

**GRMPA**  
**Wednesday, November 11, 2015**  
**Meeting Minutes – Chorus Room**

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes for the October meeting were submitted for approval. The motion was made by Lisa Lauterbach to approve the minutes and seconded by Anthony Turiano, so the motion passed. The approved October meeting minutes will be posted to the GRMPA website.

**Band and Chorus Director Reports – Dr. Darren Gage and Ms. Jessica Cino**

The Executive Committee and other participants at the meeting welcomed Ms. Cino back from her maternity leave.

**Instrumental Lessons**

Ms. Cino indicated that she has resumed instrumental lessons with the 7th and 8th graders and also with the high school students during 1st and 2nd periods. She had lessons with the saxophonists today; all of the musicians came to their lesson and left saying that the lesson was actually really helpful. She stated that it would be great if parents could encourage their kids to go to the lessons.

**Need for new tuners and drumpads**

Ms. Cino mentioned that the high school has almost no tuners left, and expressed the view, which was reiterated by Dr. Gage, that they really need some tuners. They stated that the cost is approximately \$20 each. They also mentioned that there are only two practice drumpads at the high school, while there are approximately twenty percussionists in the bands. They indicated that they could put these items into the budget request for next year, but then the students won't have them until next September. Dr. Gage mentioned that he has been purchasing music and submitting receipts for the music to the school for reimbursement, but that given the higher total cost of the tuners and drum pads, it probably wouldn't be appropriate to use the same approach for the tuners and drumpads. At the Executive Committee's request, Dr. Gage will put together an estimate for the purchase of these items. Kris Ramanathan suggested that Dr. Gage submit the invoice to the school and, if the school won't cover the purchase, GRMPA would be willing to cover it. Kris R. pointed out, however, that we need to get a clearer sense of what expenses are (or should be) covered by the school and what needs to be covered by GRMPA.

**Dorney Park Trip**

The Dorney Park trip is set for Friday, June 10 for 7/8 band and 7-12 chorus. This trip is paid for solely by the parents of the students. There are about 70 kids and there is one chaperone per 10 kids, so 77 in all – Dr. Gage and Ms. Cino are hoping that they will be able to fit everyone

into one bus. Mrs. Bushue suggested that we look into whether we can do a middle school fundraiser to help defray the cost of this trip.

### **Spring Band and Chorus Trip**

A three-day high school band and chorus trip is currently being planned for the weekend of May 21. Dr. Gage is working on getting the administration to agree to the school day that could be made part of the trip (because there is a possible conflict with the PARCC testing). Dr. Gage and Ms. Cino have three places in mind. They are 90% sure of which of the three it will be but want it to be a surprise for the kids. In that case it would be a performance on a live stage and then a workshop/clinic. They will try to finalize the date in the next couple of weeks. Dr. Gage will send a set of proposals and quotes in a week or so.

### **“Remind”**

Ms. Cino has asked her students to sign up for Remind, and asks that we remind the kids to do so.

### **2015 Marching Band Season**

Dr. Gage thanked GRMPA for our support and our help in his first year as Band Director at Glen Ridge High School. It was a fantastic year and one of the highlights of his teaching career. It was really thrilling to be at Nationals and have the kids perform so well. He is really looking forward to continuing to work with GRMPA and with these great kids.

Dr. Gage also mentioned that the leadership tryouts have begun and will take place for the next several weeks. They are quite intensive.

Dr. Gage and Lizann Lander will continue to offer color guard training and marching percussion training during the course of the school year and the summer so that the marching band can really hit the ground running next year. Rachel Hogan will try to get a gym for practices. They may even be able to have the students perform at halftime shows for girls' and boys' basketball. Dr. Gage and Ms. Cino have had resistance from the school to including 7th and 8th graders in marching band (because they want to keep the middle-schoolers and high-schoolers separate), but they view this as a "pre-season" activity for the 8th graders (like the Memorial Day Parade). Anke Kramer asked how cheerleading is handled in GR. Ms. Cino said that it is a GRAA activity -- and Lizann Lander has been trying to see if we can add color guard to GRAA.

Dr. Gage noted that our tiny color guard, with so little prior experience, came in sixth at Nationals. Our percussion came in third. We earned 98/100 as a visual score from a real expert in the field. It reflects the drill design and also the execution by the students.

Kelley Forsyth thanked Dr. Gage and asked him to thank all of the staff for the wonderful, transformative experience for the students.

Dr. Gage said that the staff had a great time working with the students and creating such a great marching band performance with them.

## **President's Report – Kris Ramanathan**

### **Concession Stand**

Kris R. reported that with only four home games this year (instead of the usual five plus, in some years, some post-season games), the concession stand nonetheless grossed \$4172 in total revenue this year, which equated to profit of \$2568. Kris R. said that the energy at the concession stand was great, with a lot of volunteers and a lot of fun, and commented that the Turianos had followed very well in Pat DeCelie's large footsteps. In addition, he noted that they had made efforts to keep expenses down by not buying any additional supplies for the last game. The executive committee thanked the Turianos for a job excellently done.

### **Ideas for Increasing Awareness and Involvement**

Kris Smeets asked how we can get more parents involved. Ms. Cino said that they send out a lot of email messages, but people are busy. Dr. Gage said that it might be best to reach out to the parents of the 7th and 8th graders. Kris Ramanathan suggested that we reach out to those parents as part of the "pre-season" effort.

Kris Ramanathan mentioned that he has been very frustrated by the low attendance at the winter band concerts. We brainstormed ways to increase awareness. The suggestions included a bright flyer promoting the different concerts attached to the fruit flyer, sent out by email to the entire town and handed out at the train station shortly before the events. Dr. Gage also suggested that we figure out a way to get the audience to use the front of the auditorium, because the sound is better in the front and the auditorium feels and looks fuller that way. One suggestion is to rope off the back half of the auditorium (except for the front row) and have ushers guide the incoming audience members towards the front. Lisa Lauterbach stated that it would have to be adult ushers because kids won't be forceful enough.

Joan Giurdanella stated that the website should be modified post-marching band season to highlight more chorus and concert band members and activities.

Kris Ramanathan stated that he is looking for someone to head up a concert subcommittee.

### **Marching Band Dinner**

This year's marching band dinner will have a "Mambo" theme and will take place in the cafeteria, catered by Senioritas. The cost is \$25 per adult and \$10 per student/child (including the marching band members). Emily Bushue requested volunteers for set-up in the cafeteria at 4:00. We will invite the principal and superintendent. We'll have the usual candles and photos for the kids and senior speeches. There will be video footage from Nationals playing and also a slideshow throughout. Gary Provost is also looking into providing CDs for the kids. Kris R mentioned that he has candid footage from Nationals and will contact Gary P to see if he wants it. There will be fruit, salad and black beans for vegetarians.

### **Citrus Sale**

The marching band will be performing at the train station on Friday evening. Jim Cowan has arranged for the police to rope off Baldwin Place and Kris Smeets will set up lights. All of the trophies will be there, and GRMPA will be providing pizza and soda (from the concession stand) for the kids. We will hand out flyers and also sell citrus on the spot. We have a credit card device (from Kris R.) available. We have 27 drivers, so we are all set on that front, and 3 talliers (plus Anthony T., after he has driven his route). The Turianos, Ann L. and Joan G. have created new route maps with clearer directions, and the instructions will include Ann's and Joan's cell phone numbers for questions (although Joan pointed out that reception in the cafeteria is terrible). There is a tally sheet in the GRMPA drop-box, which Ali Umana will modify as necessary to reflect the new routes - so Ann will send Ali the new route information.

There being no other new business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anke Kramer Dombrowski  
GRMPA Secretary