

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School

Board of Trustees Official Minutes

June 24, 2021

Board Members Present

Tom Hockensmith, Chair

Rose Thornberry, Vice Chair

Becky Uppercue, Board Treasurer

Derek Beckenbaugh

Jill Clinton

Missing

Traci Elligson, Secretary

Diana Williams

Others Present

Dr. Faye Pleso, CEO

Christine Fitzpatrick

Nicole Norris

Public

Jay Appleton, Greyhawk

Jesse Bean, Charter Choices

Jason Officer, Parent

Ashley Whitmore Utermahlen (Prospective Board Member)

Call to Order

Tom Hockensmith called the meeting to order at 6:03 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](#). Introductions were made for new Board member and new attendees.

Building Agenda

Jay Appleton, Greyhawk states that construction is progressing quickly. The contractors are working on the doors and trim. Furniture is expected to be received by June 30th. The expansion of the music area has a structural issue that is being addressed. Faye Pleso acknowledged that part-time staff are helping with the painting. She also informed that new carpet for the office is scheduled for July 23rd.

Administrator's Report

- Enrollment: Faye Pleso reported that enrollment for 2021-2022 school year is currently at 262.
- There are currently 12 on the waitlist for kindergarten.
- Jason Officer asked how many of the families that joined mid-year last year stayed.
 - Faye advised all but 3 are staying with GMCS.
- Faye reviewed the family exist surveys.
 - These surveys were primarily from 6th grade families who are leaving because they have aged out of GMCS.
 - These surveys advised that some of the families were in attendance at GMCS due to the following:
 - Struggling with hybrid
 - GMCS offering 5 days in person learning
 - Montessori Philosophy
 - Class sizes
- Faye had 4 hiring recommendations to be approved by the board.
 - Kindergarten teacher to be filled by Emily Merritt. This position is full-time starting August 1st with salary of \$41,325. Jill Clinton made a motion which was seconded by Becky Uppercue. This was unanimously approved.
 - First/Second grade teacher to be filled by Brandy Stormes. This position is full-time starting August 1st with salary of \$45,210. Rose Thornberry made a motion which was seconded by Tom Hockensmith. This was unanimously approved.
 - Food server / Lunchroom Aide to be filled by Rebecca Zepp. This position is \$15 per hour for under 30 hours a week starting August 1st. Becky Uppercue made a motion which was seconded by Jill Clinton. This was unanimously approved.
 - Food server / Lunchroom Aide to be filled by Sheena Serio. This position is \$15 per hour for under 30 hours a week starting August 1st. Tom Hockensmith made a motion which was seconded by Derek Beckenbaugh. This was unanimously approved.
 - The teacher for 5/6 has been postponed to next month due to ongoing interviews.
- Faye reviewed the Health and Safety Plan update.
 - This is due July 30th and will be approved at the July board meeting.
 - ESSR Funds require the “universal and correct wearing” of masks
 - This requires CEO and Board Chair signatures upon approval.
 - Proposed changes to health and safety plan include the following:
 - Masks optional
 - No longer requiring daily symptom tracker or daily temp check.
 - Desk shields and checks with sick families by Nurse Adrian would continue.

- Jill Clinton advised that South Western board approval removal of mask mandate.
 - Jason Officer asked about distance learning when child is sick.
 - Faye advised that distance learning would only be used for flex days or snow days. Sick days would be a normal sick day, no remote learning.
- Helping Hands update by Nicole Norris
 - Hoping to get information out to families early July.
 - Back to school night and ribbon cutting will be on August 18th at 4PM.
 - Currently working with Gettysburg Area Chamber of Commerce
 - For back to school night, following ribbon cutting, food trucks available for families.
 - For new teachers lounge the committee is working with staff to get wish list of items.
 - Also looking to have welcome bags for staff and even a “shout out” board
 - Volunteering is being added to parent portal for easy sign-up and access.
 - Spirit wear store should be live by August 16th.

Consent Agenda

- Motion to approve made by Becky Uppercue, seconded by Jill Clinton. All agreed; approved.

Chair Report

- Act 55 sent to Derek Beckenbaugh
- Tom Hockensmith to send survey results before next board meeting.
- Reminder to board members to bring dates to August meeting for upcoming board calendar

Finance

- Jesse Bean informs the Board that the school has a strong cash standpoint based on the May report. Cash is slightly down due to the soft costs of the construction project. There will be minimal (~\$100K in additional soft costs up through August).
- Current ratio is 5.9 meaning the school has about 6 times cash on hand vs outstanding debt.
- An expected net income of about \$295K is expected through the year end.
- Budget has been updated to reflect higher enrollment numbers. Enrollment is being set to 250 from original 235 even with expected enrollment of 260.
- Budget also reflects new 5/6 classroom teacher and assistant.
- Jill Clinton asked about PSERS and if staff that had PSERS what happens. Jesse advised GMCS PSERS requirement ends.
- It was inquired by Jill Clinton if specials teacher could be made full time. Faye advised she is looking into this but has concerns if one special teacher is full time and others are not.
- With increased enrollment and other changes a surplus of \$169,412 is expected over previous surplus of \$30K.
- Rose Thornberry asked about “Cutoff for new classroom for 5/6”. Faye advised that ideal is 20 students but due to enrollment each will have 26 which is still under max.

- Budget was submitted for approval. Tom Hockensmith made motion to approve budget which was seconded by Jill Clinton and unanimously approved.

Governance committee

- Recruiting has been completed.
- Recommending Ashley Whitmore Utermahlen to fill Jill Clinton's position that opens in August, vote to be done in July and will be sworn in in August.
- Becky Uppercue and Rose Thornberry positions to be re-approved.

New business: For the good of the order

- None

Public Comment

- Jason Officer
 - Inquired which kindergarten teacher is the new hire replacing. Faye advised Mrs. Donahue

Adjourned at 7:08pm