

MSSPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
October 27, 2005

Present: Bill Pierro
Lori Suvalsky
Erin Warne
Betsy Malone
Chuck Mogilevsky
Tom Richards
Alan Schwartz
Karen Charles

Absent: Dave Mahler
Jon Montilino
Katie Lee

Meeting was called to order at 7:10PM

Introduction of new member

Erin Warne (language arts teacher)

Introduction of guest

Anne Hadaad

Announcements

Melissa Cohen resigned from the board

Have not had Hopkins rep at last several meetings – Bill will call Katie Lee

Review of agenda

Lori moved to approve; Tom seconded – all approved

Review of minutes

Lori moved to approve; Tom seconded – all approved

Grant updates

Anne updated us on current applications being worked on or sent out – submitted to X-Cel Bank, Clear Channel (moving forward), Best Buy (\$2500 gift card and \$15,000 grant), Thorpe Foundation, working on Cargill Foundation, final report submitted to General Mills (last year gave \$10,000)

Currently more money is available for arts education – focusing on music and trying to focus on funds for FAME

Main work currently is on a solid application (templated) that can be used for many grants, working off prospect list as well – using conservative approach

Need to develop relationships with organizations – if you know contacts, please give names/numbers to Karen, Anne will e-mail list of company board members of potential donors for us to review so we can find out if we know anyone to be a contact

Goal is \$80,000-100,000

Letter writing campaign

Bill discussed need for focus for letter and resources for database to mail letter out – discussed how to use last years letter to help inform this years, Anne suggested personalizing letters and sending a separate letter for people who gave last year and another for those who are new, whether or not match should be included, consider adding a student quote – Erin offered to help with this

Goal is to send letter by November 15, 2005 to avoid holidays but be on people's minds during the holidays

Marketing

Karen – FAIR school presentation went well – got 6-8 shadow students and several applications as a result, helped to be able to say transportation would be available, will be able to do this each year, in spring will be able to bring an excerpt from FAME

Reviewed Annual Report Karen had forwarded for discussion – no specific questions raised

Info meetings scheduled slightly later – last year wasn't useful to have too early

Beginning to accept applications for next year on November 15, 2005 – can apply on line and in print

Surveys show that best marketing was ads in the Sun Sailor, also Star Tribune does a metro school guide – consider placing an ad there – passed around examples of sizes of ads and costs

Could have marketing through Clear Channel – radio – this is very expensive, they would guarantee 50% during prime time (called an "Image Membership") – goal is to get image out and advertise information meetings in January – board voted NO (too expensive)

Still have \$500 donated for marketing through \$500 – need to use this. Lori will ask donor if they would be OK with this money being used for marketing other than NPR

Board agreed that advertising should be concentrated after the holidays in January, also agreed that Star Tribune school guide would be a very good place to advertise

Can also use postcards from last year's mailing with show dates overlaid

Betsy wondered if money was available for a mailing for a flyer with performance dates before shows

Board agreed that our money would be best spent on Sun Sailor, Metro School Guide, mailing and later another mailing for FAME

All agreed we need to actively recruit for a board member with marketing experience

Enrollment Time Line

Begin accepting applications – 11/15/05

Info meetings January until March

Application deadline (soft) – 3/15/06 (required by charter law)

6/3/06 – workshops for new students

Staffing

Budget higher for salaries than Dave predicted in order to add 12th grade – leaves us >\$73,000 in the red (would support enrollment of 225-250)

Betsy asked about seeking a project specific grant to support a position

Karen would like to post earlier – last year waited too long and quality of applicants was not as good as could have been – even though we do not yet have deficit in budget resolved, would like approval to post earlier – this level of staffing is a necessity (wants to post 4 positions in 2/06) – not obligated to hire if money not there – all board members approved posting

Includes a paraprofessional – essential for special needs students, lunchroom supervision, etc. – we have just as many students on 504 plans as special ed – no extra funding for these students, need to try to afford 2 counselors for this reason

Karen would like to propose a title change for administrative assistant

Need to discuss what number of students we can accept based on our space capacity

Have had problems with math teacher – Karen working with him weekly on classroom management, inaccurate grade reporting, not covering curriculum, ?harrassment issues, have requested a formal plan to show how he will catch the class up; considering putting him on probation but then has to formally do something whether or not there is someone to replace him – Karen asked for board input on this, agreed to hold off on formal probation for now – has been informally asking around, posting early may help with finding someone for this year if needed. Have thought about asking Alison Maud-Halin to help with BST preparation

Budget

Deficit related to staffing discussed above

Biggest factor in deficits is onerous lease – Tom will continue to work with Karen and church on this

Alan requested more info on law re: statutory operating debt – can't be >2.5% in debt, first report looked like we were 19.5% in debt but after checking it became clear this had to do with Hopkins bookkeeping errors – after correction we may be in the allowable range – need to come with a 3 year plan to get out of debt with the State – Karen, Bill, Dave and Alan will work on this in Dec or Jan – Karen would like to ask Chuck from the State to come to meeting in Nov or Dec

Questions about budget presented – why is Federal Grant Phase II in expense but not in income?

Budget not yet reconciled

Chuck requested that budget sheet be forwarded ahead of meeting so that we have more time to review

Karen reviewed misprint in Tribune – reported we raised \$6,000,000 – former students started spreading a rumor that Karen had misappropriated these funds, now spreading among current students – board reviewed potential remedies, Karen not in favor of making a big deal of it but did request Tribune print correction & will consider announcing to students that this was misprint and referring them to correction

School Policies

Chuck reviewed process that he and Bill went through

- Harrassment and Violence policy – need to specify physical violence as well – once changed, Tom moved to approve, Lori 2nd, all approved acceptance
- Hazing policy – needs to be up to date of MN Dept of Ed and Title IX – Tom moved to accept, Alan 2nd, all approved acceptance
- Gift policy – need an official policy in order to manage gift of stock we received worth ~\$2780, reviewed policy (can't hold as stock, must cash out) – Lori moved to approve, Betsy 2nd, all approved acceptance
- Reviewed policy on board titles – Bill cannot be considered “chair” – must be “president”, Chuck cannot be considered “vice-chair” –must be “vice-president” – Betsy moved to approve, Lori 2nd, all approved acceptance
- Need to look at personnel policy manual soon (before Jan) – Karen requested this
- Need to look at board indemnification policy – Tom offered to look at the statute mentioned – Tom moved to accept, Lori 2nd, board approved as is pending anything that needs changing from Tom's review – Alan questioned if insurance money is appropriate to cover anything that may happen

Other business

None noted

Adjourned at 9:15PM

Next meeting Thursday, November 17, 2005