

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
TUESDAY JUNE 28, 2016 – 6:00 P.M.**

**Board Members Present:** Liz Coenen, Kristen Campbell, Andrea Galdames, Eve Lo, Julie Richards, Jane Reilly, Melissa Santrach, and Liesl Taylor

**Board Members Absent:** Juliann McDermott

**Other Attendees:** Chris Bewell, Sandy Schmidt, Amanda Cina

**Meeting Called to Order by Liz Coenen, Board Chair, at 6:04 pm**

**AGENDA**

**Public Comment Period:** None

**Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

- Liz asked if there were any additions or changes to the agenda;
  - Strategic Board Work Session moved to July when we have the new board seated.

**KRISTEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EVENING’S AGENDA; EVE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- Based on the approved agenda, Liz asked if anyone had any conflicts of interest with the evening’s agenda. None were disclosed.

**Acceptance of Minutes**

- Liz asked if anyone had changes to the May meeting and Annual meeting minutes; none were offered.

**KRISTEN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MAY 2016 MEETING; ANDREA SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**EVE MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE 2016 ANNUAL MEETING; KRISTEN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Head of School Evaluation Committee Report – Jane Reilly**

*Liesl stepped outside for this part of the meeting.*

- Jane summarized the evaluation. Jane noted that the report was presented to Liesl in February. No surprises to anyone
- Jane suggested that we look at revising the HOS Evaluation process to make it more meaningful. While our current process is good, we have grown and matured as a school. The process could be improved to provide historical context and consolidated accountability data.
- Liz mentioned that she recently attended a meeting, sponsored by a new local charter school management company (CharterSource), of charter school leaders regarding Head of School review and evaluation. During the meeting, a template was shared that effectively addressed many of these concerns. Liz and Liesl will look at this tool over the summer.

- Jane's term on the board ends June 30, so there is an opening on the Head of School Evaluation Committee. No experience needed! Interested board members should contact Liz.
- Liz thanked Jane for her excellent service on this committee and her work on developing and managing the Head of School Evaluation Survey.

*Discussion of Liesl's contract ensued.*

- The CMES portion will be \$42,487, or 65%. This is a 1% increase from last year, which is the same as for all staff. The Montessori Center of Minnesota will pay the remaining 35%. All other terms of the contract are the same as the previous year: Liesl is eligible for all benefits offered by CMES, she will have 3 weeks of vacation to be coordinated with MCM and approved by CMES board chair, she will have Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, and 6 major holidays off as paid holiday and she will have 7 sick /personal days (PTO)
- CMES will reimburse \$600 toward Professional Development activities during the 2016-17 academic year.

**JULIE MADE A MOTION TO EXTEND AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT TO LIESL TAYLOR FOR THE POSITION OF CMES HEAD OF SCHOOL FOR THE 2016 – 2017 SCHOOL YEAR. CMES WILL PAY 65% OF THE CONTRACTED SALARY OR \$42,487 AND ALL OTHER TERMS OF THE CONTRACT AS STATED ABOVE; EVE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Liesl returned to the room.*

#### **Head of School Report – Liesl Taylor**

- Liesl reported that we will have a roster of amazing people for 2016-2017. While there are always challenges in transitions, there is also lots of positive energy.

**MELISSA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE STAFF ROSTER FOR FY17 AT BUDGETED SALARIES. EVE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

*Liesl described the 2016-17 Budgeting Process and Rationale*

- We need an Administrative Assistant to help with paperwork and tracking
- We need to increase the hours of our Literacy Specialist to full-time and serve children from third through sixth grade
- This will give Liesl the opportunity to support teachers as needed and spend more time in classrooms, primarily assisting with math work
- School-based mental health services have had profound positive impact on our children. We need more of this for children not on IEP's. Additional funds will also provide staff training, care, and debriefings. The provider will define and track measures of success.
- Professional development dollars are allocated differently in the new budget; rather than having everyone attend AMI Refresher Course every year, it is now an optional training, and the allocated money can roll over to the next year so that the teachers can accumulate enough professional development funds to fully cover the course. Those who attend will share the information with the others.

- Sponsorship dollars should be used for teacher-trainee candidates who are fully committed to our mission. The individuals we will sponsor are already working successfully with some of our most challenged students and are making a difference.

### **2016 – 17 Budget Presentation – Sandy Schmidt**

*See FY17 Preliminary Budget and Long Range Planning document*

- Sandy commented that the Finance Committee worked really hard to support the organizational goals as prioritized by Liesl.
- FY17 enrollment is budgeted at 135. This is a realistic number.
- The Budget Cover sheet has the details.

*Sandy walked through the budget pages.*

- This budget leaves us a little short of our fund balance policy goal of 20% of expenditures, but the projected fund balance is still healthy, at 18% of expenditures, or \$314,120.
- Liz commented that the 20% fund balance goal was primarily motivated by the former state holdback of 40% of our funds. Liz said that this budget allows us to meet our goals, plan for unexpected events, and still be a responsible steward of public funds.
- We expect to hit the 20% fund balance goal in FY19, and we anticipate that we will stay at that level.
- We may want to ask our auditor what an appropriate fund balance is for the future, given a 10% holdback. What is the appropriate amount of money to save (vs. spending a little more on educational programs)?
- Liz thanked Sandy for guiding us in this process and helping us focus on our organizational priorities.

**MELISSA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FY17 BUDGET WITH REVENUE OF \$1,839,801, EXPENSES OF \$1,831,310, AND REVENUE OVER EXPENSES OF \$8,491. KRISTEN SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **Treasurer's Report – By Melissa Santrach**

*See Finance Committee minutes; additional comments and actions follow:*

- With regard to the May financials, Melissa commented that we continue to track on budget with a healthy cash flow. There are no issues or concerns.

**MELISSA MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MAY 2016 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS; ANDREA SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- The new FY17 lease addendum with the Montessori Center of Minnesota must be approved. There are no changes in any of the other terms of the lease, but the lease amount is enrollment-based. FY17 enrollment is set at 135 students, resulting in a lease cost of \$197,100.

**MELISSA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2016-2017 LEASE AMOUNT OF \$197,100, WHICH WILL APPLY TO THE LEASE PERIOD FROM JULY 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017; ANDREA SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- We have totaled the donations for the year and need to approve:  
**MELISSA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE DONATIONS OF \$1,056.47 OF AMAZON, TARGET, AND BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION, AND \$2629.12 FROM THE APRIL 30, 2016 FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST. DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM THE FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST WILL BE DEFERRED TO FY17. SECONDED BY EVE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- We received notification on June 8<sup>th</sup> that we will be receiving Tier II E-Rate funds for FY16 in the amount of \$5280. Liesl and Chris recommend that we use these funds for installation of a school-wide security PA (Public Address) system to communicate with the classrooms in the event of an emergency. The system would be installed in August.  
**MELISSA MADE A MOTION TO COMMIT \$5280 FROM FY16 BUDGET TOWARD INSTALLATION OF SECURITY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IN AUGUST, 2016. MOTION SECONDED BY EVE. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **Governance Committee Report and Strategic Planning Discussion – Liz Coenen**

*See Governance Committee minutes; additional comments and actions follow:*

- Melissa shared her experience at various East Side Area Business Association (ESABA) events. These events are community-building networking events and are beneficial for community outreach and allow us to connect with local community members who may someday be interested in serving on a Cornerstone committee or serving on our Board.

#### **Director of Business Operations – Chris Bewell**

*See report; additional comments follow:*

- We are still receiving a few applications every week for the 2016-2017 school year.
- Cornerstone is a summer food truck site for children's lunches, served Monday – Friday at 12:20 pm. The food looks healthy and fresh, and is free to all children – no questions asked. This adds visibility to our school and meets an important community need.

#### **Strategic Board Work Session**

- Discussion: Board Culture, 2016 – 17 Officers  
*Tabled until July.*

#### **Other Business**

- Liesl recently returned from the Montessori Social Justice conference in Cambridge, MA. It was an outstanding conference and much was gained that will benefit Cornerstone.
- Liz thanked Eve and Jane for their board service. Their voices will be missed as we move into the next stage of our organizational development.
- Liz also thanked Amanda for attending!

#### **Next month's agenda**

- Discussion: Board Culture, 2016 – 17 Officers

#### **Adjourn**

**JANE MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:43 PM; EVE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

***Respectfully Submitted by Melissa Santrach, CMES Treasurer***

**Next meeting is July 19 at 6:00 p.m.**