

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School

Board of Trustees Official Minutes

February 25, 2021

Board Members Present

Tom Hockensmith, Chair

Rose Thornberry, Vice Chair

Becky Uppercue, Board Treasurer

Traci Elligson, Secretary

Diana Williams

Ashley Reid

Jill Clinton

Others Present

Dr. Faye Pleso, CEO

Christine Fitzpatrick

Nicole Norris

Public

Jay Appleton, Greyhawk

Jason Officer, Parent

Call to Order

Tom Hockensmith called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm via Zoom call in accordance with PA state health guidelines during the COVID-19 crisis. All information regarding public access to the meeting was advertised in the [Gettysburg Times](#).

Public Comment on Agenda

None

Consent Agenda

Jill Clinton made motion to accept, Becky Uppercue seconded the motion.

Building Agenda

Jay Appleton, Greyhawk, discussed a water issue for the building requiring school to go all virtual on Thursday, February 25 and Friday, February 26, 2021. The possible cause of the water issue was the new power line run for construction. Work will begin Friday 2/26 at 7AM to excavate the power line, trace, splice, and repair. If this does not resolve the issue, then a new pump will be put in place.

Overall, the construction project is behind schedule due to the snow, but ECI is adjusting to get on schedule. The building is almost sealed up and once sealed then interior rough-in will begin with drywall a few weeks later.

Delivery schedule remains the same with plan to be out of modular by end of June and then remove modular in early July.

Administrator's Report

- Enrollment: Faye Pleso reported that current enrollment is 224 and will increase to 226 as of March 1, 2021. Jason Officer inquired as to whether any classes were at full capacity and unable to accept more students, Faye Pleso's response was that no classes are completely full at this time.
- Preliminary personnel recommendations would impact the budget by about \$150/160K and would include:
 - an additional 5/6 grade teacher full-time with benefits, based on continued increases in enrollment
 - Librarian full-time with benefits, will be included in '21-'22 budget even if enrollment remains at current status
 - 1 Part-time learning support, part-time without benefits
 - 3 PCA's, part-time without benefits
- Special Education evaluation is concerned that we have a high percentage of students with IEP's
 - Many new students came to GMCS with existing IEP's
 - Several parents opted to change to GMCS due to their child's IEP needs not being met at previous schools
 - Resolution would involve \$6,990 for ECRI training for Special Education teachers with \$6,400 allotted and required to spend. '21-'22 will require additional \$7,281 and implement education in classrooms and re-evaluate for improvements

Marketing, Fundraising, Activities

- Nicole Norris discussed Google ads cost \$190K with 1,100 clicks of interest whereas the Facebook ads cost \$1,290 with results being unimpressive. Google ads will continue and Facebook ads have currently stopped and can be reactivated in the future.

- Spirit School Store is now closed to parents but will remain open to staff until Friday, February 27, 2021. Orders totally \$1,050 with \$150 raised for the school. Orders to be sent out in mid-March. There are plans for another store in the Fall.
- Gertrude Hawk online sales totaling \$ 1,300 and paper orders will be in shortly and tallied by next board meeting.
- Yearbook is in plans with the company that took the school pictures this year
- Joined the school campaign with Weis for Schools and will look into similar school campaign with Giant
- Helping Hands-Nicole reminds that Teacher's Week will be the first week in May, there are several ideas in discussion for staff appreciation
- Kindergarten Open House was postponed and communication was sent to attendees
- Christine Fitzpatrick discussed plans for Read Across America
 - March 2 is a Dr. Seuss Day of dress like your favorite character
 - Month of March will be challenges of Read 10 books/chapters with a prize and certificate to place on the school bulletin board

Chair Report

- Trauma informed training
 - SAFE Schools has an online training with certificate, Faye Pleso to register and email information to all board members
 - Act 55 has 1 board member in progress of completion

Finance

- Becky Uppercue reviewed that accounts have decreased slightly by \$86K while District Receivables have increased to \$189,722.
- We have a 4 month operating surplus if needed
- Budget for '21-'22 will be based on current enrollment and will be revised in Sept/Oct to adjust for any new students
- Charter Choices has a new accountant to replace Michael Snyder
- Construction budget we have crossed the 20% mark and will be meeting with Members First to discuss loan since we are out of the interest-only stage
- SOFI forms will be sent to board members for electronic submission
- Governor Wolf is writing a proposal to cut Charter School funding for Special Needs allowing home districts to retain a portion of the funds that were previously paid in full

Governance committee

- RoseThornberry informed the Board that the 3 people interested in the opening Board positions will be interviewing soon

New business: For the good of the order

- None

Public Comment

- Jason Officer asked
 - 1. If we were allowed to record Zoom Board meetings for parents who are unable to attend
 - Minutes are taken for the purpose of information to anyone who is unable to attend
 - 2. Can we restart in person meetings
 - The Board is staying remote in order to ease stress on cleaning staff having to clean after Board meetings adjourn and prior to the next school day and help to keep non-school staff out of the school building during pandemic

Adjourned at 7:14 pm