**Stuttgart Piranhas Swim Team**

**General Member Meeting Minutes**

February 24, 2019

Patch Library

1**. Call to Order** 14:07pm.

Current Board members in attendance: President, VP, Secretary, Stats, Equipment, and Parent Liaison

**23 people attended** in all (including current Board members and nominees)

2. **Election Committee (3) were in attendance and Courtney Sebold opened with a brief explanation about the process.**

Election runner will be utilized to collect the votes online, one per family. The link that will be emailed out by the committee will take you to a secure private ballot, even from the committee. However, you **MUST** vote for each candidate slot even if there is only one choice. All board positions must be approved by general members to serve.

If there is a runoff due to a tie, it will be announced on the 7th of March after the voting closes and a paper ballot will take place at the Banquet on the 9th.

Open Positions will be filled by the new board elected (*Susanne confirmed this as well*) so anyone interested can reach out to the President or the Secretary of the new board about their interest. There will be **NO** write ins allowed.

3. **Nominees (Statements/Introductions) (Meeting led from this point by Parent Liaison - Krishna)**

President Nominees (Becky Koning and current President Susanne Galvin) were both in attendance.

Becky Koning spoke first - her comments reflected a touch on her work responsibilities (personnel/organizational goals) and she felt she had great breadth of experience for swim team management between former Piranha board positions (Secretary, VP/filled in for President for two years, EFLS Champs Meet Support, etc…). Becky wants to “get back to basics” and focus on serving the needs of the whole team. The team needs a stronger business model where the Head Coach is the supplier and the swimmers are the customers. Strategic decisions to manage board communication, coordination and motivation as well as build on stronger community relations such as the not-participated this year German-American swim meet. Becky also feels that the amount of meets is simply too many to be sustained. Historically there used to be only 10 and while schedule said 18, there were actual 25 meets this year.

Questions: How do swimmers still qualify for champs or varsity letter if there are fewer meets?

**Answer:** It is a balance between needs of team and what we can sustain. Comments from families have been that this has been the longest most exhausting season. Becky said the bottom line is that there has to be a happy medium and if we cannot sustain this high a meet number, then we need to cut back. Becky said again strategic planning was needed by board/team.

One member spoke up and said that the amount of meets was increased a couple of years ago due to the size of the team (former board member). However, the member also indicated that we are smaller now and it might be too many for the swimmers we have. Other members spoke up to comment that parents can strategize their meets out for the year, whether distance, time off/cost, or whether their swimmer will do better, earn more points by attending a small meet instead of the KMC mega meets. Coaches also have flexibility in helping swimmers dedicated, dropping time, etc… to meet the requirements, especially as other DoDEA sports are completely inconsistent with lettering policy. Our agreement is very antiquated and very specific. The comment was also made that the reality is that sometimes new swimmers, less experienced, etc… will earn the JV letter and accept that as with any sports team.

(*Becky sat down*)

Question from member to Board (not Becky) : Why can't we get the list of meets earlier so we can plan on which ones to attend especially those that are farther away? The list came out too late for us to attend certain meets because of travel.

**Answer: Susanne (President)** stated that there are few issues that complicate meet selection/dates and we received the calendar late this year. One, the EFSL requires that teams visit every team in the league every 5 years. For instance, we need to visit Naples - so that is looming on the horizon. Traditionally, it is the Coach - Pres- Stats who will attend the EFSL meet meeting. This year, all three positions were new to the process as well as many on the EFSL board too. The coaches’ meeting was accidentally scheduled during the meet selection process and Stats was not in attendance, due to a decision to not take her at the time. Susanne had to anticipate what meets would be best for the whole year, and in a “speed dating” sort of scenario without coach input, Stats, etc.... It was a lot of transition and chaos with a short time to make decisions long term. Certain meets always happen - home meets (⅔ a year), the travel October weekend, etc... so those were selected right away.

Lisa (VP) brought up possibility of attending meets, if there was a need for a qualifying time or varsity letter, out of band (not on the Piranha schedule but on the EFSL schedule). Susanne (Pres) commented that this was a tricky process, but yes, it was an available option. Krishna (PL) commented that we can ensure parents know that this was an option if needed.

(*Susanne came up to speak on nomination*)

Susanne Galvin - she referred to her statement attached to the slate of nominees for experience in swim and Piranhas support. Her primary focus is to ensure that the team is financially strong, remains financially strong for the future. Susanne has worked hard to ensure affordable fees for all the families, ready funds for continued coach hires, and not scrambling to find practice times because we have two pools to utilize - pools that are ours and not in competition with another team. Susanne agrees that the German American swim meet needs to return and she and the Community Liaison are already working on that issue. Susanne speaks German and feels that is an added benefit and allows her to have a good working relationship with the pool finance office. Susanne feels she has worked very closely with a couple of board members such as the Treasurer and it has made the board/team more successful and has tried to connect with parents at the pool.

Questions from the members in attendance:

**For Susanne**: How much stronger are the team resources now from when you took over as President last year? Is there a budget to compare to from last year? **Answer**: As the bills are not monthly, they continually roll in, which is why the families pre-pay for the entire season. Rolling accounts - funds always on hand. Our financial strength is about the same as last year - give or take a few thousand.

**For Susanne**: Why do we fundraise? It was a long busy fundraising year.  **Answer**: Banquets are not included in our expenses because the SCSC grants will not be provided to cover banquets. Fundraising pays for our banquets - both HS and the team banquets.

Why do we have two banquets and why is there still a cost after fundraising?

**Answer:**  There are two because the HS banquet is a lettering ceremony and HS does its own fundraising to pay for the separate event. Additionally fundraising serves as team publicity - getting our name out there to the public.

(**Treasurer post meeting answe**r) The High School Banquet is always covered by the High School fundraising, so whatever they make in fundraising throughout the year, they get to keep for the banquet.

\*\*see note at the end for what was raised this year for both team and HS fundraising\*\*

Vice President Nominee (Lisa Stevenson): Lisa stated that it was not her intent to run and serve on the board again but the voice of the parents and enthusiasm of the team (and family encouragement) sparked her to stay. She is excited about the election committee being formed to meet the needs indicated by the membership body because it means the members are getting involved.

Treasurer Nominee (Cynthia Huntsman): Cynthia introduced herself, said that her family was fairly new to the team - one season so far. She loves the team, loves the growth for her boys and wanted to be involved in its success. Cynthia stated she has a background in finance from working with the CYS.

High School Liaison (Elizabeth Morrow): Liz said this will be her 5th year with the team and has already served 2 years prior as the HS Liaison. Liz understands the lettering process. Liz wants to build camaraderie between those HS swimmers that are located in all three Groups (right now) 1, 2, and 3. Liz wants to see the swimmers be able to work with the EFSL Head Coach for Champs if that comes to fruition.

Publicity (2 Candidates - Daisy Geiser and Bryan Purtell)

Bryan Purtell was not able to attend- defers to his statement on the ballot for his experience.

Daisy Geiser Daisy has no Publicity experience but wants to be involved with the team. She loves the Piranhas.

Fundraising (Laurie Trotter): Laurie introduced herself and offered her background in sports management (business strong). Laurie’s focus is to advocate fundraising change and move away from bake sale, bake sale, bake sale. Laurie would like to plan a couple big events that really impact versus lots of small events, in order to broadcast us “larger” and from a position of strength. Laurie’s plan is to move fundraising beyond serving the banquets but increase our coffers for the future and not just the present.

other candidates were not in attendance

4. **Budget Review (**see last page for attached copy)

As the budget began to be reviewed, Susanne (current President) spoke up and commented the following: the Treasurer and President typically sit down and look at past history, future costs, etc… and come up with a budget that works. Head Coach will submit needs; Equipment will submit needs; and there is contingency money put into place for unexpected purchases.

Questions from the members:

1. Is the budget board voted/approved and when do members know what the budget is and do they have any input?
2. There used to be a capital reserve fund. It isn’t reflected here?

**Answer: (Susanne Galvin) -** Reserve fund is slowly added to over several years. It is intended to be the support for expenses should the team need to dissolve and final bills have to be paid - emergency funds to support 3 months worth of operating expenses or unbudgeted expensive vast improvement projects, etc…

Yes but what is our total fiscal position and why isn’t it reflected here, why doesn’t the budget show *all* our funds? What is the capital reserve fund amount?

**Answer: (Susanne Galvin**) - Susanne stated she was unable to answer those questions and deferred to the Treasurer.

(**Treasurer post meeting clarification**) Capital Account balance is always kept at 30,000 Euro for any emergencies that may come up with pools or equipment. It's never included in the budget because it's not used for our operational expenses.

c) Master’s swimming - Why is the income there reflected so low? (Michi Sanders). Michi indicated she runs the program and it brings in thousands.

**Answer: (Susanne Galvin)**  There are actually two Master’s programs - one that is open to team parents and one that is open to the community (Michi’s program). The second program is self sustaining and while we manage, we do

not financially support in any way. However, if there are residual funds leftover from the program each year, it rolls into our income as a fundraiser.

( **Treasurer post meeting clarification**) The masters program, a separate entity, was started a few years ago. All the details are worked out with the Master's swim coach, Michi and the President. Swim fees are paid to our account and cover the cost of the pool/s they use. I don't really do much with this other than update the spreadsheet to show payments.

d) **Additional questions emailed:**  Where are the deposits paid by parents? How many coaches and what are they paid especially if they have swimmers on the team? Why do we use three pools instead of one or two? Can we view prior year budget to this year and was this budget the most up to date? does this include spring registration since it is additional income/expense?

(**Treasurer post meeting clarification**) The budget last year looks similar to this year, I have a copy in the old binder. There has been no growth in the Capital Fund. The spring budget is separate from the regular season. The fees charged cover only the operation of the pools and the coaches plus the fun meet for the three months. The pool bills are paid months after our usage. In January, I paid the Sindelfingen pool bill dated October thru December €7065 and Maichingen bill dated October thru December €4452. The bills vary based on the number of days we swim. There are six coaches who are paid monthly. They are never paid for time they don't work.

**(**Krishna interrupted because the meeting was getting long and we needed to move off the budget for now. But encouraged members to keep asking questions of her, Treasurer afterwards)

5. **Volunteer Initiative (Parent Liaison)** Krishna stated that normally volunteer hour needs are determined solely by the board and introduced at registration/first parent meeting of the year. However, parent feedback was to be more involved and that the volunteer hours program needed to be more clear for this year. (A back and forth discussion occurred about what WERE the hours requirement for this year - some included all the meets, others said none of the meets, and so forth.) Many differing opinions on the responsibilities this year and Krishna agreed that the language was vague. Bottom line though is that in order to support the team, the hours needed to increase per family (and key is per family not per swimmer as on many teams).

In spirit of cooperation with our families but still trying to meet our volunteer needs, Krishna (PL) said that the board discussed offering three different initiatives as presented on the slate email for elections that went out a week ago.

Option 1: **50** hours total in support of the team, all inclusive of meets and fundraising/events. For those with a need (German families, etc…) a pre-pay option of 500 Euro was being offered to buy out of the 50 hours for the year.

Option 2: **30/20** with 30 hours volunteer hours and 20 hours fundraising that allowed for a 200 Euro pre-pay fee to buyout of fundraising (only). However, the 30 hours does not meet the minimum needs of the team, which being generous is around 37 hours per family but more likely closer to the 50.

Option 3: **35** hour option, all inclusive per family, but does NOT include home meets, Divisionals, Champs. Those do not count towards the 35 hours if your swimmer is participating. There is a 350 Euro Pre-pay option for those families who need it.

Board realizes that the 15-50 hour jump was a lot so that is why we are including the buyouts, although historically are not usually taken by more than 1-2 families and becomes extra income. Additionally, the big increase prompted the other two hour options by board members so that it was more forgiving for those who cannot regularly support meets due to extenuating circumstances, etc… But the primary need of the team to be successful is meet participation.

Discussion/Questions from the members in attendance:

Why offer the buyout, and why not focus on positive and call it pre-pay or buy-in? Won’t families just jump at chance to not volunteer at all.

**Answer:** Agreed, but the buy-in will be limited to only a few families but language on ballot can be changed to pre-pay or something more positive. These are likely families that already do not volunteer or cannot volunteer.

For the 30/20 option, where do we get the 20 hours for fundraising especially if fundraising hasn’t been decided for the year and there may be less of a need?

**Answer:** Based on the information from this past year as collected from volunteer coordinator and fundraising. It’s a best guess without having future data in order to give parents the option to buyout fundraising.

Can we extend some grace to those who cannot meet these hours instead of hitting them with penalty fees?

**Answer:**  Yes, of course, members can always help support others. For the board, it would need to be on a limited basis. Away meets are the big issue - we’ve had too many times where parents are present, asked by the EFSL or other teams to volunteer, and they refuse. We need families to understand that this team cannot operate with volunteer support, especially if their swimmers are at the meets. Recommend parents sit down at beginning of season and see what they can handle in terms of meets and volunteer hours. TU will help manage all of this better for parents and the board.

Why offer the two options for 30/35 if they aren’t enough to meet the team’s minimum need of 37 hours? Just offer 40 or 50 hours only.

**Answer:** The ballot was meant to reflect varying opinions from board members and to give parents more choices but while stressing that with the option of the reduced 35 hour choice - home meets, divisionals and champs would not be included if their swimmer was participating and still obligated.

One member commented that parent education is important and clear understanding of the EFSL’s needs and swim team needs are also important. A member also commented that there were many board complaints about how little parents do to support the team, etc… and this does not help motivate parents to be involved. Board agreed that we have great parents and overall most are always rising to the occasion to support our team.

6.  **Team Banquet (Equipment):** RSVPs for banquet are due NLT Saturday 2 March - no exceptions. Last year we had an issue where there was not enough food due to calculations for kids (littles) but that has been resolved this year, but we need an accurate headcount. Volunteers will be needed to help setup and take down for the Banquet and a volunteer sign up will be sent out to remind families/swimmers. Casual Aloha fun wear for the event.

7. **Team Unify (**Krishna**).** Our test trial for team unify lasts until April. The new board will have to vote whether they want to implement permanently.

Member comments - yes, please adopt right away, why haven’t we been using it already as other teams.  **Answer:** Krishna commented that the program costs $1200, but that is only $700 more than the $500 the board pays for the current website usage. If adopted the TU site would replace the current website.

Krishna stated that Team Unify will be able to track volunteer hours, track all fees (show balances due), support event signups, coach can use for attendance, and much more. There is even an app that allows for on deck use especially for volunteer signups; however, for awhile there will still be paper in/out to hold parents responsible for showing up for their shifts or those that take over for others not able. Scratch fees after a meet will be able to be viewed instantly instead of waiting until April and deductions from the penalty fee. If people haven’t paid, swimmers don’t swim.

Questions/Comments from Members:

1. What about if members accumulate more than the required hours? What about board members that already get their volunteer hours? Is there a fix in the system to reflect these possibilities?
2. What happens if folks get all their hours early in the year and future meets/events are not supported? Can we keep a sustained pace throughout the year?

**Answer:** Krishna stated these were good questions and ones that would need to be explored with TU’s abilities to handle exceptions and as the new board works through the hours initiative voted in for the new year. We will get our hours covered - she plans to be very proactive in ensuring families know where they are at with totals and where the needs are still for coverage, etc… and TU will make all that more manageable.

**Meeting Adjourned at 4:15pm**

**Attachments: Current Budget, Slate of Nominees and Ballot Initiative, Fundraising Notes from Treasurer**

**To give us a better understanding of our fundraising efforts, here are the numbers I've totaled. The "Gear Sales" represent the tokens and previous year apparel items we've sold at the parent meeting and home meets.**

**Breakfast Burrito Sales: $200/€85**

**Baskets (3 meets): $155.50/€242**

**Bake Sales (3 days): $1502.25/€580.99**

**Gear Sales: $215.34/€330**

**High School Fundraising**

**Bake Sale: $131.95/€94.12**

**Christmas Market: $442.00/€300**

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**Here are the candidates for the SPST Board and the document attached to this email includes personal statements from these candidates, if provided:**

***President*: \*statements provided\***

**Becky Koning**

**Susanne Galvin**

***Vice President*: Lisa Stevenson**

**\*statement provided\***

***Secretary*: April Purtell**

**\*statement provided\***

***Parent Liaison:* No nominations received**

***Registrar:* Colleen Brown**

***Statistician:* Mandy Taylor**

**\*statement provided\***

***Equipment Manager:* No nominations received**

***Fundraising Coordinator:* Lauri Trotter**

**\*statement provided\***

***Volunteer Coordinator:* Krishna Easton**

**\*statement provided\***

***Concessions:* No nominations received**

***High School Liaison:* Elizabeth Morrow**

**\*statement provided\***

***Community Liaison:* Thomas Schmidt**

***Webmaster:* Stacey White**

**\*statement provided\***

***Social Coordinator:* No nominations received**

***Publicity Coordinator:***

**Daisy Geiser**

**Bryan Purtell \*statement provided \***