



MINUTES
VSWEA Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, February 15, 2023
VIA [Zoom](#)

Members Present:

Kerstin Kubina (KK)—President
Dan Franks (DF)—Treasurer
April Sauer (AS)—Secretary

Danielle Martinez (DM)
Myriah Mhoon (MM)
John Tanner (JT)

Members Absent: Ben Fong, Nellie Grossenbacher, and Ashley Parks

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

Guests

Invitees of the Board:

Frank Mirizio (FM)
Sophie McCurley (SM)

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

H
JJ

Deb
Tammy Lopez

Opening Verse/Introductions

Meeting was called to order at 6:33pm. KK welcomed the public to the meeting, read the opening verse, and reviewed the agenda.

The Board members introduced themselves along with FM.

Executive Director Updates

FM Enrollment is currently at 287. 2 more are trying to enroll next week. We've been pretty solid the whole year. We received our permit to start work on the woodshop. We're getting started right away on Monday. It should take a week, maybe a week and half. Javier Construction, who did our bathroom, will do electrical, HVAC, fire alarm, etc. It should be open at the new school year. We're planning some budgetary things. We'll speak more about that in Executive Session. We've been doing some campus clean up and beautification. We cleaned up the riparian. We pulled up some dead trees and will be ready to plant some new plants in there. We've cleaned up some holes due to irrigation and under the 8th grade building. We've leveled some ground and cement, restuccoed the EC, washed it up due to pigeon issues. We'll be planting in the garden starting Monday. We have some openings--a grades teacher and a special ed aide for the high school. Two new bids on the AC—both were lower, so we'll be getting started soon. I think that's it. Tonight is senior projects. I met with seniors this morning as they were practicing. Everything looks really good, and it's something to be proud of. We had a play last week. The high school put Newsies on using the new stage. We had popcorn and hot chocolate thanks to

DM. JT's class will be using that venue soon. We seated 100 students at the daytime event, which was great. We had 62 at the evening performance. We're hoping to pack the house at the 8th grade show. We have pentathlon games, medieval games, 8th grade trip, and senior trip coming up. The 6th/7th grade just came back from a skiing trip. Ms. Pawlo is getting our computers ready for state testing coming up. The work she does to get those computers ready is great.

AS How's enrollment going? I did mine today thanks to all the reminders via email and text. Everything was laid out well and so simple to do. It didn't take me long at all.

FM It's going well. We get about 10-12 new enrollments every day. About 2/3 of our classes have registered. We have lots of waiting lists. We have an open house coming up and invited George Gervin. We're hoping to get about 10 new students for the high school.

KK Can you tell us more about the open teacher position?

FM Our 2nd grade teacher Ms. Cunningham has announced her departure. Her husband is in the military and depending on where he's stationed next, she may have to leave. So we've set up interviews to look for the best candidates.

Parent Council & Animal Care Updates

NA

Marketing and Development Updates

SM It was quiet over the holidays. First, I want to thank and congratulate the board for reaching 100% participation in the sustaining fund campaign. Some news is going out regarding the next stage. I'm hoping to meet with individual families. We're up \$1000 from last month, so at about 35k. We're at 28% participation. I released the first quarterly issue of the Bloom. Those who donated have received it in the mail; everyone got it digitally. Currently working on finding advertisers for the yearbook. Nellie and I are working on the school store. The contest is finished, and we'll launch the store soon. We'll do some basics: shirts, mugs, hats, etc. Tax credits are at about \$6000. I hope to see more come in as tax season approaches. FM has approved a Spring Gala for 2024, and all proceeds will go to the sustaining fund. I'll be working with faculty and staff, and I'll be asking for board support as well. I'll be doing more coffee and chats soon. If any other board members would like to join us, you're more than welcome to come out.

DF I can help with coffee and chats in the Fall.

SM That would be great.

KK I wanted to thank you for all of this. I also wanted to mention that we've only spent around \$600 on all of these development projects. I couldn't be more impressed.

SM Thank you for allowing me to do this work. I love every minute of it. We have to keep the momentum. I know this is just the jumping off point, so I'm excited to see it moving forward.

Financial Update

KK Shared her screen to show the P&L Forecast. We're starting to see that we're bumping against our budget numbers. Again, it's just an estimate. We're still in a good financial situation because we have three months of operating expenses in our savings. Shared her screen to show the Balance Sheet. Expenses are about \$900,000 a month. Total Liability and Equity is at 3.3 as well. Shared Profit and Loss. We're good as far as net income goes. I have to thank FM because he's always got his eye on the ball. It's tough to manage the budget of a charter school in AZ. I'm grateful that you're always checking in with Monique so we can make plans regarding raises and improvements. It's great to see.

Proposed Motions

KK moved to approve the 01/18/23 regular board meeting minutes. DF second. No further discussion. Unanimous votes in favor: KK, AS, MM, DM, JT, DF. **Motion passes.**

KK moved to approve the 01/18/23 Executive Session meeting minutes. MM second. No further discussion. Unanimous votes in favor: KK, AS, JT, MM, DF, DM. **Motion passes.**

KK moved to go into Executive Session for discussion of hiring and retaining staff and invite Frank Mirizio into the session. MM second. No further discussion. Unanimous votes in favor: KK, AS, JT, MM, DF, DM. **Motion passes.**

Executive session began at 7:00pm.

The minutes of the Executive Session are confidential and are maintained separately pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(B).

Executive session ended at 7:42.

Continuing Business/Open issues

Substance Abuse Program

FM DM set me up with Sarah who works for a Waldorf company that has several presentations. The only issue is it's a bit expensive. I have my own counselor on campus who is state certified in this. Something that Sarah did not know since she's from New York is that in AZ sex ed is not required, but it is specific. Abstinence is the focus of the curriculum. So we spoke about that. We'd have to hand her the state curriculum. The other two programs they offer are fine, but do we want to spend money? I want to do something on substance abuse and cyber technology. I could do the free in state stuff and budget the \$4/5000 for next year. I would recommend that we do something free this year and I work with Sarah to plan something for next year.

KK I think what you're proposing makes sense. Could you and DM get some pricing for us, and then maybe we could vote at the next meeting?

AS I don't want to vote yet on spending this money since we don't have our budget yet. I'd rather get those quotes and think on it a while and vote when we have more information about our budget.

FM I also think that we could get a grant for something like this. That would help. I'll get pricing from Sarah and see if I can find a grant or get something in the budget.

KK And Ms. Dietz is ready to present something this year?

FM Yes, after Spring Break. Also, we have some training coming up that two of our staff will be participating in.

New Business

Board Meeting Day and Time

DF Even when I come back, this time will be difficult. If it's possible to move it to another night of the week that would be better. I know we're missing people, so I'd want their input as well.

KK Okay, we'll revisit next meeting.

Academic Calendar

FM I sent over some tentative town hall dates. I suggested March 29th and June 7th.

AS June 7th is a budget board meeting.

FM We can do the 8th.

KK Okay, both of those dates work.

AS There's a few half days in the spring semester and nothing is written there. What are those half days for?

FM The one in January is for Waldorf training, and the teachers who don't have that will have some other professional development. The date in April is also a half day for professional development.

KK moved to approve the Desert Marigold 2023-2024 academic calendar. DF second. The following discussion took place:

JT DM mentioned dates for survey rollouts.

AS Those are on the board calendar. The survey will be discussed at the next board meeting.

Unanimous votes in favor: KK, AS, JT, MM, DF, DM. **Motion passes.**

Spring 2023 Plan for Board Apps

AS You should be familiar with this document if you've been on the board awhile. I just update it regularly. We have our next board applications coming up in May, so I just wanted to review the plan. The first community letter will go out 3/10. That gives everyone time to attend two board meetings, get their fingerprint clearance card started, etc. I'll send out another reminder on 3/24. Applications will be due on 4/1, then KK will meet with everyone. We have our interview on 5/3 and then follow up and vote on 5/17. Everything in this plan is already on our board calendar. I'll

be sending out that first communication soon and just wanted to go over the timeline before we get started.

Spring Faire—Board Booth

FM I heard you were thinking about a board dunk tank.

KK Or a caged match. I'm stumped on what to do.

AS Could we show something from the store? Maybe a flyer with photos and a QR code or link?

FM If those items are available, we could sell them.

AS I just don't know when those items will be ready since Spring Faire is so soon. I didn't put the store together, so I don't know, but that would be great.

MM I think we all have booths to work so I don't want to be stretched too thin.

AS I think we could set a specific time frame to be at the booth so we're not all trapped there all day. I know we all have other work to do. Another thought I had is Circus has a performance, so right beforehand is a great time to have you or FM or Sophie speak about the sustaining fund and tax credits and then send all the grandparents, aunts and uncles over to the lady in the bright vest or whatever to gather those funds. It's a great opportunity to actually ask for support. And it can be really quick—just a five-minute spiel. Then everyone can enjoy the show.

KK These are all great ideas. I'll contact PC and go from there.

Announcements

KK Our next board meeting is 03/22/23 via Zoom. Also the ACWE meeting is coming up 3/25.

FM It's a great experience, and we've really improved our reputation. It's an all-day event, but please let me know if you'll be coming so I can have enough chairs and lunches ready.

KK moved to adjourn the 02/15/23 board meeting. DF second. No further discussion.
Unanimous vote in favor: KK, AS, JT, DM, MM, DF. **Motion passes.**

Closing Verse

DF read the closing verse.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm.

Prepared by AS on 02.15.2023.