



## **Minutes of General Meeting – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Meeting Opened:** 7.35pm

**Present:** Christine Del Gallo (Principal), Wayne Christie (P&C President and Meeting Chair), Doug Price, Margaret Thwaites, Jacqui Walshe, Karen Nicholls, Edith Hurt, Sandra Bensted, Helen Redmond, Robert Johanson, Dawn Newton, Cathy Griffin and Fiona Allen - 12 attendees (quorum is 11).

**Apologies:** Gail Correy, Liz Klaz, Jim Cooper

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Wayne Christie noted that Edith Hurt has volunteered to act as Secretary – this has been accepted by the P&C Executive and was endorsed by this General Meeting.

→ Edith to forward minutes to Robert Johanson who will put them up on the P&C website

**SRC Update** provided by Tahlee Auton (Captain), Emily Baker and Elizabeth Christie (Prefects)

1. Breast cancer fund raising
  - Cake stall \$400
  - Merchandise \$400 (tbc)
  - A 33m “bra-chain” made by 2 pastoral care groups to decorate the occasion
2. Bear Cottage (for terminally ill children in Manly)
  - Students will be asked to bring in a small gift
  - Prefects will take a hamper full at Xmas time
3. Leadership Conference
  - Attended with Cromer Prefects at Darling Harbour
  - Prefects from other schools attended as well
4. College Prefects Leadership Day
  - Attended at Terrey Hills
  - Enjoyed the day, was a great initiative
  - Helped them learn how to interact and build a sense of community
5. Next charity will be Guide Dogs Australia

**Technology Briefing** by Lyn Christie (Deputy) and Carla Campbell (Computer Co-ordinator)

- Lyn took the meeting to a science lab to demonstrate the new SmartBoard technology. She gave a slide presentation (we will try to have a copy put up on the P&C website) on the status of technology at the school including:
  - Number and location of computers in the school
  - Networks and internet connection
  - Terminal server which allows staff to log on from home (students too in the future)
  - SmartBoards – 7 at present – being used extensively
  - Digital camera and associated software
  - Website with links to P&C website
  - Maths “tablets” which are like a laptop but can be written on and project a view of the screen onto a whiteboard – cheaper than SmartBoards but not as interactive
  - Laser printers in staff room
  - Mounted data projectors in classrooms
  - Performance Space projector and permanent screen
  - Adobe Smartsuite – publishing program, PhotoShop, etc
  - New attendance management software
  - Music hardware and software with capacity for recording music
  - Animation and languages software
  - Wireless access across most of the school – brick school puts up some barriers to reception
  - In 2009, as part of the Commonwealth “digital education revolution”, 219 laptops are expected. NSW Government still negotiating about the rollout so don’t expect these till mid 2009
  - Lyn made an appeal to parents



- If you are aware of any grants that the school may be eligible for, please let her know
- Any other ideas and assistance is very welcome

The meeting adjourned back to the Staff Room to resume the rest of the meeting agenda at 8.15pm, after expressing thanks to Lyn and Carla for their time and efforts.

**Previous Minutes** accepted by Doug Price and Helen Redmond.

### **Correspondence**

1. Wayne Christie replied via email to Brian Kirk (refer previous minutes).
2. The remainder of the correspondence was from companies offering fundraising products.

### **Matters Arising From Previous Minutes**

1. Rock Eisteddfod – Mackellar 4<sup>th</sup>. Given the ever increasing standard of the event, this was a big achievement and congratulations expressed to the student involved, along with the Ross Milne, other teachers and the parents who have supported them.
2. Doug Price has checked the Group Certificates for Canteen employees. He reported that both these and Super are up to date.
3. In reply to a question, Doug Price advised that the Canteen pay increase mentioned in previous minutes is in line with the Shop Assistant Award as of July 28<sup>th</sup> 2008 including back pay. It was approved by the P&C Executive and will be implemented as of next pay period.
4. This led to discussion about the status of the Canteen Committee. Robert Johanson advised that there was a Canteen Committee (of which he was a member) headed by Judith Kerr and including Gordon Whyte, however it was informal and meetings were not held. Doug Price advised that in practice, he is acting as a "liaison" between Canteen staff and the school/P&C.
  - ➔ It was agreed that issues such as Canteen staff wages, incentives and conditions and the approval process for any such matters are best handled by the Canteen Committee, which need only meet once a year or once a term (similar to some other local schools). The meeting was asked if anyone would like to join the Canteen Committee, however no-one present was so inclined.
5. ➔ Still waiting for Brian Kirk to return the key to the Canteen cupboard.
6. The status of the ongoing matter of Lowes selling Mackellar uniforms was discussed. A parent advised that Lowes were selling dresses for \$79.00.
  - ➔ The decision taken at the last meeting was reconfirmed – there would be no purchase of stock by the P&C without due consideration by the P&C Executive and Helen Redmond.
7. It was noted that in relation to P&C meeting attendance, there had been 2 items in the newsletter encouraging parents to attend, and tonight's numbers were a good indication of the willingness of parents to respond to the call.

### **President's Report**

- Wayne Christie thanked the parents who were in attendance and said it was good to see so many people at the meeting.

### **Treasurer's Report**

1. Doug Price tabled a Treasurer's Report which included:
  - Provisional Canteen figures for October 2008 (profit of \$5,543.91)
  - Bank Account details as at 31 Oct 2008
    - Canteen ANZ closing balance \$65,230.90
  - MYOB balances as at Aug 2008
    - Canteen CBA Account closing balance \$20,933.76
      - It was noted that this account is used for book packs
    - Administration CBA Account closing balance \$53,758.34
    - Canteen ANZ Long Service Account closing balance \$455.00
  - Uniform Shop figures provided separately
2. Doug advised that the P&C was in a good position to give \$100,000 to the school



3. School year ends on November 30<sup>th</sup>, so the school would like any funds that are intended to be forthcoming before that date
4. There followed discussion about the status of bank statements (in order to have a true and current picture of our financial position). It was noted that this has been a running request for most of this year. Christine De Gallo mentioned that current bank reconciliations were desirable for each meeting.
5. Edith Hurt asked what the P&C funds given to the school were used for, to which Doug Price advised that they go into general school funds. Edith advised that there was a process in some other local schools' P&C, where a "wish list" of projects (such as student outdoor seating or assistance with funding for school representatives) was prioritised by the parents at P&C. The process then allowed for discussion and agreement through the year by the P&C Executive and the Principal and the relevant amount spent on agreed items, giving the parents who had contributed to the funds some say over how they were spent.
  - Christine Del Gallo expressed support for this concept and will discuss with the P&C Executive.
6. Doug Price moved a motion that \$100,000 be given to the school. This was seconded by Robert Johanson and carried unanimously. Funds to come from:
  - \$35,000 Canteen CBA Account
  - \$5,000 Administration CBA Account
  - \$60,000 Administration CBA Account

### **Canteen Report**

1. 24<sup>th</sup> November – volunteer dinner for Canteen volunteers
2. Volunteer numbers – any help appreciated
  - Some parents find 5 hours too long
  - Some parents share shifts doing half a day each
  - It is not necessary to do one day a month
    - Agreed to alter new student sheet to reflect this flexibility (it currently implies that 1 day month is the minimum)
  - Doug noted that parents are also welcome to start early at 7am to help with food prep, although others noted that having enough helpers at morning tea and lunch to serve students was also important

### **Principal's Report**

1. Christine Del Gallo tabled a print-out from the school website which outlines the merit system – there had been a question on the agenda as to how the system worked. This information is available under the "Welfare" tab
  - Personal best aspect
  - Outstanding achievements
  - About 20 students a year get a blue banner
  - Merit Assembly – parents are welcome
    - ACTION: put these in the Newsletter and send a note home to parents of recipients (as the parents present were mostly unaware that parents were welcome or when / if their child was receiving a merit award). It was noted that in the calendar at the back of the Newsletter they are listed as "Merit Assembly" however parents at the meeting commented that they did not know when their child was receiving a merit award, so notification would be welcome.
      - Collection of email addresses continuing so that more correspondence can be targeted
      - Letters of commendation will continue to come by post
2. HSC – one nomination for Art Express, 4 HSC dance nominated
3. School Certificate next week
4. Years 7 & 8 having exams for the first time this week.
  - In response to questions from the meeting, Christine outlined why exams had been re-introduced for Years 7 and 8 – raising expectations and showing that what you do in the classroom is important, a way of keeping students focused and on track all year, lifting the academic culture of the school (co-curricular activities are important but so are classroom activities). It also holds teachers accountable for covering the curriculum.
  - Some parents said students were feeling quite pressured and concerned about loss of academic place (some teachers had warned that these were at risk if results not up to scratch) – Christine advised that this was not the case.



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- Reports will show exams as a separate outcome. No marks will be shown but will correspond to a range.
5. Academic streaming
- This was also an agenda item for the meeting. Christine advised that Year 7 Academic stream will also be streamed in Year 8, however the other talented streams will be in normal classes, but Music, Dance and VA will have some special classes. Sport students will do their sport when school sport is on.
  - All G&T students will have 5 enrichment days per annum (equivalent to 1.5 periods / week) with challenging / extending work
  - If a student is in more than 1 stream (eg: Academic and Dance) they will be able to do both.
6. Question from the floor about debating – Cathy Griffin asked about the Premier’s Debating Challenge. Our team won the Region with Cromer, Balgowlah and Manly. The next level is Zone in Oct/Nov but no notification has come out about it. The Finals are 29<sup>th</sup> November.
- Christine will ask Stephen (who does this in addition to his teaching load) about it tomorrow
- Cathy also asked if, at the beginning of the year, a schedule could be sent out, the costs outlined, etc so that students, parents and teachers could follow through on these worthwhile initiatives
7. Christine expressed her thanks to the Canteen for a wonderful year.
8. A vote of thanks was proposed for Christine for all her good work in her first year at Mackellar – unanimously supported.

### **Uniform Shop Report**

1. Helen Redmond reported that we will not be doing uniforms on Orientation Day this year but will 2 x Saturdays 9am-4pm instead, one before Orientation on 29<sup>th</sup> November and one after on 6<sup>th</sup> December.
2. Thanks to Gail Corey, a major support since 2004, who is finishing up
3. Gordon Whyte is continuing to help with the book-keeping
4. A batch of poly-cotton has been ordered to check if it better to use than the poly-viscose, which is stiff and does not breath. New batch due early 2009.
5. Suggestions for better uniform shop access have been put forward to Christine.
  - Christine suggested Helen meet with her to discuss and progress this
6. Saturdays have been successful with turnover of \$800 - \$1,000 each day
7. As it is the last meeting of the year, Wayne proposed a motion to thank Helen for her great work running the uniform shop again this year. This was seconded by Robert Johanson and unanimously carried.

### **Other Reports – PAG (College Parent Advisory Group)**

Dawn Newton reported on the cross-Campus meeting held this week, including:

1. Student Leadership Day very successful
2. Sponsorship in schools discussion
3. College plans for 2009
4. P&C Attendance and parental involvement in schools
  - Problem with attendance numbers at P&C meetings at every school in the Campus
    - Suggestions for building a sense of Community in our school included event based – eg: mixed evenings to showcase performing arts, music, other as a way for parents to meet each other and get interested in being involved
    - Christine noted these suggestions and will take it up with staff for discussion. She said there were some issues in getting various subjects streams to “peak” at the same time but could look at it for the juniors and try to have some of their subject areas or outcomes co-inciding
    - Some parents noted that Forest Hight and Manly Selective are doing something along these lines with Showcase nights
5. P&C levy – a report was tabled of what other schools are doing (Hunters Hill \$110, James Ruse \$316, Manly High School \$80 with 80% contribution rate, Mosman Year 7 \$139, Year 8 \$149 etc, Neutral Bay \$175 with 75% compliance)
  - It was noted that Mackellar’s levy is \$110 and can be discussed / changed from time to time, but it is too late to make any changes for 2009.
  - It was further noted that Mackellar’s seem to be roughly in line with other schools.



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### **General Business**

1. **P&C levy** to be discussed. At present this is \$2.00 and is collected at meetings. Only financial members can vote. Some schools allow/encourage this to be paid as part of school fees/school contributions (separate line item) which is a better accounting/administrative option than dealing with stray \$2.00 coins at individual meetings
  - For further discussion at P&C Executive
2. Proposal by Cathy Griffin that we investigate **Canteen on-line ordering**. It would require a computer in the Canteen, but this could also be used for admin.
  - Taken on notice for review by Canteen Committee. It was noted that it had been successfully implemented at some other local schools.
3. **Use of Year 12 Common Room** – it is noisy and close to the office – Christine noted she can hear everything that goes on in there. Question about how many actually use it. There are 130 Year 12 students but only about 12 use it at any one time.
4. Doug Price raised the issue of the **NSW Govt planned changes to bus passes**. He felt the P&C should be concerned about cost, parking and safety. It is thought it is changing from 2.9km radius to 4km radius of the closest school to your home address. Since some Mackellar students come from out of area to attend the only state girls single-sex high school on the peninsula, concern that it may impact enrolments/school fee income
  - Doug put a motion of concern which should be addressed to Verity Firth, cc: Teacher's Federation, P&C, local member – carried
    - Wayne to write the letters and send
5. **Where to take the P&C in 2009?** Suggestions from the meeting included:
  - Environment committee – water tanks, recycling, reducing the school's carbon footprint
  - Debating committee – to support the school's efforts
  - New venue for Uniform Shop
  - Former Students Association / Alumni – mentoring for current students, help build and retain school community
  - Parent discussion forum on the website – close to being a reality
  - Greater sense of community in the school – all ideas welcome
  - Guest speakers at P&C meetings
  - Greater attendance at meetings, regular attendance and ownership of roles
6. Wayne and Christine thanked all Year 12 parents for their contribution to the school over the years and all the best for the future.

Meeting closed 10pm

**Next meeting: Wed 4<sup>th</sup> March (AGM)**