

Will Rogers High School Community Foundation

Winter Board Retreat

January 19, 2015

Those in attendance included Board Members, Carol Axley, Johnnie Egbert, Vicki Gilstrap, Ora Harrison, Jo Anne Lewis, Frank Marcum, Sherryl McGuire, Jay Ross, Iris Studenny, Paul Thomas, Lana Turner-Addison, and Stephen Wright, and Advisors, Chris VanDenhende and Debbie VanDenhende.

Jo Anne Lewis called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m. The meeting took place at the Sonoma Wine Bar, 3513 S Peoria, in Tulsa. A quorum was present.

Jo Anne commended the Board on a very successful 2014. She is working on the Annual Report that details the activities and results accomplished by the Foundation. This was presented to the Board in draft form. She has received excellent reports from most of the committee heads and hopes to hear from the remainder shortly. This is the first year such a report has been prepared, and once completed, it can be presented to prospective donors. Jo Anne mentioned that she is adamant about keeping a good history of the Foundation.

Carol Axley reminded the group that we should be keeping careful track of the hours that we have spent volunteering for the Foundation. These statistics should be reported to the school and will benefit the school when the State evaluates and grades the school. It was suggested that a form for recording this information be developed and distributed to Board members.

Sherryl McGuire, Development chair, reminded the group that we have agreed to one primary fund raising event per year. This was in the minutes from the last meeting. Sherryl pointed out that while our 75th Anniversary Gala was a tremendous success in 2014, it takes three to five years to make these an annual fund raiser really successful and we have not thus far made plans for a large 2015 event. Jo Anne suggested that we will still want to have some small fund raising activities during the year. Discussion of this main fund raiser was tabled until later in the meeting.

Jo Anne reported that Larry Beaubien has agreed to continue to serve as the Foundation Treasurer through the end of April of this year. No replacement has yet been named. Larry has agreed to continue doing the taxes for the Foundation as long as we continue doing the bookkeeping on Quick Books. He also will allow us to continue using his firm as the mailing address for the Foundation. Jo Anne recommended that we find a better method of reporting financial activities so that we

have the much more complete details on how our funds are raised and disbursed. Iris pointed out that it would be good to find a younger CPA, and that having the 75th anniversary Gala in the springtime made the accounting difficult because of tax season, a problem for most tax accountants. Sherryl has a friend from her class, Chris Armstrong, who cannot do the taxes, but he may be interested in the Treasurers position once he retires. Chris VanDenhende said that he is CPA and a corporate CFO and might be willing to handle the bookkeeping. He is not willing to take on the tax preparation.

Jay Ross asked who will be receiving copies of the Annual Report. Jo Anne said that it will be given to the School Board, to WRHS administration, and will be used as a promotional document to solicit funders.

Jo Anne suggested that we spend a few minutes introducing ourselves, providing our graduation year and our purpose for participating in the Foundation.

Lana Turner-Addison, '82, is a member of the Tulsa School Board and an educator. She is interested in helping to revitalize WRHS.

Stephen Wright, '56, does the school guided tours, produced the school's historical calendar several years ago, and has a special interest in seeing that the organ project is completed.

Debbie VanDenhende. Wichita HS graduate who volunteers at WRHS with special interest in sports and helps husband, Chris, with the Booster Club. She wants to help the students excel in academics. Debbie is on the Foundation's Board of Advisors.

Chris VanDenhende, '77, is the leader of the athletic Booster Club and wants to bring Rogers back to the quality of the 60's and 70's. Chris is also a Foundation Advisor.

Jay Ross, Edison '75, is a horticulturist who recently moved into the neighborhood of the school. He loves the architectural quality of the school and is helping to beautify the grounds of WRHS. He asked about a neighborhood association and was given a bit of the history of such association and was informed that State Representative Eric Proctor lives in the neighborhood and that our City Councilman for District 4 is Blake Ewing.

Frank Marcum, '61, is former Foundation secretary, considers himself a "go-fer" guy, and is interested in seeing the success of the school and its students. He believes WRHS can be an extremely viable part of the community.

Sherryl McGuire, '65, is chair of the Fund Development committee, helping to raise money and distribute it in the most beneficial ways. She wants to help the staff, kids and parents to achieve excellence and have success in life. She coordinates the teacher funding requests and how those funds are utilized. Her goal is to fund all teacher requests.

Vicki Gilstrap, '63, is the recording secretary, keeper of the alumni/friends database, and coordinated last year's Teacher Appreciation events.

Iris Studenny, '66, has a well-demonstrated talent for organizing events. She is passionate about the kids, teachers, and parents, and successfully headed up the 75th Anniversary Gala last April. She's working on the Hall of Fame celebration coming up in March.

Johnnie Egbert, '65, was on staff as the school was reorganized, has worked closely with cheer, football, and other sports with the Boosters. Her real passion is mentoring and is serving as the go-between between teachers and volunteers.

Carol Axley, '62, is a retired Tulsa Public School teacher and served as Gear-Up Coordinator for Tulsa Public Schools. She wants young people to have the same opportunities we did in HS and serves as Chair of the Scholarship Committee. She is working to coordinate the Foundation and the Alumni Association. She has nominated our principal, Nikki Dennis, to the Leadership Tulsa and hopes that if she is accepted, the Foundation will be able to sponsor her membership.

Paul Thomas, '73, has served as a past president of the Foundation. He still lives in the neighborhood and is in it for the kids. He serves as a connection between the community and the school.

JoAnne Lewis, '55, is president of the Foundation. She became involved as a result of receiving a call to see what was happening at WRHS as they were being converted into a magnet school. She is dedicated to seeing that the students have a positive, self-fulfilling experience at WRHS.

Ora Harrison, '51, went through Cleveland Jr. High, WRHS and TU, and then lived in Houston for 40 years. She returns to Tulsa and our Board as the assistant treasurer.

Following introductions, the following business items were discussed:

- Jo Anne talked about the importance of writing thank you notes to donors and to be certain if the donor specified how the funds were to be spent that they were informed that the funds were appropriately dispersed.
- Jo Anne reminded us that the responsibilities of Board Members are listed in the bi-laws of the organization, and primary among them is that we each must make an annual contribution to the Foundation.
- There was a discussion regarding the Will Rogers Alumni Foundation, which is separate from our organization. It was mentioned that they only have certain types of items to which they care to give and that we try to allow them to fund such items before we become involved. This group is primarily comprised of very early WRHS graduates, mostly from the late 1940's.
- Iris pointed out that we should have a presence at the Will Rogers Rotary Club, which meets weekly. It costs about \$600 per year, but they have offered to have a school employee attend for free. Sherryl recommended Karen Miller as a good teacher representative to the weekly meeting, but also suggested that we check with principal, Nikki Dennis, to obtain her recommendations. Iris also mentioned that there are several classes that have monthly get-togethers and that it would be a good opportunity to promote the Foundation if we could be represented at these events.
- Sherryl asked about the pricing on the Mayo Hotel as a venue for the Hall of Fame celebration in March. Iris said that the cost will be \$50 to \$55 per person for a beautiful dinner. The price for attendance at the event will be \$75 to make it a fund raising event. Sherryl said the Doubletree will do a nice dinner for \$35 per person. She questioned whether we need the quality of elegance of the Mayo Hotel. A very lengthy discussion ensued regarding where the event should be held and whether or not it could be expected to be the major fundraiser for 2015. Sherryl recommended that if it is to be our primary fundraiser, we need to broaden the scope, having additional events at the school, etc. There was question as to whether or not we have the time to make the event bigger this year. Iris pointed out that the Hall of Fame Committee had recommended the Mayo Hotel. After much discussion, Paul Thomas moved that we accept the recommendation of the Hall of Fame Committee to hold the Hall of Fame Banquet at the Mayo Hotel on Friday, March 27, charging \$75 per person. Iris Studenny seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Four people from the Board attended the "Making the Ask" course presented by the Oklahoma Center for Non-Profits. In attendance were Jo Anne Lewis, Steve Wright, Sherryl McGuire and Vicki Gilstrap. A handout from the class was disbursed to the group. We learned that the principle reason that people give to a non-profit organization is because they are asked. Jo Anne announced that the average gift received from the Foundation's December mailing was approximately \$250 and that responses to date have been quite good.

- Sherryl suggested that the fund raising goal for 2015 should be at least \$50,000. This amount needs to be in the forefront of our fund raising activities, a published figure not only with our Board, but also with the alumni of WRHS.
- There was discussion about taking pictures of students to be used in our newsletters and fund raising activities. Publication of pictures of students requires parental permission. Johnnie Egbert will find a form for this purpose and give it to Debbie VanDenhende.
- In order to meet this goal of \$50,000, we will need to write grants, use newsletters and email solicitation, etc. Jo Anne commented that we need to find major Tulsa donors.

The next Board Meeting was scheduled for Thursday, February 19th, at 4:30 p.m. at WRHS. The Winter Board Retreat was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Gilstrap
Secretary

NOTE: Subsequent to our meeting, Larry Beaubien has resigned as Treasurer effective immediately and we have changed to a Post Office Box for receiving communications. The PO Box is 52845, Tulsa, OK 74152.