

MINUTES
VSWEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020
VIA [Zoom](#)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gregory Schneider (GS) – President

John Tanner (JT)

April Sauer (AS) – Secretary

Danielle Martinez (DM)

Dan Franks (DF) – Treasurer

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

GUESTS

Invitees of the Board:

Teresa Marzolph (TM)

Priscilla Garza (PG)

Michelle Kratzer (MK)

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

- Becky King
- Deborah Allen
- Colleen Pope

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- Susan Kerr
- Juli Curtin
- Barb Cunningham
- Jamie
- Adeline Carrera
- Sarah Williamson
- Sami Rank
- Deb
- Heather Sullivan
- Kim Baker
- Helena Moriarty
- Jill Thomas
- Harper Rose
- JJ

OPENING VERSE / INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. GS welcomed the public to the meeting. GS read the opening verse and reviewed meeting procedures. The Board members introduced themselves.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Financial Update

GS Introduced PG.

PG Reviewed Profit and Loss.

GS Asked follow up question regarding private program.

PG Reviewed the Balance Sheet.

DM Are we earning rewards or cash back on our credit cards?

PG Will take a look at that and get back to us.

DM Retained earnings?

PG That's the profit and loss over the year. It's rolled over into the retained earnings.

DM Asked about someone on the aging report. Does that mean they haven't been paid?

PG That has been entered, but it has not been pushed for payment. We were waiting for approval from Parent Council.

DM What does our bookkeeper do that is different from Aspire?

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GS Jessica does day to day operations. Submits approval and makes payments. Aspire handles high level aspects like profit and loss statements, grants, ESG, and coordinates the audit to make sure we're in good standing there.

PG That aging payment has been processed.

GS We will see that on the next statement. Our cash position is better than what it appears here because we got the ESG funds in. That adds another 125k. We're in a good position at the end of the year.

PG That is still pending, but it should go through tonight. End with over the amount we were expecting for the RSF loan.

GS And that doesn't include money in the savings account.

PG That is correct.

GS PG is great at answering questions, so please reach out as needed. Thanked PG.

Grant Updates

GS ESG funds are deposited but pending. Asked a question regarding ESSER.

PG Once ESG is settled we can put in the budget for the ESSER. We submitted ESSER to state, but they want it more itemized. She'll be on campus tomorrow to pull invoices and submit that budget tomorrow. Once accepted, we can draw down the money.

DM Is there a way to get a break down in what's included in general supplies? Item 6610. Roughly 15k. Asked question regarding professional development and item 6310.

PG Audit expense is made in two payments for our auditor.

GS That item was just approved at a recent board meeting.

DM Question regarding materials fees and percentage of families participating.

GS Have we calculated a target amount based on the amount of students at the school? How much more can we expect and hope for?

PG We can run a report on that and see how many families could still pay.

GS Our state equalization payment is a mixture of how many students are enrolled and how often they are in attendance at school. I believe both matter, but what is the weight of those things?

PG The state has formulas based on enrollment and attendance. There's a report that she can send us from the state on how they do their calculations. Attendance is pulled every month.

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They use that data to make their calculations. Crystal Lee makes sure that she updates those numbers before those calculations are made.

GS Wants that report so he can explain it to others as questions arise. He will share that with the board.

DM There are bank fees, and we should ask for those to be refunded.

GS That's a great point. Banks have been good about that over the last nine months.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

TM Covid discussions. We've had two healthy weeks. We did have a close contact. We report those to the county. We notified the community so they can make decisions as they see fit. The community has been amazing to keep us in hybrid. However, we are looking to tomorrow's update from the state to see whether or not we return to remote learning. This doesn't reflect what our community has done. In the event that we do have a positive case and need to report it to the county we've been given guidance. On 12/2 they updated their guidance reducing the amount of quarantine needed. It was recommended that we simply state in our response guidelines that we are aligned to CDC or Maricopa Dept of Health. Recommends we follow Maricopa. The quarantine days went from 14 to 10.

GS Do we need to vote on that or are you just looking for input?

TM That's a good question. Are these needed for board approval?

GS I would err on the side of putting it in the minutes. How should we phrase this?

TM Guidance as it pertains to Covid19.

GS I want to be careful that it's not too broad. I think this is a specific topic. Setting aside technicalities, any object to following Maricopa County's guidance for on campus safety. Is this from our mitigation plan?

TM I think it's the response guidelines, which we updated on 11/28.

GS moved for DMS to continuously align our Covid response guidelines with the Maricopa County Health Department. JT second. Vote in favor: JT, GS, AS, DF. Abstain: DM. **Motion passes.**

TM Update for charter review was finalized today. They reviewed our processes, distance learning plan, and compliance. They completed an interview and asked for additional documentation regarding our distance learning plan to ensure that we are following the plan we

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laid out earlier this year. The results of the review come in phases. We should receive compliance piece first. There are some areas we need to address with our enrollment. We were found to ask for documents too late in the process. We need to fine tune that. We've worked with City of Phoenix to get an inspection. We learned this needs to be done by the state. The fire marshall provided us with a list of things to address. We are given 30 days to remedy any issue within the report. The next phase, we should receive a review of our academic systems and distance learning plan. Faculty helped to support this process. A huge thanks to them. It was very time consuming—in particular Falconburg, Maynard, Moriarty, Lee, and Pawlo helped tremendously. They pulled a lot of information together in a short amount of time.

GS Thanked staff and TM for pulling this together so quickly.

AS Where will this report be posted?

TM On our charter dashboard. There is a link on our website.

GS Yes, that is helpful.

TM Sandra Lovelady will be leaving us and not returning next semester. There was a parent meeting last night to discuss it. We wish her well and are grateful for her work at DMS. Currently working on a substitute to come in so we can find a long-term teacher to take that class. Debbie Natske will help sub on a part time basis.

GS Any other questions for TM? Doesn't look like it.

PARENT COUNCIL

GS What's going on with Parent Council and what can we do to help?

MK Updated us on Parent Council. They are doing the book club every Monday at 8pm. They are currently reading the latest version of Waldorf Education: A Family Guide. The book is read and discussed during book club. They will likely continue this one through the end of January and start Beyond the Rainbow Bridge. Winter Faire obviously didn't happen at the regular time. They are trying to come up with other ways to do it-possibly in the Spring or do a drive thru to make it safe but keep the spirit of Winter Faire. That will be addressed at the beginning of the year. They're doing holiday support for 25 families. Looking for gift cards or cash to support these families. Some funds from Hope and Help will be offered to support these families as well. Donations due by tomorrow. New system for funding requests through Google Forms. This will help with tracking the money and approvals. We ask for grace of two weeks to get these requests approved as those making the approvals are volunteers. Next meeting is 1/5 at 7pm. They voted that they will continue to have virtual meetings through the end of the school year due to Covid.

AS Can donations be made online to support families? Is there an option to do that?

MK There is not.

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GS Thanked MK and Parent Council for their support during Thanksgiving and now over the winter holidays. The update of the approval process will be helpful. Thank you.

COVID-19

GS Shared the latest metrics on the screen from Maricopa County. All numbers are moving in a negative direction, making it very likely that we will be moving to an all-school remote learning model. This data will be updated Thursday morning. We can anticipate that all three factors will be in the red. Broke down the likelihood by looking at laboratory testing data and hospital and Covid-like illness data. It's likely the state will suggest an all-virtual model. We have some time to make this transition. The faculty has already done some preparation to make that transition. Right now we don't know if we will be hybrid or virtual on 1/4.

DF Can you clarify the questions?

GS The state will probably say we need to go all virtual. Do we want to give the teachers more certainty heading into this break by telling them the first week will be hybrid or virtual?

DM Have we polled the teachers/staff regarding their preference?

TM I know the teachers that I've heard from the most want to remain in hybrid. It's not from everyone. Teachers are concerned about the impact virtual has on the children. As we approached Thanksgiving this was discussed. Most want to stay in hybrid; it's hard to plan for both in person and virtual.

GS JT, your perspective could be helpful.

JT The vaccine is here, so that will be helpful. Doesn't think schools are super spreaders. Doesn't think we're in a hotspot. Concerned about the accuracy of the data for our area and lag time. He agrees with TM that most teachers would prefer to stay in a hybrid situation. The children really want to be there. Every day has been a precious gift. I respect the decisions of individual families. The HS seems to be doing fine with what they're doing. They're mostly virtual and doing well. Proud of the students for their willingness to do the right thing and follow the guidelines.

GS We find ourselves in a position of this public health crisis and having the county tell us what's in our best interest. What I'm hearing is there's not a lot of appetite for rushing for the desire to prepare for all virtual. The teachers prefer to wait and see. That may result in some scrambling before the semester starts.

JT We respect the board and the decision that's made on this level. While we've given our opinion, we respect the board's choice.

GS It's been a hard year, and everyone deserves a break. I don't want to steal their break by creating more uncertainty by not making a decision.

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AS Suggested a possible motion contingent on data that's out tomorrow.

DF Perhaps looking at more specific data should be taken into account.

GS I think we should continually evaluate and continue to adapt, but I don't want to change things all the time. We agreed to follow the guidance but left the transition up to TM.

AS Discussed benefits of decision made now based on tomorrow's data. Specificity may be needed in a motion to have a plan.

TM I'm concerned about state changing guidance even after the fact. Perhaps 1/4 week is planned as hybrid to plan for the transition. I'm not sure if that would be an option.

GS It makes sense to have a longer time to transition.

DM Is it much more difficult to make the transition?

JT Yes, that is a big switch to make. It's difficult to put supplies together and plan.

DF Thanksgiving data is still coming.

GS Leave it to TM in conjunction with the teachers to transition to virtual learning based on the guidance. I don't think we need to do anything other than say to TM, let's enjoy the break, and not rush, and let's take time to get students materials and for teachers to prepare.

DF Yeah.

GS We'll leave it at that. We'll see what the data says and leave it to TM to coordinate with the faculty to transition. It doesn't need to be rushed.

TM Okay, thank you for that discussion and consideration.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH

GS Through the efforts of the Advisory Panel culling 100 resumes, conducting interviews, and recommending candidates for the Board to interview—we have been able to continue those efforts. We were impressed with the individuals we interviewed. We did select someone. We have alerted faculty and staff and will make a formal announcement to the wider community at the end of the week. We want to take our time and do it right by alerting those who will be most impacted first. The announcement will come later this week. I am very excited about this individual. This person has a depth of experience and is so excited to be at this school.

BOARD PROCEDURES

Spring 2021 School Calendar

GS There's an issue with the Spring calendar and MLK day, and we need to make a change.

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TM Currently MLK day is not marked as a holiday on our academic calendar. Contacted LDC regarding that issue and meeting 180 days. We'd like to honor MLK and extend the last day of school to 5/28. Previously we committed to 5/27.

GS That seems like an honorable decision.

GS Moved to amend our school calendar to include the MLK holiday and extend our final day to 5/28. JT second. The following discussion occurred:

JT The last day will be on a Friday. Will check with Ms. Lee about that.

GS Is attendance better on Mondays vs Fridays?

JT Could be a factor. Friday would be a safe day, and we'd still have good attendance.

Vote unanimous in favor: GS, AS, JT, DF, DM. **Motion passes.**

ADE/ACB Compliance

GS Happy to report that we actually took every step that we can and need to to be caught up. We are in a good spot there.

Approval of Minutes

GS Moved to approve the meeting minutes and executive session minutes of our 12/2, 12/8, 12/9, and 12/10 meetings. DF second. No further discussion. Vote in favor: GS, DF, JT, AS, DM. **Motion passes.**

Board Calendar

GS 2021 Board calendar will be looked over and then circulated to the full board.

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

CLOSING VERSE

Meeting was adjourned at 8:06pm

Prepared by AS on 12.16.2020.