

MINUTES
VSWEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 01, 2021
VIA [Zoom](#)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kerstin Kubina (KK)–President
April Sauer (AS)–Secretary
Dan Franks (DF)–Treasurer
John Tanner (JT)
Danielle Martinez (DM)

Nellie Grossenbacher (NG)
Ben Fong (BF)
Myriah Mhoon (MM)
Scott Edwards (SE)

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)
Emma Carrera (EC)

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

- Morgan Davis
- Nicole Goodman
- Amy Edwards
- Tammy/Tom
- Deb
- JJ
- Adeline Carrera
- Barb
- Deborah Allen
- Helena Moriarty
- Angelina Hart

12.15.21 Approved

- Laura Heaney
- Barnaby McGillacuddy III
- Sami Rank

OPENING VERSE / INTRODUCTIONS

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

The Board members introduced themselves along with FM, MK, and EC.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

FM We have a new sign for our high school and some special gravel for the parking area in front of the high school. We're trying to bring attention to the high school. We have an 8th grade orientation next week where they will spend the day with the high school. We have a parent night coming up for 8th grade parents to learn more about the high school. We have an alumni coming as well to speak. They currently are in the honors program at ASU. That is Ms. Wahbeh, and we're excited about that. Next week we have the spiral walk as well. We are pressing forward. No cases of Covid on campus this week, so we are moving forward with our activities.

STUDENT COUNCIL

EC We will be having a bake sale and all proceeds go to the high school prom. We are planning another bake sale in January as well. Yesterday was Giving Tuesday. Paula Cummings and Megan Kelsy decided to make it Giving December and want to hold a drive for a women's center—the Hope Center. The drive will start next Monday to 12/15 and ask parents to donate at least 100 items each of what they need. Student Government will collect and donate. We have about two weeks to get those items. That's our plan for Giving December. Prom will be in March. Ms. Lee wanted it to happen earlier so that we can get photos into the yearbook. We are raising money so that we can rent a space.

DM How do you feel about the updates to the high school?

EC I have to thank Mr. Hector and Mr. Pawlo for the courtyard. I love it. I'd love to see it extended into other areas in the future. We'd like to be in a more central area for everyone to hang out. I think the sign looks great, and the grass looks amazing. It made the area more vibrant. It would be cool to get more art or murals. In the past, classes have done murals.

KK It's so great to hear what the high school student government is working on. Thank you for coming.

FM Thank you for inviting EC tonight. You can see that she is a high energy person and so great.

KK EC, you're welcome to stay at the meeting, but you can also bow out if you'd like.

EC Thank you. I will be heading out.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE CONTINUED

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FM The Medieval Games are still happening, and we're working on planning still. Hopefully at the next board meeting I'll have more information. I also want to talk about the Virtue of the Month Program. Our theme this year is First Class, and we want to run with that and point out students and staff who are going above and beyond. We met today with several nominees. 4 students, 1 teacher, and 1 staff member will be named as having embodied the Virtue of the Month. The last thing is that I will go into the classrooms and award students in front of their classes to thank them for the virtue they are displaying. I will have a lunch with those students as well so that I get to spend some time with these individuals. We're just trying to create something that recognizes wonderful behaviors and virtues. I credit the LDC for coming up with this idea that goes hand in hand with Waldorf. We're happy to do something positive.

KK That's wonderful, thank you. I'm excited to hear about Medieval Games as well.

Approval of 301 Plan

FM The board needs to approve the plan that the 301 Committee put together. It looks almost identical to last year's. We only added a few more items for points. Do you have any questions? You can raise your hand if you'd like a brief explanation of 301.

FM Prop 301 is a special tax collection that only goes to classroom teachers who are qualified teachers. Its almost bonus pay for those who are employees for at least half the year, you're in good standing with the school, etc. The money comes to us from the state depending on the size of our staff. 40% goes to teachers who qualify, 40% goes to lowering class size to hire extra teachers or extra staff for electives, then 20% can be used for supplies and things teachers need. This past year we gave \$3400 or so to our qualified staff. I think it was about 16 who were highly qualified or state certified and in good standing with the school and serving on committees. That's it in a nutshell. It's still on the books for another 5 years.

DM Do we currently have anyone on a PIP plan?

FM No, not right now. We haven't finished evaluations for this semester. Any teacher who has a PIP will have the opportunity to work through that to improve.

DM Do all the teachers have a say in the outline?

FM The committee comes up with the plan and the teachers get to vote to approve it. There's were no no votes, but there were abstentions.

DM How does this compare to other schools?

FM In other schools there are board members, administrators, and teachers on it, and the staff on the whole approves it. There's no levy on the 40, 40, 20. And it only goes to classroom teachers. Example, no assistant principals, librarians, counselors.

DM Does that exclude our specialties?

FM No, it doesn't exclude them.

DM What about the test qualifications?

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FM Those are the tests they have to take to become highly qualified in the state of AZ. That is how you prove competence.

DM Thank you, FM.

Approval of Minutes

DM I think in order for our new members to vote, we need to approve our meeting minutes first.

KK moved to approve the 11/17/21 Meeting Minutes. DM second. No further discussion. Votes in favor: GS, AS, DM, DF, KK, NG, JT. Abstain: MM, SE, BF. **Motion passes.**

MM moved to approve the 301 Plan for the 2021-2022 school year. DF second. No further discussion. Votes in favor: KK, DF, AS, DM, NG, MM, BF. Abstain: JT, SE. **Motion passes.**

Enrollment

FM We are at 287. We have some touring, but we're not sure if they want to come now or for next year.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Refinance Update

KK RSF has not been able to match what Desert Financial is proposing, so we are going forward with an application to Desert Financial. I am currently working on filling out that paperwork in tandem with Gregory Schneider and DF. I'm sure I'll have some more updates as that progresses.

BOARD PROCEDURES

Date for Town Hall

KK We know we have lots of events coming up, so it makes it hard to schedule the Town Hall. FM and I will be there. Anyone else who wants to be there?

DM I'm happy to attend if needed.

NG I'm happy to as well.

MM Can it only be two or can we do more?

SE If there's an opening, I'd like to attend.

KK So we've got MM, DM, SE, NG, and FM and MK will be there as well.

MK Thursday is not going to work. Any chance we can move it to January? I'm hearing from parents that they're feeling overloaded.

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FM We can do whatever we want here. We can have three instead of four. Maybe that first week back, January 6th. Would we do it on Zoom or in person?

SE What's the best turn out?

FM Zoom, but you do lose that connection a bit. I think we need to do in person or on Zoom, not a combination.

NG I think it would be great to be in person and in January.

SE I think a face to face is the best option.

MM FM, how do you feel about in person if we get some cases due to family gatherings over the holidays?

FM I think in person would be best, but we can always switch it to Zoom if we need to. It would be great if the in person was in March due to weather, but that's okay.

DM Maybe a bonfire.

FM We could do that, and they usually last an hour, hour and a half, so people need to prepare to be chilly since we'll be outdoors. We have to sell it that way.

KK Do you think PC might be willing to share the coffee/tea pots so we can have some warm beverages?

MK Yes, I'm sure we can do that.

FM What time do we want to meet?

NG 5 is on the schedule.

MM I do know that when we have evening events, it can be an issue for those who live far away and have to come back. That can be a barrier.

FM We haven't allowed for Town Halls to have students, so I don't think we should have it so close to pick up. Unsupervised kids can be an issue. I think we had around 60 people on Zoom at the first Town Hall.

NG Before Covid, where were they held?

DM On campus around 7pm.

NG Are we opposed to being in the Eurythmy room?

FM I'm not opposed, but that fits 40 at max.

MM And that's without any social distancing.

FM It's possible that it'll be smaller since not everyone will be coming back in.

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MK We have had them outside, and it's difficult to see the screen, but there have been a lot of people at the last few town halls.

DM We had a PA system; that worked really well.

NG Didn't we get a PA system donated.

FM We did get a new PA system; it was donated by the Kerrs. Thank you, Kerrs.

SE Maybe we should alternate: one Zoom, one in person.

DF I like the 7pm time frame as well because it's after dinner, you can help with kids, and then head out.

KK Maybe in January we have Zoom since it's cold and then March can be in person.

FM I agree. That's very thoughtful. I think that works.

KK Okay, so January 6th 7pm via Zoom. It would be great to have some communication that we will be rotating.

FM I heard there were 5 board members, but we can only have 4.

DM January 6th is Three Kings Day.

FM January 4th, 7pm via Zoom, 4 board members on the panel. Would you like me to put that out publicly?

KK Yes, thank you.

DM Did we have a staff member at the last Town Hall?

FM Yes, we had Christie Martin. Do you want a staff member at this one?

DM Yes, absolutely.

FM I will see who can attend.

Advisory Roles

DF We had an idea when we had our last election. We had really good applicants, and we could see that specific people would be really helpful in particular roles. We could have people come to meetings to speak on particular topics in an advisory manner. This would be a more intentionally designed role versus just asking for community volunteers. We could take it as far as to have people apply to the role. We would create them based on priority. We'd explain the framework around it to help formalize it a bit. I thought it was an interesting thought and wanted to share it with the board. Some ideas for these roles: capital projects, digital marketing, festival logistics, grant management, etc. And, of course, board members could help with this as well.

MM I've always had more success if it's task force oriented, otherwise there's too many cooks in the kitchen or stagnation as far as synergizing and making sure it's working well within our

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bylaws. So I'm wondering if those topics are topics that need to exist 9-12 months a year or can we prioritize tasks that we can collectively honor an advisory group to conquer that task?

DF I think that makes sense. I think the advisory role would have a point person to help work on it and coordinate with the board to optimize communications.

DM I think it would be ideal, but I don't think we have enough items goaled out. I think once we get that settled that would be great to have that.

DF Is it worth putting more thought into?

DM Yeah, making sure we have priorities addressed.

SE I think as things arise we can expand it. I think it can be a very flexible dynamic and not burdensome.

KK DM, you bring up an interesting point about establishing goals. I think that's where we should start. I know Tom Lopez brought that up, so perhaps for next meeting's agenda we can add board goals and then do the framework for advisory roles going forward.

DF I like that.

KK Okay, I'll jot that down that we'll talk goals next.

NG Maybe we can all come to the meeting with some goals in mind that we'd like to accomplish.

DM FM, I'd like to hear from staff/faculty of their want items as well.

MM Would this be a broader or deeper planning on bringing in facilitation or are we just going to bring forth our ideas?

KK I think we need to start with board goals, something reasonable like 4 or 5 and then we chunk it down and list, then bring in an advisory person to head up those ideas. I want to make sure our goals are measurable, and that we can actually achieve them. If we get too many goals on our plan, we won't be able to achieve that and that will be demoralizing and ineffective. Ideally 5 goals for the board and then we can trickle down into other areas. Does that sound reasonable?

DF Yeah, 3-5. We don't want to bite off too much.

KK MM, what do you think? I know you've been on boards before.

MM Part of this group and being nine members, getting to five goals, building off our values and mission, our internal goals to make sure that they mirror the board goals that's a lot of work to get down to those five focus points that mirror what's going on with staff. I think if we're doing a strategic kind of goal orientation, we need to work in tandem instead of building silos of our own subjective thoughts or goals.

DF Is that what you were referring to when you mentioned having someone help with that process? That's what I thought—to keep that chaos from happening. Things can get contentious, and it's difficult to make progress.

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KK So for next meeting, let's start with some ideas, and we can brainstorm.

JT Do all the board members know what the school's mission statement is?

DM I do. Yes, I keep it with me. DM read the School Mission:

The mission of Desert Marigold School is to provide an educational context that emphasizes intellectual achievement and the imaginative, artistic, and moral growth of its students. By addressing their heads, hands and hearts, the school will encourage students to be lifelong learners and independent thinkers as well as self-motivated, self-disciplined, creative, adaptable and responsible individuals.

- We seek to establish and maintain a school that provides an individualized, nurturing approach and achieve the following goals:
- To ensure each child's excellence in core academic skills by providing a curriculum enlivened with the arts of painting, music, theater, movement, singing, sculpture and handwork
- To educate according to age and development, so that learning and growth are united.
- To present the curriculum in multiple and integrated ways, so students have many different opportunities to learn concepts, as well as see the relationship to the larger whole.
- To nourish the spirit of curiosity so that students continue to learn long after the end of formal training.
- To encourage fundamental values and life skills, including responsibility, perseverance, integrity, self-discipline, trustworthiness, craftsmanship, friendship and compassion.
- To make available this quality of education for all ethnic and socioeconomic sectors in our community.

JT Thank you, KK, for allowing that. I thought we should all hear that and keep it in mind as we set goals and make plans.

KK Agreed. Thank you for bringing that up.

DF We should also keep those 3-4 points from the bylaws in mind.

KK Would anyone be willing to write up a summary of that for us?

DF I can send out the bylaws objectives and purposes and the two mission statements.

KK Thank you, DF.

DBA Renewal

KK DM was good to catch that for us and followed through on that.

DM Filing time is 3-5 weeks. As soon as it's approved, they'll send an email to the payment portal.

KK Perfect, thank you. We will add the steps to that in the Board President Playbook that Gregory created for us.

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Mentorship

AS Everyone should have the direct link for the documents. There's a document called Mentorship, and it's meant for older members who have been asked to mentor a new member. We just wanted to get something in writing to follow Gregory's thought process of getting everything in writing. So these are ideas we put together to help the mentor know what to cover with new members. You can peruse that as a new member to see what should be covered as you're being mentored.

Board Calendar

AS We have three new board members. There's been some email chaos, but once you have access to your board email, you'll have access to all of these documents. There's a PDF of all the board meetings scheduled for this school year. The 2021 Quarterly Board Calendar has information that we look back on, we write reminders, details for reports. It's great to check that occasionally. I update it regularly and mark it when I do. It keeps us running smoothly. You can always ask me to add something to it if needed. Now we have our 2022 Board calendar. I did check that with Gregory before he left. It's up to date through the Spring and then it's blank dates until we set up our future meetings. One of the asks from the Contemplation Exercise was to have at least two board members attend each event. So please fill out the form for the Spring Semester, and I'll forward that to Bonnie and Frank so they know the Board will be following through on the request that was made of us.

DM Thank you for binging up the Contemplation. We are coming up to our 90-day renewal date, and we're getting ready to meet up again and check in on progress.

BF I don't have access to a lot of these documents. When I have access to my board email, I should access to these documents, right?

AS Yes.

MK PC gets on the agenda a bit, but not to report. Is there a way for the PC to give a report at the second meeting consecutively?

KK Yes, we can do that. I'll put you on the next agenda and have you on at the second meeting of the month going forward.

MK Great, thank you.

Tax Credit Update

KK DM, can you give us a tax credit update?

DM I have figures up until 10/31. I was hoping to have some Giving Tuesday updates. As of 10/31 Consumable Donations are up to \$20,000, Restricted Donations are at \$8000, Unrestricted Donations are at \$1848, and Tax Credit Donations are up to \$1675. They're lower than we like, but they are inching upward, so we appreciate that. In a normal year we'd have tax credits up to about \$10,000. We will never turn away a donation. There's no amount too small. We had our Parent Square posts that are pretty regular. We don't have a big social media presence. We've noticed that when we post to our FB we only get a few views. We were hoping to get some traction there. I can definitely use some more support for some social media outlets

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so I don't overload Laura Heaney. If there are any pictures or video snippets that would be great.

MM I'm not social media savvy, but I'd love to help build a social media calendar to get that started to hit on the sweet spots of the year. There are kits to use for that.

DM Thank you.

Spring Gala

NG Well, once I sent some information over, we learned that we wouldn't be able to get a liquor license for the school, so I'm currently reading through those guidelines. I'm hoping we can find a way around that.

DM Is there a loophole to have drinks across the street?

NG Or a BYB?

FM No, the state statute prohibits alcohol.

NG I'm digging through all the links to see if there's a special events licensing that we can get.

FM If you find that, great, if not, our own Barb has a warehouse that's too big for Prom. Why aren't we talking to her? I want 300-350 people.

MM Is the issue that school can't hold the license or is it that alcohol cannot be on campus?

FM Alcohol cannot be on campus. All it takes is one person to turn us in. At any rate, Barb Cunningham is an option. Let's talk to her.

DM Who has access to put things on PS or in an email blast?

KK I do.

AS I do for Parent Square. Not sure about email blasts.

DM One last announcement to please review Parent Square for Winter Faire volunteer opportunities.

NG MK, anything we need to know about Winter Faire?

MK Yeah, we just need people to sign up for their class booths and other volunteering. We also need everyone's Angel Room and Fish Pond items. 10 for each. That's mostly it, thanks.

DM And baked goods.

Mk Yes, baked goods. That's a sign up and volunteer position. Angel room and Fish Pond is requested of every family.

KK The next meeting is December 25th. We will have Joan Treadaway there, we'll have an update from Parent Council, and with that we'll close.

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KK moved to adjourn tonight's meeting. DM second. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor: GS, JT, AS, DM, NG, DF, KK, MM, SE, BF. **Motion passes.**

CLOSING VERSE

DF read the closing verse.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm.

Prepared by AS on 12.01.2021.