



MINUTES
VSWEA Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, April 19, 2023
VIA [Zoom](#)

Members Present:

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

John Tanner (JT)
Ben Fong (BF)
Nellie Grossenbacher (NG)
Ashley Parks (AP)
Myriah Mhoon (MM)

Members Absent: None.

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

Guests

Invitees of the Board:
Frank Mirizio (FM)
Michelle Kratzer (MK)

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

H
Tammy Lopez
Mike M

Deb
P. Cummings
JJ

Opening Verse/Introductions

Meeting was called to order at 6:34pm. 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 Our campus is on three separate lots. That's a tricky situation when it comes to fire drills. Explained the situation and Metro Fire's involvement. We may be changing companies if needed.

KK Is Metro Fire compensating us for not fulfilling their obligations?

FM We want to try to have Metro Fire fix the situation so we don't lose money on this. I'll continue to work on it with Steve and Hector and will report at the next meeting. I got an invite to the ACSA compliance summit. I will be attending next Tuesday. They'll cover budget, compliance for Sped, attendance, etc. I want to attend more of these on a regular basis.

FM I'm prepared to post the two new positions if they're approved. We have a grades position posted already. We've started interviews already. Capital projects: the AC unit in the front office went down, and the eurythmy room lost a fan. We got that fixed. The woodshop is coming along. Electrical and AC are going in. Bathrooms, lounge, and conference center at the high school are fully operational. The stage is wonderful. I invite you to the play this Friday. It looks so good. The cameras were installed but not working due to internet issues. We have a staff meeting tomorrow. I hope to present progress on contracts. Enrollment is at 286 for next year. We have 8 students filling out paperwork right now. We have a large tour next week. We're pushing the high school since that's where we have the most availability. Our next town hall is Thursday, June 8th. Our last town hall went well. It was small but comfortable. We were able to talk in an open forum. Prom and circus finale are April 29th. May Pole is May 1st. 8th grade is going to Milwaukee. The 12th grade is going on a trip. Graduation is coming up. KK, I hope you're able to speak as the board president.

FM Some information on E-Rate. It goes to small schools to help with their internet bills. We've been overpaying on our bill. We'll save about 18k. We have to have our contract through June 30th, and we start this new contract July 1st. The SRP grant covered new LED thermostats and LED lighting. We should see savings on being able to preprogram these thermostats. We have a fundraiser at the Hale Theater to see Beauty and the Beast. It's \$70 a ticket, and we're hoping to get some kickbacks from some local restaurants in the area.

DM The Glen Williamson event?

FM ACWE is hosting an event this Saturday at 6:30pm in the eurythmy room. Joan is hosting that for us. Is there a fee?

DM Yes, \$20 at the door.

FM I think they're expecting 30 people.

DF I'm curious about E-Rate. Is this an opportunity to upgrade?

FM We've been paying for 10 gigs, and we don't even have the cable to do that. I have a meeting with the companies involved tomorrow.

KK Is that something that Shawn can help facilitate?

FM I think I'm going to loop him in afterward. The expert will be with me to ask the tough questions. She knows the people at these companies by name.

KK I'd like to know how much we've been overpaying and for how long? I'm wondering if we have legal grounds to recoup some of that.

FM Dawn Palermo is the one helping me out. Christie signed the original contract. Dawn will see what we can do, but legally they do have a contract.

AS This contract was signed at the start of the pandemic when schools were shut down. I imagine it was frenzied because kids and teachers needed to have online access throughout the school day. It was probably a very complicated situation.

FM Yes, that's right.

NG When is the senior play and what is it?

FM I'm not sure when, but I know it has accents.

AS The Importance of Being Ernest.

DM Let's make sure that information gets out to the community.

FM I'll take care of that.

Parent Council and Animal Care

MK We'd like to continue forward movement with getting our own bank account. We'd like some guidance from the board for that. Parent Council is working on our shed organization. A huge thank you to Mr. Camacho who has helped us with that. May 1st is the in-school BBQ luncheon. It will be after the May Pole. We will not be prepping during the performance, so everyone should be able to watch. We do not have totals yet from Spring Faire. In May, we meet for presentations and voting for funding and leadership. May 2nd at 7pm is our presentation meeting for funding requests. Our May 9th meeting at 7pm is the voting. Any parent who attends the May 2nd meeting is allowed to vote on May 9th. You must attend both in order to vote. We haven't sent out funding requests yet. Hopefully, we'll get our financial report soon and then we can send those out.

KK The board hasn't received our financial reports yet for March because we have some outstanding receipts, but I don't think that should be an issue for Parent Council so I will look into that. How can we help with the bank account situation?

MK Last year, we were given a couple of options for opening our own bank account. We chose to have a separate account under the Desert Marigold umbrella.

KK I'll have to review my notes from our meeting. Do you remember, FM?

FM To have their own 501c3 they have to have their own bylaws and elections. It's much more detailed and explicit. We don't have anything to do with this.

MK Currently, we're all in the same account, and we would like to have a separate account.

FM If I remember correctly, we can't do that. You'd need to have your own 501c3 to do that.

MK I don't remember the specifics of needing our own 501c3. I know we were given some options.

KK What are we solving for?

MK We just got a report for February yesterday. We don't have a report for March, so we don't know about Spring Faire. So that's part of the problem. Also, reading the reports is hard.

KK I know this has been an ongoing concern, so maybe we just need to sit down and meet to figure out where the disconnect is. In tandem, I'll also figure out what the options are with the help of Monique.

MK Is it possible to include DM in that conversation?

DM Yes, I can join in.

MM I'm curious if we aren't defining things that are already resolved. I'm hearing from FM that there aren't options for holding an account within DMS. I'm not sure what are questions versus facts.

DM What I'm hearing is that they simply want a separate account to simplify income and payments.

MK We just want to be able to view it. We don't need the authority to take money out or anything like that.

MM Thank you. I appreciate the clarification.

KK FM, would you please set up a meeting with the appropriate group to discuss this?

Marketing and Development Updates

KK Sophie cannot join us tonight, so I will go over her report briefly. The sustaining fund is going well. We are at about 44k. The overall participation rate is 36%. Our goal is 100% participation. 54 tax contributions in the amount of 16k. The class with the most tax credits will have a pizza party.

DM I know that some families cannot contribute, so please reach out to family and friends to see if they can donate their school tax credit to DMS.

Financial Update

DMS Budget 2023

KK We do not have our financial statements for this month yet. We have some credit card receipt issues. FM, I'm sure you're on the offenders and trying to wrangle up the receipts.

FM She has all the receipts, but she needs specifics for accounting purposes. Sometimes, the people using the credit cards don't write exactly what the items are for. We're working on it.

KK Not to be harsh, but the next logical step is pulling credit cards.

FM You're right. The logical solution is to pull credit cards, but then that causes issues too.

MM Have you used Divvy? We use Aspire, and Divvy is an app that helps us out a lot.

FM I will look into that.

KK Shared her screen to show the revised budget for 2023. We overestimated our enrollment numbers, so we needed to revise. So we will need to approve and sign the new form through DocuSign. Please make sure you sign it when it comes your way.

FM The new enrollment number for this budget is 290.

KK For next year's budget we're budgeting for 290 as well. We're on track for our budget.

KK moved to approve the DMS revised budget for 2023 reflecting a decrease in enrollment from 300 to 290. DM approved. Unanimous vote in favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, MM, DM, AP. **Motion passes.**

Proposed Motions

BF Explained the update in the employee handbook regarding bereavement.

BF moved to amend the Employee Handbook under "Bereavement" to read as follows "Time off with pay that is not deducted from regular PTO may be granted..." AS second. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, MM, DM, AP. **Motion passes.**

FM AS, will you please send me that motion so I can make those changes?

AS It's on the agenda, but I can send that to you. I'll email it.

7:35pm John Tanner joined the meeting.

KK moved to approve the 03/22/23 regular board meeting minutes. NG second. No further discussion. Votes in favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, DM, AP, JT. Abstain: MM. **Motion passes.**

KK moved to approve the 03/22/23 Executive Session meeting minutes. NG second. No further discussion. Votes in favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, DM, AP, JT. Abstain: MM. **Motion passes.**

KK moved to go into Executive Session for discussion of the salaries of our two new positions, the children's internet protection act, longevity stipends and retaining of staff. I invite Frank Mirizio into the session. AS second. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, DM, MM, AP, JT. **Motion passes.**

Executive session began at 7:38pm.

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 8:55pm.

KK We have some motions to make.

8:56pm John Tanner left the meeting.

KK moved to approve the description and salary for the SPED position. DM seconded. No further discussion. Unanimous votes in Favor: KK, DF, AS, JT, BF, NG, DM, AP. **Motion Passes.**

KK moved to approve the fundraising position with Mr. Mirizio making some of the changes we discussed to the title, qualifications, and salary in executive session. DF second. No further discussion. Unanimous votes in Favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, DM, MM, AP. **Motion Passes.**

KK moved to approve the longevity stipends, the current employee staff retention increase, and the classified staff increase proposed in the document shared in executive session. MM second. No further discussion. Unanimous votes in Favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, DM, MM, AP. **Motion Passes.**

Continuing Business/Open issues

Substance Abuse Program

FM Ms. Deitz is working with various classes. Our Waldorf contact, Sarah, will be working with us in late September or early October.

Survey Update Discussion/5/19 Go Live

AS You're up next, DM.

DM Any questions?

AS I didn't get a chance to read through it. It arrived late today. Quite frankly, I was expecting it directly after the last meeting, so I didn't think it was coming today. I'd like to move this topic to our next meeting--our special meeting. That would give everyone time to review it, send notes to DM, and then we can approve it at our next meeting.

DM It's the same as before. I made a copy of it. You are all collaborators now.

KK I like AS's idea. That will give us time to review it and move forward.

New Business

Board Meeting Schedule

KK Our board meeting schedule—everyone is here.

DM I'm not available on Tuesdays.

MM What happened to Wednesdays?

AS We discussed the possibility of changing the meetings to another day because we were losing a lot of people.

DF I'll be moving in late July, but I'm keeping the same job so the timing of my work meetings is staying the same. I can make Wednesdays work. I just might miss part of the meeting.

AS Okay, so I will update the schedule with Wednesdays, and we can approve that at our next regular meeting.

Announcements

KK Our Board Applicant Interview meeting is on 5/3/23 at 6:30pm via zoom. Our next regular board meeting is 5/17/23 at 6:30pm via zoom.

KK moved to close the 04/19/23 board meeting. BF second. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor: KK, DF, AS, BF, NG, DM, MM, AP. **Motion passes.**

Closing Verse

AP read the closing verse.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm.

Prepared by AS on 04.19.2023.