



Swift Water VPO General Meeting Minutes

Date: September 15, 2025

Location: Swift Water Community Room

Attendees:

Board Members:

Shannon Clute, VPO President
Victoria Bercek, VPO Vice President
Stephanie Guimont, VPO Secretary
Brigitte Coudron, VPO Volunteer Coordinator
Sarah Carruthers, VPO Communications Coordinator
Jen Skjerven, Member at Large
Michelle McGuinness, VPO Member at Large

Special Guests:

David Brooks, Principal
Niccole Griffin, Deputy Principal

Agenda

- ☐ **Call to order: 5:34 pm**
- ☐ **Welcome: Shannon Clute**
 - Shared VPO mission statement with all in attendance
 - Introduced the 25-26 VPO Board Members:
 - i. President: Shannon Clute
 - ii. Vice President: Victoria Bercek
 - iii. Secretary: Stephanie Guimont
 - iv. Treasurer: Adam Markel
 - v. Volunteer Coordinator: Brigitte Coudron
 - vi. Communications Coordinator: Sarah Carruthers
 - vii. Members at Large: Jen Skjerven and Michelle McGuinness
 - All board positions have been filled for the 25-26 year, but there are still plenty of volunteer opportunities available and committees that need help for future events. Interested parties should contact Brigitte Coudron at (add email)
- ☐ **Review of what VPO has supported to date: Shannon Clute**

- Staff Breakfast: The week leading up to school, the VPO provided working staff with breakfast as they prepared for the new school year.
- Staff Treats: VPO covered beginning of the year Staff Treats (month of September)
- Meet the Teacher: VPO partnered with SignGypsies to provide a photo backdrop for Meet the Teacher night. There was also an informational table staffed by multiple Board Members with free SWE stickers and a flyer of upcoming events.
- Kindergarten Jump Start: VPO provided a pizza lunch to incoming kindergarteners and their families.
- Garden Clean-up: In August we partnered with Harbor Covenant Church and other SWE community members to clean up the school grounds and spread more bark in the garden.
- Purchased new Seal Slip prizes
- Purchased new recess equipment: Volleyballs, Basketballs, Footballs, etc.

☐ **Overview of Agenda: Shannon Clute**

- Principal's Update
- Approval of Bylaw Changes
- Vote in Additional Board Members
- Review Open Volunteer Positions
- Discuss Fall Events/Fundraisers
- Review/Approve Budget
- Other Reminders

☐ **Principal's Update: David Brooks**

- Mr. Brooks shared the school's vision statement: "We are a welcoming community of learners who inspire and empower each other to lead, innovate, and dream"
- Led by Mr. Brooks, all members in attendance circled around and introduced themselves and stated how they are connected to SWE.
- Mr. Brooks addresses the need to add a 5th Kindergarten class, as well as a 4th Fifth Grade class after the year has begun. Jessica Gordon is currently taking on the role of the 5th Kindergarten teacher while the hiring process for the permanent teacher is still taking place; Maria McQuaig is the new 5th Grade teacher, and they have already divided up the classes and started on Monday.
- New sign in process is available when coming into the school office to volunteer— QR code is available at the front desk.

☐ **Updates to Bylaws/Voting in Changes: Shannon Clute**

- VPO Board proposed the following edits to Bylaws:
 - i. Added role description for the Volunteer Coordinator
 - ii. Added role description for the Member(s) at Large
 - iii. Updated board transition procedures to occur in July moving forward
 - iv. Clarified there will be two general meetings per year, with the scheduling of those meetings to be set by the board
 - v. Removed need to use a specific bank; board will decide bank based on VPO needs
 - vi. Added a requirement to maintain a minimum balance of \$5,000 in the bank account at the end of each school year
 - vii. Incorporated Scholarship Fund details

- Voting: After reviewing the proposed Bylaw changes, Ruth M. motioned to approve all changes. Brigitte C. seconded the motion. All proposed changes to the Bylaws passed by a unanimous membership vote, effective immediately.
- ☐ **Voting in additional board members: Shannon Clute**
 - There have been two new board positions added for the Member(s) at Large, and the nominated parties were Jen Skjerven and Michelle McGuinness. Victoria B. motioned to accept these nominations for the MAL positions, and Matt B. seconded the motion. Both nominated parties were voted in unanimously by membership.
- ☐ **Voting in June Meeting Minutes: Shannon Clute**
 - The June meeting minutes have been documented and posted on the VPO website for membership viewing.
 - Pam B. motioned to approve the June meeting minutes; Matt B. seconded the motion. The June meeting minutes were unanimously approved.
- ☐ **Open Volunteer Positions: Shannon Clute**
 - Please contact Brigitte Coudron @ volunteer.swiftwatervpo@gmail.com to inquire about any open volunteer positions, or follow our social media accounts to learn when new volunteer opportunities become available throughout the year.
- ☐ **Hands on Art Docent(s): Shannon Clute**
 - Hands on Art is a district-wide elementary art program that brings engaging and educational art projects to our students quarterly throughout the school year.
 - The following classrooms are still in need of a Docent.
 - i. Jensen
 - ii. Benoit
 - iii. Gordon
 - iv. Backman
 - v. CC
 - vi. Marshall
 - vii. Hayes
 - viii. Wright
 - ix. Brown
 - x. Stafki
 - This parent volunteer will attend 4 trainings throughout the year, and work with the teacher to schedule 4 in-class projects.
 - The first training at Swift Water is scheduled for September 25th from 7-9pm.
 - There are other trainings available at different locations: for more information on trainings or HOA in general, please contact Ksenia Vasenev @ kseniagvasenev@gmail.com
- ☐ **Seal Dads: Shannon Clute**
 - Volunteer opportunity available to any male figure with a SWE student (dad, grandpa, uncle, etc).
 - Background check must be on file
 - Flexible scheduling: volunteers are able to stop by recess and help supervise/play games, or help supervise lunch.
 - There are no required time slots— volunteer for any amount of time you have available.
- ☐ **Staff Treats: Shannon Clute**

- Wednesday, October 8th is the date for our October Staff Treats drop-off.
- 5th Grade families are being asked to contribute items for the month of October.
- The next few months will be:
 - i. November: 4th Grade
 - ii. December: 3rd Grade
 - iii. January: VPO restock

☐ **Popcorn Fridays: Shannon Clute**

- The first Friday of every month, starting in October, the VPO and parent volunteers provide popcorn to all students and staff.
- First popcorn day of the year will be October 3rd
- To volunteer to bag the popcorn from 9am-12pm on popcorn days, please sign up via the sign-up genius that will be sent out on ParentSquare and through our social media channels.
- To donate money to help fund popcorn for the school year, please visit our website or scan the QR code that will be sent home on flyers with students next week.

☐ **Outdoor Learning Lab and Trail: Shannon Clute and Niccole Griffin**

- Looking to form a garden committee that will ensure garden projects stay on track in order to be ready by the spring. The Green Thumb Committee will also need a lead.
- L next community work day will be October 19th.
- The school will also be starting a “Garden Club” consisting of SWE students interested in volunteering one hour after school each week (Wednesdays) to help spread bark and do other outdoor tasks in preparation for planting in the spring.
- Thank you to the following organizations that have donated funds, materials, and/or time to help us with the garden so far:
 - i. Greater Gig Harbor Foundation
 - ii. Harbor Covenant Church
 - iii. Tom Taylor YMCA
 - iv. Turnbull Farms
 - v. Gig Harbor Garden Club
- The VPO has also committed \$3,000 this year to the Outdoor Learning Lab and Trail.

☐ **Upcoming Events/Fundraisers: Shannon Clute & Victoria Bercek**

- Spirit Wear:
 - i. Spirit Wear is now available through our partner, 1st Place Spiritwear.
 - ii. Items can be shipped directly to you, and the VPO will receive 10% of all sales through this company.
 - iii. We will also be working with a different vendor to provide a small selection of spirit wear for purchase at school concerts and other VPO sponsored events.
- 5th Grade Camp Committee:
 - i. This committee is for current 5th Grade parents to help raise funds to reduce the cost of Camp Seymour for all families in the spring.
 - ii. This is an overnight camp available to all 5th graders, which usually takes place in May.
 - iii. The cost for all SWE 5th graders and staff to attend is between \$17,000 and \$20,000.

- iv. We used to receive a grant that covered \$10,000 of that total cost, but that grant is no longer available. Because of that, the Peninsula School District has agreed to give each school \$5,000 to help cover the costs.
 - v. Our goal is to be able to fundraise (specifically with restaurant takeovers) to raise the remaining \$10,000-\$15,000 to cover the entire cost for our 5th grade families.
 - vi. Be on the lookout for our first takeover announcement in October.
- Reading for Success Fundraiser:
 - i. Our biggest fundraiser of the year, Reading for Success will run from October 6th-October 20th.
 - ii. You can register on FundHub beginning September 29th.
 - iii. Informational flyers containing important details will be sent home with students next week.
- Fall Carnival:
 - i. Saturday, October 4th from 4pm-7pm at SWE
 - ii. Admission is FREE— and there will be several free carnival games.
 - iii. Ticket purchases for other games and activities, like face painting, can be purchased on our website ahead of time to avoid standing in long lines. Face painting requires a pre-purchased time slot.
 - iv. Food will be available for purchase- on site or online prior.
 - v. To volunteer to help set-up, cleanup, or run a station, please go to our website and use the sign-up genius. We will need several volunteers to make this carnival a success for all SWE families.
- Book Fair:
 - i. SAVE THE DATE: November 3rd-7th
 - ii. Volunteers will be needed— be on the lookout for the sign-up genius via ParentSquare and social media.
 - iii. Time slots are short and you are able to volunteer during your child's library time— or stay longer!
- Passive Fundraisers:
 - i. Fred Meyer (shopping code is GR753)
 - ii. Mabel's Labels- Type in "Swift Water Elementary" for our VPO to receive credit. You may also use the code WELCOME10 for 10% off your order.
 - iii. Company Matching- if your company offers matching for your donations, please consider selecting Swift Water VPO
 - iv. MINTED- Enjoy 20% off of your order, and 15% of your purchase comes back to the VPO. Use code: FUNDRAISESWIFTWATER
- ☐ **Budget Review:** The 25-26 VPO budget has been reviewed and updated based on 24-25 spending and the anticipated needs of SWE students and staff. For transparency, the full document is available for viewing on the VPO website.
- ☐ **Vote to Approve Budget:** Kris V. motioned to approve the 25-26 budget, and Ruth M. seconded the motion. The 25-26 budget was approved unanimously by membership.
- ☐ **Stay Informed:**
 - For a list of events, information on "Teacher Favorites" for gifting, Spirit Wear links, event purchases, and more, you can visit our website: www.swiftwatervpo.com

- To keep up with weekly updates or to send a quick message via social media you can follow our Facebook page www.facebook.com/swvpo or our Instagram account @swiftwatervpo

Meeting Adjourned : 6:36 pm