

MINUTES
VSWEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 2021
VIA [Zoom](#)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gregory Schneider (GS) – President

John Tanner (JT)

April Sauer (AS) – Secretary

Danielle Martinez (DM)

Dan Franks (DF) – Treasurer

Kerstin Kubina (KK)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Nellie Grossenbacher

The President, Treasurer, and Secretary were present, and a quorum was reached.

GUESTS

Invitees of the Board:

Frank Mirizio (FM)

Members of the public present via Zoom/Registration through Google Forms:

- Barb Cunningham
- Helena Moriarty
- Deb

07.14.21 Approved

- JJ
- Tammy
- Michelle Kratzer
- Colleen
- Laura Heaney

OPENING VERSE / INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order at 6:31pm. GS welcomed everyone to the meeting, read the opening verse, and reviewed meeting procedures.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Financial Update

GS Shared his screen to review the profit and loss for January-May 2021. Budgeted to be 9k in the black, but we are 126k in the black, so we are doing well from a budget standpoint. Kudos to FM and JT and teachers to make things work out. These are fantastic results. Shared screen to review the balance sheet for May 2021. Bank accounts are doing well. Total assets are just under 2.7 million. Any questions?

Enrollment Update

GS Last report said we're sitting at 300 students. Is that correct?

FM Yes, Crystal Lee came in today and gave me an update. 6 students withdrew, unfortunately. But the good news is 4 of 6 will be filled with students who have been on waiting lists.

GS Is the 300 number 300 ADM?

FM Yes, that's 300 ADM, so we could add another 16.

GS One thing to think about is that our enrollment cap from the charter is 340. I'm not sure if that's 340 ADM or 340 bodies.

FM Our openings are in the high school, so we're focusing there with extra programs to get more students in. We can have 30 in kinder based on our licensing.

GS Let me check with the charter board on that 340 number to get clarity. But overall, that's very good news.

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FM I'm disappointed that we lost some students, but I'm happy that we're filling those spots.

Fundraising Proposal 2021-2022

GS Shared screen to review proposal by Melissa Sutton. What are you thinking?

DM I think the first one was lower in fees. I'd like clarification on her sponsors—who she has connections with to rely on for monetary support.

AS I was left with a lot of questions regarding sponsors and attendees. Does she teach us how to network and find sponsors, does she provide information, or does she do that herself? I need more information to decide.

DM Can we put together a Google doc to get our questions together for Melissa?

GS AS, will you create a Google doc to add questions for Melissa Sutton so we can send it to her?

AS Sure, I'll do that.

FM Several staff members commented to me that they were excited about the idea of a gala and an offsite event because we used to have those.

KK The anticipated level of effort and the rate she set seemed high. I wasn't clear about it because a lot of the work falls on class parents and the board. So I'd like to know what she does with those hours.

GS My assumption was that she'd be creating content and coordinating a donation process, so yes, we need to clarify that.

DM At our initial meeting she said that she would discount her rate if we had more volunteers involved to lighten the load.

GS Let's get that list together and send that off.

DM I'd like us to brainstorm some themes and ideas as well.

GS Yes, but let's make sure that it's not a discussion. Just share your ideas, and then we can come together for the discussion.

Student Activity Fees

GS FM, you emailed me regarding fees. Do you have that information for me, or do we need to table it for the next meeting?

07.14.21 Approved

FM Yes, I didn't get to it. I apologize. I had some other balls in the air, but I will get that you all before the next board meeting.

Tax Credits

GS About a month ago, DM and KK said they were looking into tax credits.

DM I looked into it and there are specific categories which DMS families select. I had to work with Monique and Jessica to work that out. If Jessica creates the report and provides it to Monique it can be tracked.

FM Monique, Jessica, and I met last Thursday, and Jessica has agreed to set up accounts per grade, so if a parent wants the tax credit to go to their grade it can. That's for the grades and high school. We did not agree to do that for specials, so we're asking parents to choose. We cannot split the money.

DM I was able to get confirmation that the money doesn't have to be used in the calendar year.

GS FM, what you're describing isn't tax credit money because that can't go into general funds.

FM Yes, but it could be used for a field trip for a specific kid for a grade. I know our 8th grade trips can be costly.

DM As we do more on campus, I'd like to have board members involved in advertising that in the classrooms.

GS Well, that's all good news. FM, maybe that would be good to send out a communication on that.

FM Yes, I was thinking that would be a good kick off right before we're coming back to school.

GS Speaking of those emails, you mentioned the materials donations. I think you said something about that regarding advertising and where that money will go.

FM We will be clear on that, and they can still say that donation goes to second grade supplies, high school supplies, etc.

AS I've been working with Crystal Lee and Deb Pawlo regarding some updates for the website, and once I get that written text from them, I'll be helping to make those updates so everything is clear and readily available on the site.

KK I want to make sure that we're clear that no donation is too small.

FM Absolutely.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

07.14.21 Approved

Summer Work

FM Some good news about the summer teacher training: we have 17 enrolled teachers. 6 are paying customers. I hope Michelle and Laura hear that, but thank you to Parent Council for helping fund that and helping us with some breakfasts. It starts next week. The teachers are excited as well as the trainers. Some aides will be participating as well as they have aspirations to be teachers some day, and we're pleased about that. So, 17, that's awesome. I was able to buy each classroom an air purifier. We'll get them in classrooms right before school starts. They are nice units. They cost around \$3400, and we got them on sale. I'm happy that that's another item we tackled.

GS Excellent. Really awesome news on the teacher training. That's wonderful considering we just put this together.

FM The stars aligned for us. Kudos for the teachers who are coming and to Parent Council for paying for our teachers who are attending.

COMMUNITY

Contemplation Exercise Update

GS I know DM sent an email with some questions for us. Some of you have already responded, so thank you. We'd love to hear from DM and JT regarding how things are going.

DM Thank you. We sent those questions out to help us to communicate better regarding boundaries and expectations. We all have different experiences, and everyone sees things differently. I thought it would be more effective to hear from everyone—like with the love stories. It was nice to open up with that and take a look at what we're doing well and what we could be doing better. Bringing that to the community, I was hoping that we could all participate. We want the best for DMS and for our students. We all affect one another, so working through the contemplation has really opened up those conversations. We were able to see a lot of hurt and healing from a lot of participants. It was beautiful to see everyone be vulnerable and humble. Getting those conversations started was great. We've spent a lot of time in sessions and outside. What questions can I answer?

GS I want to say thank you for putting in that amount of time to make this happen.

DM You're welcome, and thank you.

GS One of the things that I heard was that the community needed some healing. Do you feel like the exercise is providing that?

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DM To a certain extent, but because everyone has had a different experience it's difficult. What does that look like? We want to make sure that we're all taking everyone's perspectives into consideration. And that we're all doing our best.

FM DM, you hit everything on the head. DM is right. For the most part, what we are setting out to do is happening: rapport is strong, people are being honest, and we're writing our final thoughts to the board. You'll get a list of things that we are requesting. The staff and parents will get these lists too. That way everyone is involved in the give and take and the compromise that will help with that healing. I see some participants in the meeting, and I want to thank you all for your time, and your thoughts have been so heartfelt, and it's so nice to get to know people I didn't know before. And thanks to JT for participating in two capacities. It's not easy. I know that. I'm sure DM and JT would say this too that Teresa, Peter, and Joan are doing their best and working through the challenges of this exercise. They did a really good job. I'd love to hear from JT too.

JT DM, you might not get this out of me all the time, but I agree with everything you said. You said it eloquently. I would say that compromise is going to be the pathway to healing. I look forward to that, and I appreciate that people got to express their emotions. It was an emotional meeting for many. I'm so happy that everyone had that opportunity. I'd like to feel like we're turning a corner and getting to a good place where DMS should be having been around for 25 years. Having everyone together to discuss issues in a healthy manner has been some great groundwork. I appreciate the opportunity to participate. I hope as many people as possible can benefit from the work that's been done this summer.

GS JT, thank you so much for taking the time to do that and wear two hats. I know that makes it more complicated. Thank you for being there for the school. It means a lot to me personally.

AS As I was answering the questions you sent us, it really was thought provoking. The whole point is it's an exercise, but I would also love to see what others wrote. I'd like to hear their perspectives. It will give us a good way of listening to the community. Will we see those responses? Even if they're not named, but just a list of responses or something similar? I think we could learn a lot from the answers people shared.

DM I don't know what that summary will look like, but from my own personal notes, I do have those available, so I'm happy to share those with all of you. In our working groups we were mixed, so we did get different answers—some from experience and some perspective. And we'll see from the recommendations that will come out as well.

FM I believe we will all be privy to the expectations for all the groups. A summary I'm guessing will be a consensus. It will be a good majority of people sharing what they want to see. DM, do you agree that's what we will see?

DM Yes, I agree.

JT I agree with that as well.

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FM We're heading in a direction of some type of agreement on "let's do this," and you should see all of that. We want transparency, so everyone can see the end result.

GS I look forward to reading that.

DM It's not a one and done. It will be something we'll work on for many years to come.

BOARD PROCEDURES

Approval of Minutes

GS moved to approve the 06/16/21 regular meeting minutes. DM second. No further discussion. Vote is unanimous in favor: GS, JT, AS, DF, DM, KK. **Motion passes.**

Board Education

GS Last topic is something DF brought to our attention. AS put together a document with some history of education that already took place, upcoming possible dates, and some topics we could cover. Does anyone want to volunteer for specific topics? I know we've heard from the community that they want to see what we've learned in our studies.

DF I have some topics I'd like to add, but not for a few months.

GS Can I pencil you in for December on a topic of your choice?

DF Yes, that's sounds great.

DM I'll volunteer because I think I'd like to cover communication due to the work I did on the contemplation.

GS Will you pick a date?

DM 9/1.

AS DM, I asked a question in my last email that I didn't get a response to. In the presentation on Steiner and Waldorf beginnings, Joan and Peter mentioned some books I hadn't read yet. They said they'd be putting together a list. Do you know if we'll get that list or when it's coming out?

DM Sorry about that. I'll follow up on that right now.

AS Not a problem. We are all busy. I'd love to choose from something on that list. So I'll take October because that will give me time to choose a book, dig into it, and put together some thoughts on it.

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GS Okay. I'm going to facilitate someone to come and talk about standards and how we incorporate them in our curriculum. I think that compliance piece is important, and I'll find someone to teach that to us. I'll put myself in for November.

JT I'm happy to participate, however, I think there will be ideas generated from the work done this summer, and I think our plate will be quite full. Do you agree with that, FM?

FM Yes, as this is something that the contemplation has brought up--that we want the board to teach about state standards and Waldorf curriculum. I know we have someone from the state who will come to us to teach us about standards. It's great that we're already aligning with what the contemplation is coming up with. I think the information that will be coming out will lead us in a simpler path. Do you agree with that, JT?

JT Yes, you said that well.

GS This is a living document, so let's leave it now and come back to it again later when we have that information.

GS moved to adjourn. DM second. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor: JT, GS, AS, DM, DF, KK. **Motion passes.**

FM Gave us a quick update on the Phoenix Suns while JT gained access to the closing verse.

CLOSING VERSE

JT read the closing verse.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Prepared by AS on 06.30.2021.