



AYSO Executive Board Meeting

November 10, 2024 @ 7pm PST

I. Call to Order – 7:03pm PST

- Members in attendance: Terry Takahashi, Matthew Goldman, Shant Kamanjian, Brandi Lane, Taj Chiu, Dan Jeffries, and Christina Scott
- Matthew Goldman made the initial motion for Christina Scott to be approved as secretary of the executive board. Brandi seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

II. Discussion

- Terry shared that he was in the process of purchasing solar lights for the fields and the Chinese company he used was legitimate but likely was hacked by a third party. The third party changed the SWIFT code and the bank and created a very similar sounding company name.
- It was suggested that we speak with AYSO National and see if there is additional insurance or coverage that protects us from cybercrime.
- Taj suggested contacting the bank branch that was used by the third party so that they are aware of the fraudulent charge and see if anything can be done.
 - Terry tried to call the bank, but there was possibly a language barrier. The lady said she would call him back and Terry asked for the “fraud department” phone number, but was told “no.”
 - Terry will try to call the American branch of China Merchants Bank in New York on Tuesday.
- Terry also called the original Chinese company, and they filed a report. It is unclear what they can do, but the effort was made.
- The original merchant was the one that was hacked and as Taj pointed out, it is not in their best interest to anger a customer. Perhaps they have some insurance that can be of assistance.
- The cybercrime has been reported to the FBI, but if there is any chance of recovery, Shant suggested that it will take time. He believes that the Chinese government will crack down on this.
- The amount of the loss is approximately \$31,000 and we still need these lights.

III. Moving Forward with Lights

- Terry pointed out that we will want to verify that the original company is legitimate if we decide to move forward.
- It was asked if we could choose an American company instead so there is a different set of protections in place.
- A question was raised about customs and what duties might be assigned to the overseas purchase.
 - Terry indicated that the DDP – delivery duty paid – was supposed to cover the costs from the company to our location.
 - An importer/exporter company would have helped with this transfer; we could have taken possession in China, in Los Angeles or at our field. Having the lights delivered directly to us was estimated at a cost of \$3,000.
- Terry indicated that an American company would push the cost up by 50-100% and the quality was not good. The Chinese company was approximately \$10K per light, but the American companies would require approximately \$20K per light.
- Terry shared a table and noted that the lithium batteries he ordered lasted longer and the lights were brighter with the current company he selected. The American companies identified in the spread sheet do not appear to have the lithium batteries.
- Matthew asked, “Given the loss, do we still spend the money?” and “Given the loss, do we still go with the same vendor?” It was pointed out that “these things happen” and no one is to blame. The concern was raised that making another large purchase is much riskier overseas and we should purchase from an American company.
- Regardless of the financial loss, Shant indicated that we have the budget to purchase the more expensive lights from an American company.
- We can use lights at Blair, Marshall and Elliot
 - Still need a conversation with the principal at Elliot.
 - At Blair, they will let us use the lights, but we have to refill them with diesel fuel. This is unlikely because we would need to bring diesel in containers.
 - Marshall’s principal is willing to let us bring in lights, but there are concerns about the reactions of the neighboring homes.
 - McKinley originally said we cannot put lights on the field, because they would upset the neighbors, but the club team is using lights, so the position on this may have been reversed.
- Non PUSD school options have not been successfully located. LaSalle initially suggested they might be open to letting us use their fields, but they kept asking for dates and never responded in a timely manner.
- The cost of installing permanent lights at Muir was \$500,000. The biggest problem is angering the neighbors.

- Matthew suggested that many of the dads who are in construction have big trucks and might be willing to help us move the portable lights from field to field. Plus, they might be willing to carry the diesel fuel to Blair.
- Taj suggested that Chinese companies want to engage in international business and the problems with the shipping process usually exist in the United States in customs. The terms that Terry negotiated will bring the lights directly to us, which is a huge asset. Plus, the lithium batteries are superior to diesel fueled lights.
- Matthew agreed to step forward and do some additional research to do the research on whether we can find lithium batteries in the U.S.
- There is a consensus that finding fields is our greatest challenge and lights are needed to allow our children to play.
- The bottom line is that the company was hacked (U.S. companies can be hacked too) and the original company was responsible for transporting the lights all the way to our fields (DDT).
 - Our problem is that we sent the money to the wrong company. There isn't inherently a problem with the original Chinese company.
 - The original deposit was 30%, but the scammer company changed it to 50%.
 - Perhaps there is an escrow company equivalent that could hold the funds until the lights arrive.
 - Maybe the original Chinese bank could hold the money. That needs to be investigated.
- Terry agrees that it would be helpful to reduce our risk and investigate how that might be possible. We will table the discussion until we have more information.
- Perhaps there is someone within AYSO who has more experience with the import/export business.
 - There is someone from CalTech who might have additional advice and ideas.
 - Matthew will inquire about logistics firms that might be able to help.
- Is time still of the essence to get the lights onto the field by next season?
 - Terry said we will likely miss the All-Star season, but spring is possible Octavia Butler may be a possible field for us for All Stars.
 - Some La Canada parents may have safety concerns about Octavia Butler, but those fears are likely unfounded.

IV.Closing

- The next meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2024.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm PST.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Scott