

**MSSPA BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
November 17, 2005**

Present

Eryn Warne
Tom Richards
John Montilino
Katie Lee
Dave Mahler
Karen Charles
Alan Schwartz
Bill Pierro
Lori Suvalsky
Chuck Mogilevsky

Absent

Betsy Maloney

Meeting was called to order at 7PM

Agenda reviewed – Tom moved to accept, Chuck 2nd motion – all voted to accept agenda
Bill requested addition of discussion of foreign exchange students

Minutes were reviewed – Lori moved to accept, Tom 2nd motion – all voted to accept minutes; only addition was Eryn clarified spelling of her name

Old Business

1) Lori has not yet been able to connect with anonymous donor of NPR money to request that we use money in another way, given expense of this form of advertising; will still be used for advertising – Lori will follow up for next meeting

2) Lease update: Karen and Tom met with lease people from church. They need our 2004/2005 budget, their budget is tight, as well so we may have to give up space in order to adjust lease to range we can afford. This would put us in a bind space-wise –

>if we give up 2 rooms, we would save \$39,000/year

>if we give up 4 rooms, we would save \$78,000/year (\$6-7,000/month) – this is equal to our deficit

They will be able to tell us what they can do for us when they see our budget. They are probably not going to tie the lease to student #'s but may decrease the amount owed now & tack this on to the end of our lease. They are willing to work with us but there is still no solution.

If we can't afford to add staff next year, we will not be able to add 12th grade to the school.

Members suggested that we ask the church if they have anyone with marketing background that is a member who may be interested in being on our board. This would help with lease negotiations, as well as advertising/marketing. If not on the administrative board of church, do not believe this will be a conflict of interest. Katie offered to look into recruiting someone for this.

3) Policy and procedures: Karen asked that we look at this – especially vacation time for staff members who are not teachers. Katie asked if it is meant to be 4 weeks of non-contract time of actual vacation time. Chuck was able to work only on part of policy that addressed vacation time if employment is terminated with time accumulated because he had no example to work from. Katie will get him Hopkins policies to use for basis for comparison.

4) Financial report: Some of money owed on report is because Title IX money is not here yet – it is predicted to come 12/15/05. Currently, we are \$75,000 in the red projected for the end of the year. This does not account for the chemistry lab expenses. We have a problem in that we have incurred some \$50-60,000 in “stuff” to go against this grant. Since we obtained the “stuff” prior to the money coming in, we cannot use the grant money to pay for these items. May be able to juggle other items around to decrease this difference, per Dave. Dave has \$20,000 worth of ideas that he may still be able to juggle around – this assumes we have to continue to pay full rent. It would be much better if we are able to make some deal regarding the rent for this year, at least.

We reviewed different scenarios with different student numbers and how the budget would look in each case (correction to Dave’s number in handout – next year predict 225, not 265.) Budget will not work with 225 but could make it work with 240 rather than 265. In terms of space, total number of students we can handle (if staffed appropriately) is more likely 350, rather than our original plan of 410.

Still need to come up with 3 year plan for how will get out of statutory operating debt to tell the state. Hopefully, Chuck from the State will be able to come to our December meeting to hear our plan.

New Business

1) Leasing school space – most likely in summer. There have been some inquiries. We will use Stages type agreement to model after. Have to be sure our insurance covers; any parameters we should set. We need to write a policy to set parameters that does not discriminate. Our shield could be that the building is owned privately and they can set some limits on who rents space, though we are a public entity. Our lease does cover us to sublet space. Katie was able to pull up Hopkins policy and rates for an example when we are working on our policy. It encourages use to promote community, leaving to the school what is appropriate use of space, including that the building’s purpose is for education. The 2 inquiries Karen has gotten include a group of jazz musicians/physician and the mother of one of our students who teaches ballroom dance.

We will need a rental agreement, policy, and scheduling, as well as insurance coverages. Karen will work on getting more information on these things for next meeting, then we will work on the agreement.

2) Foreign exchange student: Jackie Passer asked about us taking an AFS. Per Katie, the state does not provide funding for these students, as it is expected that one of our students would be going to the country the student is from and the funding would be an even exchange. Essentially, if we do not send one to their country, the student would be “a free loader.”

3) Marketing update: Letter to send to parents and community members requesting donations shared with everyone. Nick Pierro wrote up a list of Barbra Streisand facts to make a case for why it would be better to put her name in the letter instead of Bonnie Rait. All agreed he had made a good case & all agreed to change the letter to Barbra Streisand.

We got \$1000 from the Haunted House and \$1000 from McVay Foundation. 1 parent saw in the newsletter that we would be sending out ask letters and already sent in a check for \$200. Bill is working on developing a reply device to include in the letters & Lori and Bill will work on getting the mailing out.

4) Reviewed upcoming performance dates. Stages donated a director for the theatre performance for a while because of William Leaf’s brother dying. This was a big help for the students and William. The board expressed appreciation to John for doing this.

5) Police were at the school yesterday because the math teacher’s keys were lost/stolen. The building will have to be re-keyed, as the keys were not found. The math teacher offered to pay for this, as it is not clear if he had a role in their being lost because of leaving them out.

6) Administrator update:

- > Halloween Haunted House will probably be an annual event
- > Calhoun Square invited us back – this will be free press. Date not announced.
- > Computer lab install date is 11/21/05
- > Recruitment/marketing – may get some students 2nd semester, applications are coming in and shadowing has been very consistent – 2 students ~every other day
- > Will ask current students for commitment for next year in January or February
- > Chuck Speiker from the State re: our operating debt will be coming to our meeting in December if possible. May require meeting to be earlier. Karen will update.
- > Staffing issues – still have issues with the math teacher, though he presents much better with adults than with kids (did well at the PTO meeting). Still informally calling around. He is still behind on material.
- > Our special ed teacher needs are more like 2.0 FTEE and Samantha is pregnant so will need a temp when she is on maternity leave
- > Transportation – busses are getting better but still are occasionally late – won’t be adding more busses next year but will be maintaining what we have

- > Accreditation – application submitted to NCA to start process, need a retired administrator to help us prepare for site visit next fall. Katie suggested Ron Chall, the principal of the high school, since he is retiring this year. He would chair the committee. It will not be a very big time commitment. Katie will ask him.
- > Curriculum – working on developing internship program, Betsy and Amy attended MDE workshop. Karen also has to renew her license. Has to get someone to verify her work – not sure who this should be, but she will find out. Likely it will be Bill, but may be someone from our sponsoring district, Hopkins.
- > Karen went to a meeting on Monday with Perpich to discuss working together rather than being each other's competitors. Also met the director of the St. Paul Conservatory. Meeting was very positive.

7) Dave asked if we have had a meeting with parents about drugs and alcohol based on the MN survey. Told him about mental health PTO meeting (speaker). Also reviewed our policy on dog searches. Main goal is to get parents more involved so they will be more aware. Katie discussed the grant Hopkins had for "Reduce the Use" – gave names of resources for this sort of presentation.

8) Discussed potential new board member – Lynn Plashko is helping us to find someone at General Mills who is in HR or marketing.

9) Clear Channel can't donate money now but would donate items for a silent auction.

10) Katie – as sponsor, Hopkins needs to do an evaluation of school – working on details. This will likely occur early next year.

Next meeting date: needs to be rescheduled so Dave can be there when Chuck from the State comes.

Tom moved to adjourn meeting, Lori 2nd motion – all agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37PM.