



Project Graduation “Class of 2021” Kick-off Meeting

Wednesday, July 8, 2020 • 7:30 – 8:30PM

MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 7:30PM via Zoom Meeting Meeting ID: 838 4673 0369 Password: 963907

Committee Members Present: Tina Blinn, Kathy Skopas, Kevin Hartley, Diane Kasper, Kimberly Kane, Wendy Marinar, Sharon Denizkurt, Stephanie Raymond, Donna Fraleigh & Wendy Dietz

AHM Project Graduation Member(s) Present: Jenn Boehler, Project Graduation Coordinator and Tressa Giordano, Executive Director

AHM Project Graduation Member(s) absent: Nella Stelzner, CFO

AGENDA

Welcome: Jennifer Boehler welcomed everyone.

What is AHM Project Graduation? Explained the AHM Project Graduation event and history to guests present in ZOOM Meeting. Talked about Revolution Bowling in South Windsor as the current venue for the class of 2021. Described the venue and activities available there. Starting project grad early vs. in the past because of COVID 19 and not knowing what the future brings.

Our Committee

Current members staying on from ProjGrad2020

J. Boehler recognized Kathy Skopas, Diane Kasper, Tina Blinn, Wendy Marinar, and Tina Blinn.

Importance of Junior and Senior Parent Involvement

J. Boehler is looking to get more people from either the senior or junior class. She communicated to group that a list will go out to them via e-mail talking in detail about the openings and how much time is needed for each. That there is “something everybody”; those who want to get involved a lot or a little. We will make it work for everyone. Encouraged group to contact her with questions.

How our committee is organized

Talked about the way the committee is organized and members. Steering committee members are Tressa Giordano, AHM Executive Director, Nella Stelzner, AHM CFO, and herself as overall coordinator along with the different parents (ie Kathy, Wendy, Ting, etc.)

Expectations for volunteers

J. Boehler stated that the expectations for the volunteers is all based on the number; more volunteers we have the less work for all of us.

Our Plan for the “Class of 2021”

- J. Boehler informed the meeting guests that there are 255 students in the RHAM HS graduating class this year. Revolutions [South Windsor, CT] looks at a minimum of 125 people to attend Project Graduation. To walk through the door it is \$42 per person. To add on all the food (dinner and breakfast) it's \$26.50 per person. After talking with people who have gone there suggestions were to do some add-ons (mocktails, coffee bar, etc.) and having a bounce house (\$500). Looking at a approximately 125 students attending multiplied by all the cost it will be close to \$9,700.



Comparing this price to the previous years cost and other places out there Revolutions is reasonable. Considering that it has an indoor and outdoor venue it is a right fit for our students. The more students attend the cost increases.

- Stephanie Raymond asked how many students attend. Kathy Skopas answered that historically the numbers have been declining and the previous year's numbers were 108 students. Diane Kasper asked about how the cost compared to when the students went to Quassy Amusement Park. J. Boehler said Quassy was substantially more and the distance was significant. She was not impressed with the food offered either. She like by the food offered at Revolution Bowling and discussed all the different snacks and drinks offered. Diane Kasper said Revolutions was a fun place and J. Boehler agreed further stating there is a lot to do there. Inside Revolutions huge game room, main attraction is the bowling alley with large screens, great lights/lightshow, huge area with couches and lamps, a ballroom. Outside Revolutions: 3 volleyball courts, firepit, cornhole.
- K. Skopas informed the group that two years ago a survey of the students was performed and the feedback was helpful and a good number of students responded. She thinks that Revolution Bowling is a good fit for that feedback received on the survey. Someone asked if we would be the only school during that evening or would there be other schools? J. Boehler answered that we are the only school. T. Giordano informed the group that Revolutions is owned by Nomads. Two separate venues and if a school is at Nomads they are not allowed across the street into Revolutions. She furthered that another advantage is that the earlier we book Revolutions the more accommodating they are with a change of date due to snow days, etc. K. Skopas asked if a deposit is necessary. T. Giordano answered yes and it is \$1,000. K. Skopas asked if there is money in the kitty in order to make the commitment tomorrow. J. Boehler talked about kitty available to cover reserving the venue.

Fundraiser ideas

J. Boehler talked about traditional fundraisers and some are a little out of the box. She also talked about marketing Project Graduation. That we need to do a better job marketing Project Graduation to the students and parents. A lot of parents do not know what it is. That you don't find out about Project Graduation until towards the end of the year when we start doing our fundraising when you have a whole beginning of the school year that you can be utilizing to get information out to the parents. Because we may be closing down in November, we are going to start fundraising earlier. She spoke to a spreadsheet and discussed different fundraising ideas. Getting the word out in the school is critical and drumming up the interest from all of the students. J. Boehler talked about the challenges of getting fundraisers like a Fun Run approved by the Town. Trying to hash through ideas, be creative, and try to get things started as quickly as possible.

- J. Boehler asked Tina Blinn to discuss Trivia Night. T. Blinn talked about how the committee tried to organize a Trivia Night, but with the COVID19 pandemic that event was cancelled. Trying to do it again, but virtually. Informed Tressa that her contact did not respond as of yet.
- She also talked about doing a Virtual Escape Room and talked in details about that fundraising opportunity.
- T. Blinn then talked about the car magnet design for the Class of 2021. T. Giordano asked if this is the official logo. T. Blinn responded that the design uses elements used by the school. T. Giordano asked to pass the design by Scott Leslie, Acting Superintendent of Schools. Kimberly Kane really liked the idea and said she would help promote within the school. S. Raymond and K. Skopas complimented the design.
- T. Blinn then asked T. Giordano about AHM's thoughts about hosting fundraising events at Brain Freezers and FennAgains. That it would help bring in business while also helping PG. She talked about the success the RHAM HS Girls Volleyball Team had with these fundraisers. T. Giordano replied that this question will have to be answered by the AHM Board. She will get back to committee with that answer.



- Donna Fraleigh talked about Simply Soy Candles fundraiser and they've been successful. J. Boehler said these are all good ideas. That she will be sending around a google doc for guests at this meeting to submit their fundraising ideas.
- S. Denizkurt talked about a Flatbread Pizza fundraiser.
- J. Boehler talked about the lawn signs and it brings in about \$3,000. K. Skopas mentioned to sell the yard signs versus included in the event ticket price. J. Boehler explained the history of that and that it will return to selling the signs separately.
- J Boehler talked about having a fundraising calendar ready in two weeks. We are going to listen to the state mandates, adjust accordingly. Be flexible, organized and have fun.
- T. Giordano communicated her thoughts about getting more kids involved. Have some seniors video tape the venue in order to promote the venue to the students. J. Boehler talked about getting the word out to the parents and community about PG work. Need to work with RHAM to communicate what we are doing to parents and students. She thinks that will increase the numbers of people getting involved. It will make the brand recognition of AHM and PG so much more prevalent and students will want to be a part of it. K. Kane offered all her help inside of RHAM. J. Boehler talked about targeting a handful of students to meet with them about what PG is doing. K. Kane said she thinks the students would like that. K. Skopas talked about the class officers. Wendy Marinan talked about making sure we are asking for various groupings. J. Boehler talked about getting students involved for volunteer hours. Helping the students in a positive way and getting the word out.
- S. Raymond likes the Fun Run idea and how The Hartford is changing its Marathon in a COVID environment and how we can work with them for our fundraiser. T. Giordano suggested contacting the Hebron Parks and Rec. to get some guidance on Fun Runs. K. Skopas and J. Boehler believes the Hebron Park and Rec. is still closed. S. Raymond mentioned W. Marinan's involvement with a Fun Run. W. Marinan talked about the event her son organized. The committee talked about when the school year is starting and when Fall sports at RHAM will be starting. J. Boehler talked about the difficulty doing the Fun Run at this stage of the pandemic with the Town and State. Need to work around state guidelines, etc. The committee talked more about when a Fun Run could be feasibly organized.

Goals (1) Raise funds to decrease registration cost **(2)** Increase participation rate **(3)** Increase brand awareness of AHM Project Graduation **(4)** "The Playbook"

ACTION ITEMS:

- TRESSA: Book Revolution Bowling for AHM Project Graduation 2021 venue
- TRESSA: Ask AHM Board about business solicitation / fundraising partnering
- JENN: Create fundraising calendar
- JENN: Organize a student meeting to pick brain (class officers)
- JENN: Check to see if Hebron Park & Rec is up and running
- JENN: Contact Sue Poudreau about virtual run
- JENN: Call AD about fall tryout dates
- JENN: Work with RHAM to get a video made of the venue to show seniors to drum up interest.
- TINA: Connect with Scott about the car magnet design
- TINA: Simply Soy Candles fundraiser
- WENDY D: Check in with contact on "FUN" Run
- WENDY M: will check to see her older son has information from the run he helped organize

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM *Minutes taken by TBlinn*