

We regret we need to inform you about a very serious, sad situation but we feel that as high school students you deserve to have this information provided to you to help you understand some changes happening in the Tahoma Band Boosters.

The Band Booster Board is made up of 5 officers (Pres, VP, Sec, Trea, and Fund) who manage the activities. About a month ago, the Band Booster Board was notified that one of its officers withdrew a large amount of money from the Booster checking account without permission from the Board and used it for non-Booster reasons. Unfortunately, this person was someone who has been a part of Boosters and the band program for a long time, Cathy Ruthroff, our president. We want you all to understand that regardless of the reasons a person might feel he or she needed to do this, taking funds out of an account without permission is stealing. If the amount taken is large enough, it is considered a felony crime. The amount taken was \$8,732.35 and is a felony. This is a very serious matter.

Because it is the Board's job to protect the Booster funds and make sure they are only used to support the band program, the Board had an emergency meeting, investigated the situation, and based on the facts that many withdrawals were made over about two weeks in many different ways (debit cards, cash withdrawal, and wire transfers), we determined this was not a mistake but had been done on purpose. The Board voted to remove Cathy from the Board and from membership in Tahoma Band Boosters. She will not be volunteering in our program further. The Board has a duty to inform the band directors and the school, and we did so. The Board has a duty to all the band parent members and all the band students to report criminal behavior immediately, whether it is a friend or not, and we did so.

Throughout February, the Board has made numerous efforts informally with Cathy to allow her the opportunity to willingly return the unauthorized funds. Cathy has confirmed to the Board that she did cause all of these funds to be removed, including the wire transfer and cash withdrawal. These efforts have failed.

On Tuesday, February 27, 2018, the Board voted to proceed with prosecution and to notify the general membership of the status of the current Board and TBB checking account at the general membership meeting that was held on March 6, 2018. The Board also resolved to use this situation to construct further financial policy safeguards to prevent similar things happening in the future.

We have normal election of new officers in April who will start in May so the Board will have a new president. We are still asking for parents who would like to be on the Board to contact us. We voted with the parents at the last meeting to use the remaining funds in the TBB Board account (about \$6,000) to pay out end of the year expenses and help provide a base for the next school year but we also voted that if we get any money returned or we earn extra money that we prioritize it to help pay for any upcoming Disney or other band trip.

As of the posting of this notice, legal authorities are investigating and all further inquiry needs to be directed there. We are asking that no one address this on social media as there is too much possibility of incorrect information being given out. Tahoma School District and the band directors have been very helpful and supportive to the Boosters to help us recover from this event. The good news is our Board and Booster program has grown closer by having to work together through this problem and we are encouraged by all the positive support and encouragement we have received by the membership. We want the students to know the Booster program is still strong and here for the band programs.