

Austinmer Public School P & C Committee

Minutes of meeting held on 23 March 2011

Chairperson	Peter Holmes
Minutes	Peter Holmes
Attendance	Peter Holmes, Elaine Byrne (Treasurer), Paul Petersen (Principal), Jules Cassar, Julie Brooks Fitch, Karen Hardie, Miriam Waldron, Sheralee Rae, Tanya Allen, Suzette Martin, Dan Bishop, Nuong Turner, Jo Jeffries, Suzette Martin, Thomas Summerhayes, Leanne Pattinson and Cath Daly.
Apologies	Lisa Vezgoff, Jon Bosker, Lorraine Holmes and Jodie Pryor
Start	7.30 pm
End	9.55 pm

Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed all in attendance including new members joining or renewing membership that night including Cath Daly, Thomas Summerhayes and Leanne Pattinson. A reminder given by the Chairperson that neither they nor Jo Jefferies (also present) could vote until listed on the register which would not take place until after the conclusion of this meeting.

Apologies

As listed above.

Approval of minutes of previous meeting

Motion	To accept minutes of previous meeting conducted 16 February 2011 as a true and correct record of that meeting.
Moved	Elaine Byrne
Seconded	Tanya Allen
Carried	

Matters arising from minutes of previous meeting

1. Additional insurance available through the NSW P&C Federation.

The Chairperson explained the offer which is only available for acceptance until the 6 April 2011.

The package on offer provides 'no fault' cover for students injured in school and out of school while engaged on school activities. This is an addition to the

existing insurance which covers the Association for public liability in relation to all its activities, offers director's cover and other losses including theft of property.

This is entirely independent cover and does not require the proof of fault on the part of DET or the Association for parents to claim. Cover is, however, limited to specific injuries ranging from \$250,000 in the case of quadriplegia (occurring in the school time) to \$3,750.00 for a 5cm shortening of a lower limb. The most useful feature is probably dental cover which is increased to \$10,000 maximum.

The charge is \$4.85 per student which equates to a premium of approximately \$1,600.00 per annum on present numbers. This would bring our total insurance bill (including workers compensation) to approximately \$3,000 per year.

It was acknowledged that we cannot lock other committees in years to come to taking out this insurance and it is for them to determine from time to time however it will probably become the norm.

Motion	That the Association accept the offer from the NSW Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations for additional 'no fault' insurance cover as per Federation letter of 6 December 2010 at an additional annual premium of \$4.85 per child or approximately \$1,600 per annum.
Moved	Sheralee Rae
Seconded	Paul Peterson
Carried	

2. Greta Brown

The meeting was advised this has been finalised and the \$1,500 donation raised from the 2010 Swim-a-thon as approved at the Special General meeting on 3 March last has been given to Greta's parents. Alison Brown expressed her thanks to the Association. The money donated is to be applied to Greta's tuition in an effort to help her catch up for lost schooling due to extensive treatment and lengthy hospitalisation. Greta should now be back at high school all major treatment having been completed.

3. Payment of BSC employees

The treasurer advised that this has been resolved. Salary cheques are to be made payable to the individual employees and marked 'pay cash'. This will overcome any problems in delayed clearances. The Treasurer advised the meeting that after discussions with the Associations bank she was satisfied that this was appropriate.

4. Signatures on P&C bank accounts

The Treasurer advised that this has been organised, subject to confirmation of previous resolutions by the approval of the minutes of the last meeting. Final details to be attended to.

(Acting) President's Report

The Chairperson tabled a report from Lisa Vezgoff as Acting President.

Thanks again expressed to all those involved in recent the fundraising activities. The amounts raised were disclosed on the report.

Discussion followed on the need to have more people involved on the executive committee. There was some discussion about offering specific tasks which could fit in with people's availability.

Agreed that the executive committee would meet with the subcommittee chairpersons at some stage to consider options. Further and regular notification to be included in the newsletter of vacancies on the executive committee.

Motion	Motion to accept the acting President's report.
Moved	Peter Holmes
Seconded	Sheralee Rae
Carried	

Principal's Report

The Principal's report was tabled and addressed by the Principal.

1. After completion of the interview process Debbie Hobbs has been appointed as the Assistant Principal. There was a wide range of applicants coming from as far away as Western Australia and India. This appointment is subject to a 10 day appeal period so it is conditional at this stage. A new class teacher will be needed to replace her. The Principal will activate the transfer list for her replacement.

2. Demountables

As advised previously, the second demountable to be delivered shortly and installed in playground. The current demountable to be turned 90 degrees to reduce noise effecting adjoining land owners.

3. School Numbers

Principal advised a new enrolment was received from Blue Mountains area today. The student's parents have moved into the area as a "sea change". The Principal again advised the meeting he is obliged to take all children resident in the schools catchment area whenever they arrive. The Principal believes that numbers should drop accordingly to statistics over the next couple of years but impossible to say.

A report recently prepared by the Boston Consulting Group ("Boston report") at the request of the NSW State Government has recommended the sale of smaller schools occupying land of considerable value and consolidating their students into larger schools. This could mean ultimately the relocation of students from Coledale and Scarborough Schools (which are always being threatened with closure) to Austinmer. This could have serious consequences in terms of

numbers but there is nothing that this committee can do about it apart from lobbying politically.

The Boston report will be reviewed by the incoming government after the forthcoming election. Subject to what the incoming government considers of the report in relation to Coledale and Scarborough there maybe the need to instigate some political action.

4. Swim-a-thon

Liz Mobbs has taken a number of photos from the Swim-a-thon and posted them to her facebook site for those not in attendance.

5. Funding Review Committee ("FRC")

The Principal tabled his submission to the FRC both in a personal capacity and as principal. These were posted to the school website for review and use by others.

General discussion on the need to submit as many submissions as possible as this is a political issue. The FRC is likely to recommend change based on numbers which may have political connotations if the groundswell for change appears to be widespread across the community.

The Chairperson advised the Associations submission had been sent and would be posted to the web site as well for use as a precedent.

6. Grandparents Day

All organised for 25 March 2011 and to go ahead.

7. Interrelate program

This is a program to be conducted on the 10 May 2011 dealing with puberty/sexuality issues for young children. They are designed to encourage parent and child discussions on their changing bodies as they approach puberty. Sessions are organised for students in Years 3/4 and Years 5/6. A number of different sessions for mothers/daughters and fathers/sons. Details will be in the newsletter.

Motion	That the Principal's report be accepted.
Moved	Nuong Turner
Seconded	Elaine Byrne
Carried	

Secretary's Report

The chairperson tabled the secretary's report.

Correspondence In:

1. Letter from QBE re workers compensation insurance dated 25 December 2010.
2. Letter from P&C Federation dated 6 December 2010 re insurance.

3. Letter from Peter Holmes for reimbursement of expenses 15 March 2010.

Correspondence Out:

1. Letter to QBE with workers compensation details dated X March 2010.
2. Letter to Funding Review Committee from Association dated 23 March 2011.

Motion	To accept secretary's report.
Moved	Tanya Allen
Seconded	Paul Peterson
Carried	

Interposed General Business Agenda Item.

D. Payment of expenses incurred by the members of the executive in carrying out their roles.

Interposed at the request of Di Oliver who had asked that this be put on the agenda but could not stay for the entire meeting.

The Chairperson advised the meeting that at the previous Association meeting in February a motion had been passed unanimously which, inter alia, approved the reimbursement of all reasonably incurred expenses by members of the executive in carrying out their duties.

It was indicated that this was put to cover all incidental expenses which could be incurred from time to time but which should not be required to be paid by members of the executive committee from their own pocket. This included, for example, expenses such as postage costs or travel on Association related business.

In the case of the Secretary it could also include the costs incurred by him personally in having the minutes of the Association's general meetings dictated by an outside transcription service engaged by him. The approximate cost to the Association was \$30 each time this service was used, meaning a cost to the association of approximately \$240 per year.

The Chairperson advised that all other communications for which the Secretary was responsible including emails, letters, memos, minutes of special meetings and the AGM and the like were all done by hand and without the use of digital dictation at no cost to the Association. The preparation of the minutes of the general meetings however by this means was a substantial time saver to him in the course of carrying out the secretarial duties, particularly when the executive was understaffed.

At the previous meeting assistance had been sought to avoid the \$240.00 p.a. transcription cost but no one present was able to assist by taking on the transcription role.

The motion to reimburse expenses had been passed unopposed at that meeting.

Di expressed the view that the secretary's role was voluntary and that part of the job description included the preparation of the minutes. She said it was not appropriate that association monies should be used for this purpose. She said she had contacted the NSW P&C Federation and had been informed the use of association monies to reimburse such expenses as sought by the Secretary was not appropriate.

The Chairperson advised that unlike small sporting clubs and the like this Association runs 12 months of the year, is an employer with those obligations and has a significant operating budget with responsibility overall for numerous fund raising and other activities. The volume of communications in the job is substantial and the executive committee is chronically short staffed.

General discussion followed.

The Principal advised his inquiries of Federation resulted in an entirely different outcome to Di's and that Federation had informed him the proposed course was a legitimate use of Association funds.

Di was invited to put a specific motion to vary the previous motion but did not do so.

Cath Daly, new member, volunteered to resolve the situation by taking on the role of minute secretary.

Motion	To appoint Cath Daly as minute secretary.
Moved	Sheralee Rae
Seconded	Tanya Allen
Carried	

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was tabled. The balance of the accounts are noted as follows:

P&C Account: Closing balance \$13,987.35.

BSC Account: Closing balance \$8,091.12.

Canteen Account: Closing balance \$9,663.16.

Liabilities Account: Closing balance \$3,995.70.

\$2,700 has been received from the February Swim-a-thon with a similar amount yet to be received from the sponsorship monies. The Treasurer advised that we presently have approx \$18,400.00 in available funds after taking into account all those monies retained for future liabilities.

Based on previous years performances with the functions that are yet to come the Treasurer anticipates another \$15,000 (approx.) maybe received in the course of the year which can be utilised for funding. This gives a potential amount of \$33,400.00 available to apply to the school, assuming this estimate proves on the mark.

Motion	That the Treasurer's report be accepted.
Moved	Paul Peterson
Seconded	Miriam Waldron
Carried	

General Business

A. Sub-committee reports

The chairperson tabled reports from the BSC sub-committee, Canteen sub-committee, Innovations sub-committee, Business Fundraising sub-committee and Events sub-committee.

None of these reports had contained any requests for decisions or funding from the Association but advised of past activities and likely directions.

Matters of interest:

1. The Innovations sub-committee included a report on last year's survey and present situation in relation to ethics classes.

The meeting was advised by the Chairperson that Lorraine Holmes has been appointed the Ethics Co-ordinator by the St James Ethics Centre following her submission of an expression of an interest in January.

She has interviewed 4 persons seeking to undergo the training being run by the St James Ethics Centre and interested in being appointed as teachers/facilitators in the Ethics program. At this stage there will only be one appointee for classes beginning in term 2 and that appointment is Anousha Zarkesh.

The meeting was informed that the entire ethics program is completely outside the Association's jurisdiction or involvement and hence it is not featured on any of the meetings to date. The Association has no input in the process. It is entirely a creature of statute being conducted by the St James Ethics Centre having being delegated by government. At this stage ethics classes are expected to start at term 2 for years 5 and 6 only. The program will initially be open only to those students who do not presently attend SRE classes but this may change, depending on numbers and demand. This again will be outside the Associations control.

2. Grounds sub-committee

Dan Bishop, Subcommittee chairperson, was present and delivered an oral report. The Subcommittee will aim for a mid-year working bee.

Noted that there was some interest from a number of persons within the school community and Dan will convene a meeting on a day to be fixed at which all persons interested will be encouraged to attend.

Dan advised some expenses will be incurred, somewhere between \$500 - \$1,000, so a budget was needed.

Motion	To provide up to \$1,000 for the funding of a working bee to be conducted at the school before the 30 June 2011
Moved	Peter Holmes
Seconded	Paul Peterson
Carried	

Motion	To accept the sub-committee reports
Moved	Peter Holmes
Seconded	Elaine Byrne
Carried	

C. Class co-ordinators

All appointments have been concluded however the process is not working properly. The meeting was advised that the Class Co-ordinators do not seem to understand their role. A meeting is to be convened with the Principal and to be attended to by all class co-ordinators and Tanya Allen. Tanya to organise.

D. Reimbursement of expenses – dealt with previously as interposed item.

E. Fundraising objectives for 2011

The meeting was advised that at a meeting in September last year, where the purchase of 3 interactive whiteboards was approved, a resolution was also passed whereby the Association agreed that its principle fundraising objectives would be the fitting of interactive whiteboards into all school classrooms as a priority. The Principal advised that the school has purchased 5 itself so there are now 8 whiteboards across the school. There is a need for another 7 including the library which on present costs would be around \$49,000 which is more than is available across the year from funding.

The Chairperson of the Business Fundraising Subcommittee, Tanya Allen, advised she is looking at options to assist. CBA funding maybe available for up to \$8,000 which she and the Principal are pursuing. Additional funding may also be available externally to apply towards supporting the Reading Recovery Program. Tanya advised that no response at this stage from either Telstra or BlueScope both of whom have employee based fund raising schemes which might be of assistance and that she was pursuing this further.

The Principal reinforced the use of whiteboards as teaching aids across the school and the value of their acquisition to the students.

It was generally agreed that fundraising attempts should be focused once more on whiteboard acquisition with the object being to achieve this target as quickly as possible without distraction. The achievement of this objective would then freeing up the Association to fundraise for alternative and equally valid

objectives. Notwithstanding this focus other valid objectives would continue to be funded where it was considered appropriate and affordable on a case by case basis.

There was no motion put from the floor to vary the resolution passed last year whereby the acquisition of electronic whiteboards was the Associations principle fundraising objective.

F. Purchase of a single electronic whiteboard

This had been put on the agenda at the request of Miriam Waldron. The Treasurer advised that there are sufficient funds available to cover the purchase of a whiteboard which is estimated to be approximately \$6,800.00.

Motion	That the Association purchase 1 additional electronic whiteboard from available funds at an approximate cost of \$7,000
Moved	Miriam Waldron
Seconded	Sheralee Rae
Carried	

G. Air-conditioning in canteen

The Canteen Subcommittee Chairperson, Sheralee Rae, tabled a costing for the installation of air-conditioning into the canteen at a cost of \$1,800 (incl GST). The school supplies the power. This was done via a friend of Sheralee's at a greatly reduced cost and as such the offer is a substantial discount.

Sheralee indicated that the temperatures in the canteen in summer can become extreme and it can also be very cold in winter. In the interest of keeping the volunteers comfortable and involved it was a worthwhile option. The installation of reverse cycle air-conditioning was recommended by the Canteen subcommittee.

Motion	To accept the T & C Air Conditioning quote of \$1,800 inclusive of GST to fit a reverse-cycle air conditioning unit in the canteen
Moved	Elaine Byrne
Seconded	Karen Hardie
Carried	

H. Model P&C By-Laws

The Chairperson tabled the final version of the proposed By-Laws which had been posted on the website in February and indicated that he proposed that these should be put to the meeting for formal approval at the next general meeting on 11 May 2011.

Motion	That the draft By-Laws as tabled be put to the Association for formal approval at next meeting on the 11 May 2011.
Moved	Peter Holmes
Seconded	Elaine Byrne
Carried	

I. School sign

The Acting President obtained a quotation to replace the Perspex in accordance with a resolution passed last year. The cost is approximately \$80. It is noted that there is no funding available at this stage to upgrade the sign on the western end of the school to anything more substantial. Agreed to defer any further expenses apart from replacement of Perspex in accord with previous resolution.

J. Draft voluntary contributions letter

The draft version prepared the by executive in conjunction with the principal was tabled.

General discussion followed and the approach taken generally approved.

Motion	That the voluntary contribution letter in the form tabled be submitted to parents in such a manner as is agreed is most appropriate by the Executive and the Principal
Moved	Peter Holmes
Seconded	Tanya Allen
Carried	

K. Submission to Federal Govt's Funding Review Committee

The submission prepared by the Executive and submitted to the FRC had been tabled as part of the Secretary's report. This will be sent to the website in Word format so that parents can cut and paste as they see fit so they can make their own submissions. There should be widespread encouragement to all parents to make a submission before the end of the month when submissions close.

There was general discussion on the inadequacies of funding under the present regime and the inequity in the amounts received by State schools and comparable private schools.

Paul advised that the My School website provides an opportunity for analysis of these disparities.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.05pm.



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Peter Holmes, Secretary

Signed as a true and correct record of the meeting conducted 23 March 2011 by resolution passed at meeting conducted 11 May 2011.