Gettysburg Montessori Charter School
Board of Trustees Official Minutes
Thursday, August 30, 2018

Board Members Present
Kathy Johnson, Chair
Jill Clinton, Vice Chair
Tish Weikel, Secretary
Diana Williams, Treasurer
Melissa Ring

Board Members Absent
Lieucreta Swain

Others Present
Faye Pleso, CEO
Teresa Montgomery-Greene

Executive Session
The Board met for executive session at 6:50 pm to discuss an employment related issue, which if conducted in public would violate a lawful privilege or would lead to a disclosure of information confidentiality protected by law.

Call to Order the August 30th Meeting
Kathy Johnson called the August 30th meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda
Diana Williams made the motion to approve the consent agenda as submitted. Jill Clinton seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Old Business
There was no old business.

Finance Committee – Diana Williams & Jesse Bean
2017/2018 End of Year Budget Report – Year end actuals & long-term budget priorities:
Jesse Bean (Charter Choices) reported that the school’s finances were in good shape. 2017/2018 was a strong year for GMCS and he feels this puts the school in a good position to prepare for upcoming construction costs. GMCS experienced a larger than expected surplus due to cost controls and conservative budgeting. Jesse reported that the school has a fund balance of approximately $500,000.

Jesse also reported that the line of credit through Centric Bank was renewed. Additionally, GMCS received a clean audit.

As a new and prospective board member were in attendance, Jesse took a moment to discuss how tuition rates are calculated for charter schools in PA. He reminded the board that the 2018/2019 budget was set conservatively with a 1% reduction in regular and special education tuition rates and the school should have no problem realizing a surplus again this year.

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Administrator’s Report – Faye Pleso

CEO Report: current enrollment is 222 students. Faye also pointed out that she appeared on the cover of Celebrate Gettysburg.

Hiring Motions

- **Hiring Motion for Breakfast/Lunch Server:** Faye recommended Kara Allen for the position of Breakfast/Lunch Server. Tish Weikel made the motion to hire Kara Allen retroactively to the first day of school as a Breakfast/Lunch Server at a rate of $10/hour, up to 20 hours per week, with no benefits. Diana Williams seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- **Hiring Motion for School Counselor:** Faye recommended Christine Felicetti for the position of School Counselor. Diana Williams made the motion to hire Christine Felicetti as the School Counselor at a salary of $41,000 per year with benefits. Jill Clinton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Review of Proposed Anti-Nepotism Policy

- The school’s attorney suggested the board adopt an anti-nepotism policy and provided GMCS with this language.
- Kathy reminded everyone that the policy will be brought up for a vote at the meeting in the following month.

Executive Assistant Job Description

- The board reviewed the proposed job description. Faye explained this position is designed to help with things that she does not have time to do. There was discussion around the differences between Dani and Leigh’s roles versus the expectations of the new executive assistant.
- Faye is considering a current parent who is employed at the school to fill this roll. Jill Clinton questioned whether having a parent employed in this role would be a concern. Faye felt that it should not be a concern if a few tweaks are made to the job description. She will make those changes and submit the job description for approval at a follow-up meeting.
- Kathy asked how many hours a week Faye envisioned for this position. Faye felt that 30 hours or less would be sufficient. Kathy also requested adding additional duties “as assigned” in order to assist with school board administrative tasks.

Board Secretary Job Description

- The board reviewed the draft board secretary job description.
- Jill Clinton will work to set a stipend and finalize the job description for this position so it can be formally approved at a follow-up meeting. Jill is anxious to have this support role in place as the board going forward has relatively little experience managing the administrative tasks.
- Jill and Jesse discussed ways in which Charter Choices can play a support role to provide certain administrative assistance.

Kathy asked Faye if she has identified an alternative Montessori teacher training option for the school to use going forward. Faye shared that the current training is the only option she can find, and she has not been able to identify a reasonable alternative. Faye reported that Mrs. Lawrence will need to begin her training this year. Teresa mentioned that she has a sister who taught at a Montessori

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charter school and will reach out to her to find out what kind of training that school required.

Kathy asked if Faye is planning to continue Montessori training for all GMCS employees this year as she did last year. Faye confirmed that she is planning to continue these annual training opportunities for all GMCS employees.

Kathy followed up on questions of discipline at the school. The board would like to know how Faye plans to handle discipline this year.

• Faye reported that she will be in the loop on all discipline issues now that the school no longer has a Dean of Students position. If there is a minor infraction or behavioral concern, the teacher will fill out a classroom reflection, make contact with the parent, follow-up with natural consequences, and a reminder of the rules. A copy of this will be given to the student and to Faye. This process will keep everyone in the loop. If we see a pattern (i.e.) happens three times, this can become a level II discipline report. When this report comes to Faye, she will make the decision as to what the next steps are. Options may include, lunch detention, suspension, or behavior contract. Lastly, Level III are more serious infractions. These situations may include all of the former steps plus possible steps for suspension, expulsion or police contact. Faye will also provide copies of these reports to the school counselor so everyone is kept in the loop.

Kathy reviewed the board calendar and reminded Faye that the board plans to hear a report on the PIMS data, preliminary DIBELS data, and School Safety Report at the September meeting.

**Governance Committee — Jill Clinton**

**Update on Recruitment Efforts**

• Jill reported that we will be voting on the Governance Committee’s recommendation to join the board, Melissa Ring, this evening.

• A new call for members went out via e-mail, and so far four people have responded. Jill reminded everyone we have two vacancies that need to be filled.

• The Governance Committee will begin to vet the candidates and hopes to have additional names to recommend at the September or October meeting.

Kathy suggested that would be beneficial for the board to have a table at back to school night and other big school events. Kathy suggests the governance committee look at options.

**Recommendations to Fill Vacancies:**

• Diana Williams and Lucretia Swain’s terms expire tonight and they are eligible for renewal. Kathy Johnson’s term expires tonight and she is not eligible for renewal.

• Jill reports that governance committee makes a unanimous recommendation to have Diana Williams, Lucretia Swain, and Melissa Ring fill the vacancies on the board.

• Jill Clinton made a motion to elect Melissa Ring to the GMCS Board of Trustees. Diana Williams seconded the motion. The motion to approve Melissa Ring to join the board was approved by a unanimous roll call vote. Melissa Ring was approved to serve a full two-year term. Her term will expire in August 2020.

• Jill Clinton made a motion to re-elect Lucretia Swain to the GMCS Board of Trustees with a term expiring in August 2020. Diana Williams seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

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Swearing in of New Board Member: Melissa Ring was sworn in by Kathy Johnson.

- Jill Clinton made a motion to re-elect Diana Williams to the GMCS Board of Trustees with a term expiring in August 2020. Tish Weikel seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Kathy, Jill, Tish, and Melissa voting yes. Diana Williams abstained from this vote as it presented a conflict of interest.

Chair’s Report – Kathy Johnson

Housekeeping:
- Kathy distributed and reviewed the updated board calendar. She reminded everyone that the calendar captures all the reporting that is required for the board throughout the year. This document helps to keep the board on track.

Annual Report of the Board:
- Kathy reviewed the annual report of the board. It is a document prepared annually by the chair, the treasurer, the business manager and the CEO to help ensure that the board is meeting its fiduciary duties spelled out in the Bylaws. It reviews the challenges and successes of the school year, any audit reporting and the overall climate of the organization. Essentially, this is a snapshot of what happened this past year.
- Faye pointed out an addition to the report this year: yearly the nurse sends a report to department of health SHARRS – school health annual reimbursement request system. It gathers health statistics and generates reimbursements for what the nurse does. On her first year, the nurse missed some facets and did not complete health screenings on all students. The reviewer requested a remediation plan. The nurse has been proactive and talking to department of health. They did report that the authorizer will be notified that this occurred. Faye reports that the nurse is on track for this school year, and the department of health has been informed. Also, we missed hiring a school dentist this year. We now have one.
- Diana Williams made a motion to approve annual report as submitted. Jill Clinton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Board Orientation:
- Kathy shared a new requirement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Beginning in 2018-2019 anyone joining a board will need to do state mandated board training. Charter Choices will follow-up with the board to ensure all new board members receive this mandatory training, but Kathy strongly suggested that all current board members go through an annual orientation. In the past, the school’s attorney has come down to run the orientation sessions. It is critical that all board members become familiar with their role on the board and the importance of avoiding any ethics or Sunshine Act violations.

Annual Meeting Schedule:
- The continuing board members decided to hold the monthly meetings on the last Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm, with exceptions being in December (meeting held on December 12), October (meeting on October 24). Tish Weikel made a motion to approve the following annual schedule for the 2018/2019 school year: September 27, October 24, November 29, December 12, January 31, February 28, March 28, April 25, May 30, June 27, July 25, and August 29. Diana Williams seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
**Staff Meeting Attendance:**

- Kathy recruited members to attend a staff meeting immediately preceding the monthly board meeting. This has been a good way for the staff to get to know the board members and what kind of work the board does. It is also a great way for the board members to get to know the staff and teachers, and to hear what goes on at the school. Jill volunteered for Tuesday, September 25, Diana volunteered to go Tuesday, October 23, and Melissa volunteered to go Tuesday, November 27. All staff meetings are held at 3:30 pm in the school lobby. Additional volunteers will be needed to fill in December through May, but the board will wait to assign those dates until all new members are sworn in.

**Election of Officers:**

- Chair: Kathy Johnson nominated Jill Clinton as chair of the board. Tish Weikel seconded the nomination. Jill accepted the nomination. The nomination was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.
- Vice Chair: Jill Clinton nominated Becky Uppercue as vice chair of the board. Kathy Johnson seconded the nomination. The nomination was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.
- Secretary: Kathy Johnson nominated Melissa Ring as secretary of the board. Tish Weikel seconded the nomination. Melissa accepted the nomination. The nomination was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.
- Treasurer: Kathy Johnson nominated Diana Williams as treasurer of the board. Jill Clinton seconded the nomination. Diana accepted the nomination. The nomination was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

**Committee Formation**

- Executive Committee: Jill, Melissa, Diana, and Becky
- Finance Committee: Diana and Becky
- Audit Committee: Diana and Becky
- Personnel Committee: Tish, Melissa, and Diana
- Governance Committee: Jill, Tish, and Lieucretia
- Building Committee: Jill, Diana, and Melissa

Diana Williams made the motion to approve the above committees for the 2018/2019 school year. Jill Clinton seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

**Building Committee**

- Kathy, Jill and Faye report that they met with three architect firms, Digsau, El Associates and Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates, and asked all of the firms the same set of questions.
- Kathy asked if the board wants to have a formal presentation with all three firms. Jill added that if all three firms come to present again, she would like to see more specifics on the project, ie walking the building with us, discussing square footage, etc.
- Faye shared that she feels there is one firm in particular that has a unique approach with unique designs that seemed to better understand Montessori philosophy and discussed ways to involve the students. The other two offered more traditional schools. Faye reports leaning toward the former firm, and Jill concurs, though did express a concern that the company might not be affordable. Jesse Bean recommended having a direction conversation with this firm about potential costs. Kathy also recommended that the board receive a presentation from one or more of the firms. Faye and Jill will ask Digsau to present at the September
meeting.
  • Melissa asked if there is a budget in place for this construction and Faye reported that the USDA has approved us for a $4.5 million loan. GMCS has been asked to put up 20% of that in collateral. As soon as an architect is identified, Faye will set up a meeting to have the architect, USDA representative and Charter Choices to get together and start the process of determining how much the school can afford to spend. We need to know if they can create something for us within our budget. Kathy reiterates that this is not the board’s design but it is truly what the teachers and Faye need.
  • Faye requested to have a reconvene meeting to invite Disgau to come and meet the board.

**New Business; For the good of the order**

As the Advanced Degree Pay Increase Policy was approved this evening, Faye asked how her pay increase will be authorized. She will be able to authorize the increase in wages for those eligible teachers. She asked if Jill will need to authorize hers. Kathy suggested forwarding the policy to Charter Choices and ask for their direction.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Recess**

The meeting was recessed at 9:53 pm. The meeting will remain open for any potential job descriptions, hiring motions, and other business that Dr. Pleso would like to consider before the September meeting.

**Executive session**

An additional executive session was held at 9:54 pm to discuss an employment related issue, which if conducted in public would violate a lawful privilege or would lead to a disclosure of information confidentiality protected by law.

Approved:

Tish N. Weikel, Secretary