

**Gettysburg Montessori Charter School  
Board of Trustees Official Minutes  
October 24, 2018**

**Board Members Present**

Jill Clinton, Chair  
Becky Uppercue, Vice Chair  
Diana Williams, Treasurer  
Lieucretia Swain

**Board Members Absent**

Melissa Ring  
Tish Weikel

**Others Present**

Faye Pleso, CEO  
Rose Thornberry

**Executive Session**

The Board met for executive session at 5:57 pm to discuss student and employment related issues, 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**

Jill Clinton called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Diana Williams made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Becky Uppercue seconded the motion. The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items**

There was no public comment.

**Old Business**

There was no old business.

**Report of the Chair**

*Housekeeping:*

- Jill is working with Megan Parks to update *Gettysburg Times* ad for upcoming Finance Committee meeting dates.
- Jill still needs bios from Melissa Ring and Tish Weikel
- Kathy & Jill are meeting with Charter Choices to develop binders for board members. They are waiting on clarity for bi-monthly meeting proposal from Charter Choices. Jill will be checking into this and if it goes forward it will require an action of the board.
- Jill reminded everyone the write-up for the newsletter is due.
- Upcoming events were discussed to include: Morning Muffins on November 14<sup>th</sup>, movie nights, Bingo fundraiser and board representation is needed at these events.

- Staff Meeting: Becky Uppercue attended and represented the board.
  - Future meetings will be attended by Melissa Ring on November 27<sup>th</sup>, Diana Williams on December 11<sup>th</sup>, Jill Clinton on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Lieucetia Swain on February 26<sup>th</sup>.
- For the November meeting the Executive Committee needs to review the mission statement, vision and administration policies, propose any changes that may be needed and do a strategic goals report.
- The Finance Committee will perform a budget review, follow up on long term budget priorities and updated budget due to Jill one week prior to the November meeting.

### **Administrator's Report – Faye Pleso**

Faye reported that enrollment stands at 222 students. Three additional students have enrolled and will begin on Friday, bringing enrollment to 225. Exit surveys were reviewed, with most withdrawals due to homeschooling and moving.

#### *Dibels Reports:*

- Reading: Above Benchmark = Kindergarten 31%, 1<sup>st</sup> 37%, 2<sup>nd</sup> 34%, 3<sup>rd</sup> 41%, 4<sup>th</sup> 45%, 5<sup>th</sup> 46%, 6<sup>th</sup> 45%,  
Math: Above Benchmark = Kindergarten population was half at benchmark or above; 1<sup>st</sup> 40%, 2<sup>nd</sup> 43%, 3<sup>rd</sup> 53%, 4<sup>th</sup> 39%, 5<sup>th</sup> 25%, 6<sup>th</sup> 18%.
- Overall, Faye was pleased with the scores, but did note several low scores in computation, especially in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade where 52% of students were below benchmark. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade scores were quite low in this area as well, something that Faye addressed with the teachers.

*PSSA Scores:* PSSA scores were not available due to a new state system called the Future PA Index. These will be re-visited during the November meeting.

*School Safety Report:* There only two serious incidents in the last school year. All proper protocols were followed and appropriate reports made. There has been nothing to report so far in the current school year.

*Executive Assistant Job Description:* The final Executive Assistant job description was completed by Jill and Faye and reviewed by the board. Becky Uppercue motioned to approve the Executive Assistant job description as submitted, Diana Williams seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

*Hiring Recommendation:* Faye recommended Amy Brown for the Receptionist/Office Clerk position retroactive to October 15<sup>th</sup>. Jill Clinton made a motion to approve the hiring of Amy Brown for Receptionist/Office Clerk at \$25,000/year with benefits retroactive to October 15<sup>th</sup>, Diana Williams seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

*Hiring Motions:* The hiring motion for the PCA was tabled. Faye recommended Hope Lansford for the long-term substitute Kindergarten teacher position. Diana Williams made a motion to approve the hiring of Hope Lansford for the long-term substitute Kindergarten teacher position at \$100/day without benefits. Jill Clinton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

*Marketing Report:* Faye described several marketing campaigns in the works, including two fundraisers and an in-house event for families.

- November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Faye attending PA Montessori Alliance Conference
- November 4<sup>th</sup>, Bingo Fundraiser
- November 8<sup>th</sup>, Giving Spree at Gettysburg Middle School
- November 14<sup>th</sup>, Morning Muffins

### **Finance Committee**

Diana Williams, Becky Uppercue, and Faye Pleso reported the following from their committee meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup>:

1<sup>st</sup> quarter budget review year-to-date:

- Net income for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter is \$255,003
- \$240,666 still owed by GASD and other school districts
- We budgeted \$122,709 and are currently \$132,294 ahead of budget – Charter Choices deems us ‘in good shape’ at this point in the fiscal year.
- Net Income outweighed expenses, putting us in a good position financially.
- Quarterly goals were met; we currently have 83% of expenses remaining.
- Healthcare Benefits Review – no significant updates

Building Finances:

- Jesse Bean from Charter Choices recommended we work with a local bank to secure a bridge loan for general contracting costs for 18-24 months up to \$2 million.
- The USDA loan will be at 6% for 35 years and they expect GMCS to contribute approximately 20%, 10%-15% of which we will borrow from another lender.
- The USDA will likely want a \$100,000-\$200,000 ‘good faith’ down payment.
- Jesse also suggested seeking out a credit union or larger bank for an additional 10%-15% to supplement the USDA loan.

Health Care Benefits Review:

- No significant updates – we will maintain Highmark BCBS as our provider.
- The amount budget for insurance costs for our employees was not met, so staff will be receiving checks for the differential.

### **Governance Committee – Jill Clinton**

*Update on Recruitment Efforts*

- The Governance committee had three great applicants. After a thorough vetting process, the committee would like to recommend Rose Thornberry to fill the one vacancy on the board.
- Lieucetia Swain made a motion to elect Rose Thornberry to fill the unexpired seat vacated by AJ Warner, expiring May 2019. Becky Uppercue seconded the motion. The motion to approve Rose Thornberry to join the board was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

### **Building Committee**

- Jamie from Digsau; Jesse from Charter Choices; Jeff from the USDA; Millie from the USDA (who will be replacing Jeff); Brian from the PA’s architecture office; and Ronald from the PA State Preservation office (representing environmental concerns) joined Diana Williams and Becky Uppercue, who were representing the Board, and Faye Pleso for a meeting to discuss

- where we are with the USDA loan application process and what steps are next.
- The USDA announced that our pre-application, one of the fastest they've ever seen completed, has been reviewed and 11 items need to be completed prior to obligation of funds:
    1. Completion of the proper level of environmental review (RHS to assist)
    2. Financial Feasibility Study with Examination Opinion.
    3. Proof of all Insurance(s). We need to make sure we keep all insurances updated.
    4. Revised SF424 with actual costs
    5. Mortgage statement for all accounts to be refinanced
    6. Commercial credit offer
    7. SAM registration must stay current until all funds are utilized (registration will expire on June 22, 2019). SAM is the federal government's vendor database (System for Award Management) and is free and relatively simple to apply for.
    8. Verification of 20% applicant contributions.
    9. Any and all prior approvals needed by the School District or PA Dept. of Education.
    10. Architectural Feasibility Report...Preliminary Plans & Specs.
    11. Legal Services Agreement and AD1048 executed
  - We were also told that the USDA's fiscal year starts October 1<sup>st</sup> and they get their funds to distribute in the spring. We have five years to use the loan money.
  - Jamie and Brian will work together; there needs to be an agreement signed between us and Digsau to forward to Brian. This will be done at the November meeting.
  - State architect gave outline & agreements to Digsau which we will give to USDA.
  - 'Design/Bid/ Build' is the name of the approach recommended to us by all parties; however, if we do go this route and want a Project Manager, they must be hired as a full-time employee. We would also need a government waiver and Digsau must have direct oversight of the PM.
  - Application needs to be completed before April; our goal is December.
  - A new environmental study has to be done, despite the one we did before the move. A preliminary plan needs to be submitted to the PA State Preservation Office. Contact state preservation office for preliminary plan. We were strongly cautioned that there be no ground disturbance on our property until construction is completed. Faye will ask if a school garden is considered a 'ground disturbance' as this would last three years.
  - All parties agreed that there will be an estimated \$20,000 in attorney fees.

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

There was no new business.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **Adjourn**

Jill Clinton adjourned the meeting at 7:47pm

Approved:

Lieucretia Swain, Secretary