldn't work because there would be much less participation.
  - o Carl suggested that maybe Friday's schedule could also be changed.
  - o Paul said he thought it important to allow the invited guest speaker to have the time.
  - o Discussion followed about whether or not to amend the motion to change Friday's TA as well, but the idea was dismissed.
  - o Motion restated to change Tuesday's TA to allow for the guest speaker and it **passed unanimously**. Decisions about the senior auction left for the senior class to discuss.

#### Discussions

- Zoe (12<sup>th</sup>) raised the topic of gender neutral bathrooms. She said it was extremely important for

transgender, gender fluid, and non-binary students to have access to bathrooms where they can feel safe and comfortable.

- o Discussion followed as to whether or not this would be possible here, or whether it should be a goal for the new building.

- o Bennett said that in regards to planning, it should be considered as important as the number of classrooms needed.

- o Emma (12<sup>th</sup>) asked if a transgender bathroom could be housed with the handicapped bathroom, but the general consensus was that this would be contrary to the spirit of the idea. Patti said that in the new building, all bathrooms should be handicap accessible anyway.

- o Bradley (12<sup>th</sup>) said the idea had been tried before at HB and had been overruled by the school board.

- o Dave said that the attempt had been many years ago and that the world was different now. He asked if hypothetically, the upstairs girls' bathroom could be made into a co-ed bathroom.

- o Emma asked why all bathrooms couldn't be used by everyone, and Bill and Tom suggested that in the new building, bathrooms be made more in the European style with toilets and sinks slightly apart and the whole thing being co-ed.

- o Krista asked about the single stall bathroom on the ground floor.

- o Dave said the idea of separate staff and student bathrooms struck him as very hierarchical and antithetical to HB principles, but Frank said that separate, sex specific staff bathrooms were mandated by the school board. He said that he would try to explore the idea of co-ed bathrooms for students without overtly asking for permission.

- o Eleanor said she agreed with Krista that the downstairs bathroom should be available to anyone, but Zoe said it was important, on principle, to have a bathroom identified as a gender neutral zone.

- Margaret Staeben made a motion to have the ground floor single stall bathroom designated a bathroom with no added qualifications.

- o Tom said he appreciated Zoe's concern but thought that many young middle school students were not yet clear enough in their own minds to self-identify or relate to the "gender neutral" terminology.

- o Emma made a friendly amendment that the sign say "anyone can use it."

- o Bradley said the sign on the bathroom should say gender neutral, all genders, and Margaret accepted it as a friendly amendment.

- o Eleanor said it was important to include language that respected Zoe's initial concerns.

- o More discussion followed about the exact phrasing of the signage.

- o Margaret restated the motion: The ground floor single stall bathroom would now have a sign on it that said "Bathroom. Gender Neutral, which means all genders are welcome." **Motion passed unanimously.**

- John Barnes (6<sup>th</sup>) brought up a power point presentation to open a discussion of plans for a 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade film elective. He had put out a survey to students that showed strong desire for such an elective, although he said that some older students had mocked the idea, and he was worried that Tom wouldn't have room in his schedule to teach it.

- o Bennett said he was very supportive of the idea and apologized on behalf of any older students who had acted so unsupportive.

- o Eleanor said that John should be commended for the best ever presentation of a new idea, and Frank echoed her praise.

- o Michelle said that as 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders will both have iPads next year, it would be a reasonable idea for them to be able to take advantage of them.

- o Frank recommended that John speak with Carl, the head of the fine arts department, and suggested that John bring the idea to the allocation Town Meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

- o Liz said that outside teacher money might be used for a semester-long class.

- o Dave made a point of order that ideas for classes need to be considered regardless of teacher concerns - once Town Meeting voted on the classes, it would be up to the administrators to find teachers and arrange schedules to accommodate the decisions.

- o Tom said that 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders starting out film study using their iPads would be a very good beginning and would make the transition to cameras in 8<sup>th</sup> grade work well. He added that it was essential not to stifle

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade interest in film as this might lead them to pursue other interests and forget about film.

- o Brooke (8<sup>th</sup>) added that the experience of using the iPads would probably lead to greater interest when students reached 8<sup>th</sup> grade and were then able to use more advanced equipment.

- o Max (12<sup>th</sup>) said that a lot of learning about film was done individually by kids experimenting, but Tom rebutted that saying that students benefitted from doing it in a class environment with guidance - something that was always abundantly clear from comparing different films at the film festivals.

Chair: Margaret Gorman

Co-Chair: Amanda Hayes

Secretary: Jacob Hall