

MINUTES
VSWEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 06, 2022
VIA [Zoom](#)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kerstin Kubina (KK)—President
April Sauer (AS)—Secretary
John Tanner (JT)

Danielle Martinez (DM)
Nellie Grossenbacher (NG)
Ben Fong (BF)
Scott Edwards (SE)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gregory Schneider and Dan Franks

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

GUESTS

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

Members of the public present via Zoom/Registration through Google Forms:
Sophia McCurley
H
Laura Heaney
Kelsey Orosz and William Dyer
Deb
Kristen
Morgan Davis
Devon Hansen
Barb Cunningham
JJ
Sami

OPENING VERSE / INTRODUCTIONS

Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm. KK welcomed the public to the meeting, read the opening verse, and reviewed the agenda.

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

FM He was able to speak to the contractor, and one of the permits has gone through. He'll be meeting next week to determine when we can begin. He's hearing great things about the BBQ. It was a big hit, and a great way to kick off the spring. He met with Monique to work on the budget. Still waiting on news from the Governor's office. Hoping for an increase for the staff. Also, a heightened enrollment will help with funding. All positive news on the budget. Hopefully, by the next meeting or two he'll have final numbers on the budget. Wants to publicly thank our staff and front office for holding things together while he's out healing. Dr. Darian and the front office have been outstanding. He's grateful. Contracts went out to certified staff. This upcoming week, specialty teachers will get contracts, then classified contracts will go out the week after. 5 applicants for 2 ½ jobs. 2 are Waldorf trained teachers, so that's good news. Some teachers from Hawaii are interested in our school.

KK That's good news.

FM Prom went really well. It was off campus. Special thanks for Crystal Lee who's the student council sponsor for that class. The seniors pulled it off. And now we're winding down with end of the year events—May Day, Rainbow Bridge, graduation. And that's all I have.

KK FM, please feel free to pop off as needed and take care of yourself.

FM I will. I'll be available to answer questions as needed.

CONTINUING BUSINESS/OPEN ISSUES

Approval of Meeting Minutes

KK moved to approve the 03/23/22 Meeting Minutes. DM second. The following discussion took place:

DM It wasn't AS, but BF did a great job. Thank you.

AS Special thanks to BF for taking over the meeting minutes. I'm so grateful. It was wonderful not to worry about anything that day. Thank you.

Votes in favor: KK, JT, NG, SE, BF, DM. Abstain: AS. **Motion passes.**

Board Goals/Timelines

KK Reviewed previous topics regarding goals. Started with SE goal regarding transparency.

SE Hoping to work with DM to see how the public is feeling in hopes to see what else we can do to be more transparent.

MM I'm a bit critical about surveys. I want to think about it more.

SE What do you propose, MM?

MM I think there needs to be more clarity about what the goal is. A baseline? Or narratives? I think they are different.

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SE I'd like to broaden our sample size of community members expressing their views.

MM I think when tools are utilized, we need to have an end goal. It sounds like you want to get the temperature.

SE Yes.

KK I'd like to see the survey questions ahead of time. Make sure they're posed carefully. Open ended questions would be helpful.

SE I think we can think of those by committee.

KK Do you have a timeframe you'd like to do?

SE My situation is a bit crazy now, so maybe in two board meetings?

KK Maybe May 4 or 18?

SE I think that would work. DM, does that work for you?

DM Sure, but I'm thinking of having it on hand at the brunch and having a one on one.

AS I'm hesitant to have someone speak to individuals because then the board member has to report that and it's being filtered through another person.

DM Explained she'd hand out a questionnaire.

AS But then that individual would have to scan those and send them out to us. I'd rather everything be digital and all in one space so we all have access to it.

DM Decided on May 18th to have a survey ready.

KK NG wanted to move toward hiring more certified Waldorf teachers.

NG I've been talking with teachers and FM and Dr. Darian to see what we can do to hire certified Waldorf teachers and see that they loop. We are one of three Waldorf charters that go Pre-K through high school, and we have the opportunity to have a full school. Waldorf teachers are important

FM In the budget process, I'm looking for a few things: increase for staff and professional development training. We're really close to covering those costs.

NG I want to make sure we have emphasis on high school teacher training.

FM Yes, for the high school it's not by grade; it's by topic. We're carving out enough money to make that training possible. And, of course, this is on top of our own Waldorf training that we'll do this summer. I think that will be very helpful.

KK From a board goal perspective I want to make sure we're documenting and presenting on them.

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NG I'm offering support to FM. I think it's important to foster support for Waldorf teacher trainings. Supporting the teachers and ensuring that they're working well together.

KK Would it be helpful to have an LDC update occasionally?

NG I think that would be helpful. It would be nice to see if they need anything and see if they need any support from the board.

KK We can certainly ask. Would you like to take the lead on that and ask?

NG I'm not sure who's on the LDC.

FM Heather Sullivan, Jean Falconburg, JT, Christine Martin, Paula Cummings, and Dr. Darian.

NG Thanks, FM. She'll touch base and see if they'd like to join us at a meeting and give us an update.

KK Use strategic planning for the next 3-5 years. MM, how can we move that forward?

MM I don't feel like I'm the designated person to champion this planning. I think that would be for the president and executive director. We're trying to get the temperature, set goals, etc. I wouldn't champion that, but rather support it. I would like to see a solid document that we can be tethered to.

KK I am willing to champion that. FM, are you in?

FM Yes. Let's carve some time out and get started and update the board as we go along and get input from the board.

MM I think because we don't have this tool, there has been a lot of work and we're all doing the best that we can. There should be a place where we position the efforts that are being made. A lot of times, it feels like the credit isn't being taken, but we're making bold strides and that's great.

DM As far as I can remember, we've had a running long-range plan and a list of committees and what they're doing.

AS The last one I saw was from 2012ish. Since I joined the board, every board president has started and stopped this process, so I'll look through my stuff and send those documents on to you so you can have some templates to look at.

FM Please send that to me too.

KK Have May 4th meeting for Frank and KK to present an update: basic framework and beginning process.

AS I'll aim to get those documents to you both within a week.

KK The next item is AS and BF regarding a development director.

BF MM and I have been working on getting grants together in a spreadsheet. I submitted the first grant recently. Hopefully we'll get it. I think we're on track to putting something together. I

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think we need to develop a development plan for the year rather than event by event. I'd like it to be a more systematic fundraising effort. I also want to get some grant language together and then hopefully pass it off to someone to execute that plan.

KK Do you want to commit to any date to share the repository or plan for this?

BF Maybe it would be best to talk about the motion I have later, but I think it would be safe to say that we'll have something together by the end of the semester.

KK DM, you wanted to continue with the contemplation.

DM It would be helpful to review the matrix to see what we still need to do. The next meeting is April 13th. We plan to see who will continue and pushing forward to see what else we'd like to do.

KK So for a board goal, is it just checking off those items we should as a board?

DM Yes, that's part of the goal. Then seeing who would continue on and see what comes out of the April 13th meeting.

KK So I'm confused because I thought the contemplation was finished.

DM It's ongoing. The contemplation was designed to be ongoing and to improve communication To bring healing and renew community. It has always been voluntary to participate. We have also come out of 2 years with isolation. There will be more healing needed. This is the time to find others to continue the work.

FM KK, I agree with you that it was finished. My teachers feel the same, that there was a conclusion. I met with Barb and explained that staff is finished with the contemplation. Because it is done. They don't have a problem with someone in the pillars talking if something is going awry, but they do believe that it is completed. Perhaps, JT, can confirm my thoughts.

JT Thank you, FM. We miss you on campus. We pray for your swift recovery. I think you both spoke correctly. If there are staff members who want to participate it may have to go in a different direction with different staff members, but still people may want to continue to meet.

FM I agree that this was worthwhile and we enjoyed our time, but in terms of zoom meetings, I'm not sure that would continue.

MK I remember Teresa saying that we should continue on without her. I understand that some staff and parent volunteers may be done with it, but there are still other community members that can be brought into it.

MM I remember hearing more about accountability measures to keep the community accountable but not continuing to meet and doing the work of contemplation.

DM JT, are you familiar with the child study? Is there an end point when that occurs?

JT I'm not sure I understand the question.

DM The contemplation was based on the child study. Does that have an end point?

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JT A child study happens over three sessions. It starts and then it ends.

DM And what period is that usually?

JT It's usually over a three-week period. Explained a child study.

DM I will bring your thoughts forward at the next contemplation meeting on April 13th. We can decide as a group what the next steps should be or if we take it in a different direction. I do not want to speak on behalf of the group without their input.

MM If the board is in agreeance with me, I want to assure that credit is given for the work that's done. We need to honor that space. A lot of work is still happening, but I would like some closure regarding that work.

KK I like that. It's important to see that. But is this board work that we need to spearhead or is it community that moves forward? Like the event that just happened—that was beautiful.

JT Some Waldorf schools have a care group that does similar work to that of the contemplation. They look into things on a different plane. It's more of a college of teachers. That's an idea for the board or the school to consider. Just a thought to consider. Joan will know what that is if we want to check in with her.

KK Could that be a goal?

DM I don't want to make that decision. I want to go to the contemplation and discuss it. If the board feels like we've met the recommendations and feel as though we're completed then we may want to move in another direction.

Kk Perhaps on April 20th you can put forward those metrics.

DM Yes.

KK JT, your goal was compliance training and having a more educated board. I know AS has been working on some training.

JT I don't have any progress to report. As a sideline I'd like to reflect to the board that faculty has been working in unity to engage with the community. The results are the May Day offering. We're inviting the community to experience and enjoy the company of others and experience the May Pole. Faculty has some offerings, and FM has a surprise as well. That will be a Saturday morning 8:30-11.

FM JT, if I can add to that, this is something that stems from the three pillars at the contemplation. Parents wanted to be on campus and have events, and this is a perfect correlation of the staff picking a time and following through on that. It really shows that the staff is taking on this work and moving forward. This is a perfect example of that work coming together.

KK Is there anything we can do for metrics and timelines?

JT I don't want to put this on AS, but I'm grateful that she took that up independently. Years ago, the board did trainings with someone from the state. They helped us understand Open Meeting

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Laws and compliance. I was hoping to reproduce that experience. I want to make sure that we're compliant. I will do some research.

KK There's a lot going on.

AS I think ASBCS reinvented their trainings. They no longer come into schools for trainings that I know of, but they plan to expand on the training I received. Explained ASCBS training and plan to put files into a drive for all board members to have access to. Reviewing Open Meeting Law is always helpful. Checking ASBCS site and sifting through the files is helpful. I'm also writing step by step instructions for filing amendments so when I leave stage left, a new board member can open the file and know exactly what to do. So there is progress, but it's slow going.

KK JT, you had another goal regarding programming.

JT We are making progress, but middle school is complex in that the students need more activities. We're working on adding extracurricular activities and coming up with ideas.

KK Do we want to add a timeframe?

JT Well, perhaps when the budget is ready, we can see what's set aside for middle school and high school programming. I think we should evaluate that alongside the budget which is coming up.

KK DF put some items in a document, and I will get those in the drive for everyone. Additionally, my goal was to continue the playbook that Gregory started. AS spoke about that, and we're continuing that work. There's a lot of little things and questions that we can answer as we go.

AS It's day by day. As we trudge through the mud, we write it down.

KK If there's anything that you've taken on, please document it. We don't want anything falling through the cracks. I'd like to provide an update by the June 1st meeting.

Board Applications

KK We did not have any applicants, so we will not be holding interviews.

AS My term is up in November, and we don't have any applicants, which means the next secretary is currently in the Zoom room. Let me know if you're interested enough to put your name up for the position. I'm happy to start training now while I'm still here so there's a smooth transition.

Property Appraisal

KK \$3,860,000 appraised value of our property. That is double the loan amount and that is great news from a loan perspective. I'm signing the paperwork tomorrow and hopefully that will be buttoned up and squared away.

FM Great job, KK. I know that was a lot of work. This is a relief and wonderful news that our assessed value has gone up.

DM Thank you so much. I did not see the proposal from Desert Financial. Requested for review.

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DM and KK continued to discuss the proposal.

MM Thank you, KK. I know that was heavy lifting.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Education/ Upcoming Events

DM I've been dealing with some personal things, but now I've jumped right in. The Anthroposophical Café meets via Zoom every Friday. For March 18th, there was a great speaker. I recommend that presentation. It spoke to me about the outreach we want. Also, Waldorf Today had an article that inspired me. Wants to share some questions with us to discuss later. There's a study group starting tomorrow in AZ. It helps with personal growth. If you want a group setting, I invite you to check in.

NG I'd love to share those links.

KK Maybe via Parent Square or our official Facebook page.

MK We can send it through Parent Council. Board education falls under Parent Council anyway, so I'd be happy to share those. Laura can get that out on Parent Square as well.

DM I think this would help with transparency as well.

KK Anything else?

DM The replay option is helpful because you can look at specific talks. If you watch live, there's a lecture series and a breakout for discussions.

NG I want to say thanks to BF and MM for their work on grants. It's wonderful, and I have high hopes for the work that you're doing.

PROPOSED MOTIONS

Development Parent Volunteer

BF Let me read the motion first. "I move that Sophie McCurley be appointed Development Parent Volunteer, who will act as a liaison between Parent Council, the Board, and Administration to strategize and streamline fundraising." I want it as a motion to show that it's more than a parent volunteer, as she'll have more responsibility. Sophie approached me saying that she's interested in this work and has been doing research on charter schools and Waldorf schools. We need a development plan, and Sophie can help us think that through. She has the knowledge and capacity to help us. Sophie can work with MM and I and the board to begin planning that out.

FM KK, for those who don't know Sophie, I would put in a great word. I have been working with her all year. She is positive and bright, and she rolls up her sleeves to get to work.

SE What are the terms? Process?

BF There are no terms. I talked with her, and we're in agreement that this is work that will be handed off to a development staff person or director. Our work will be completed and handed

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off. I guess I want the motion to make it a specific position and give notice to all parties involved that she will be helping us. I don't think Sophie would be working alone. She'd work with MM and I, and we'd come to the board before anything is executed.

SE How do we undo it?

BF We can always undo it.

DM Do we have the capacity to do this? It's not outlined in our bylaws, powers, or objectives.

MM It's the same as the contemplation. It's an initiative to champion someone doing fundraising. We want someone who can lead fundraising from all facets of the community.

DM Is there a reason we're appointing someone versus talking with Parent Council or the community to see who they'd like.

MM There's a lot of details needed when doing grant work. We need help and she would help with that—coordinating that work. That would be helpful.

BF The simple way of framing this is that Sophie is willing to give a significant amount of time to this. Given that, and her research and proven track record at DMS, I think we should accept her help. This isn't a staff position. This is helping us formulate a plan. It's formalizing the acceptance. I see it as a formal acceptance.

DM If it's going to be a development director position that should be clear. I think it should be chosen from the community. I don't know why we'd lean toward one person.

AS Perhaps adding MM and BF to the motion would help to show that we're expecting her to report to you and then you'll report to us. Also, this motion is similar to the Advisory Panel that was creating when searching for an executive director. We approved those staff and parent volunteers, so we've done this before—approved volunteers for a specific task. We had meetings, I reported to the board via email, and gave updates at board meetings. This doesn't seem any different.

NG I spoke with Sophie, and she has a good game plan, and she's focused and motivated. She sees where many facets of the community are struggling, and she has the capability to reach out. Her goal is to see the school succeed. It may be let me help find grants, look for individual donations, I see it as a liaison developmental director. I think even if it's for a year, that would be helpful. I think we should accept the gift. She came to us with an offering. She's ready to deliver and help us, administration, and the community. I think it's amazing that someone wants to step up and help us.

BF To address a few things: in an email where Sophie and I corresponded, we talked about a few responsibilities: consulting admin/board, facilitating execution plan, supporting communication, leading interpersonal requests, volunteer requests, fostering ongoing stewardships. I see this plan as offering a bit more transparency and structure. Part of the hope is that the work we've done thus far will be an actual plan. We're just doing things right now without large scale planning. The last bit to amend the motion, we can say that Sophie will work with MM and I.

DM When you described those roles that's what PC is doing.

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MK That was my thoughts that I keep on hearing. I love Sophie, but it sounds more of a Parent Council thing and not a board appointed role.

AS I think they're separate things. Parent Council does fundraising, and they decide where the funding goes. This volunteer would be working with staff and the board to bring in funding that we could designate.

MK I think I'm still confused. There's some crossover. I've been helping with some grants too. I get the fundraising would go elsewhere, but where there's parent education, parent development sounds like when we first came on with Amy Bird. This takes a team to determine how and where people want to serve.

MM MK, I get the confusion. I'm seeing a person/volunteer to help the board with grant writing. My capacity is limited. I didn't have the time to notify you, teachers, FM before the grant closed. I see it as a marrying of what the board is working on. She'll help with coordination of strategic fundraising. I don't want to overstep on toes.

MK This is my last year as Parent Council chair, and I can still do other things within Parent Council, but I cannot do chair. That would give me the time.

DM I don't see why there can't be two development directors.

MM It is not a development director. It's an initiative to drive our wants to give back to the school.

BF This wasn't a development director position. This is a linguistic issue here. It's a parent volunteer to help MM and I develop a plan. We wanted to accept that help. I think if we hired a Development Director that person would want to incorporate Parent Council's activities into their plan. And that's kind of what we're proposing here is the start of a coordinated effort. This will involve conversations with the board, Parent Council, and admin. Sophie would help get that all in place. It's not meant to create a position or step on any toes. I think it's a supplement to what we're doing.

KK I appreciate that Sophie would step up and do this. She's not the only person who would do this. If, MK, you have capacity to add to that, then great. We haven't been successful in grant writing or fundraising, so I like the idea of having a couple of people working on this and moving it forward. We need the help now. We want strings; we want extra everything. That money is not magically going to appear. This seems like she's handing us a golden basket of opportunity. It won't be done by one person.

DM It sounds more like what MK is doing.

KK MK's not writing grants for the board.

DM She could.

MK I probably would be working with her in tandem because a lot of people come to me with questions. I'm willing to work with her tandemly, and I'll be there.

KK Do you see any potential conflict with Parent Council fundraising and board fundraising?

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MK I think it could be done collaboratively. It takes a team to do it. It's not just me. It's a whole team. I think Sophie and the board and I can all work together.

KK I think it would help to mobilize us, and I think it sounds great. And MK if you're available to help now, I don't see why you can't work together.

MK I guess I'm confused on the liaison part between Parent Council and the board because I already do that.

BF If there's significant overlap here, MK, I wish I had talked with you about this if I knew it would be a concern. It does seem like a separate thing regarding grants. I did see it as a more strategic implementation of the work MM and I are already doing. I didn't realize there would be some territorial overlap. We would certainly speak with you about the calendar and kinds of funding we want to seek out. We'd add in staff and admin as well. The hope is that this would be raising funds like Parent Council but different than that as well. Does that address your concerns?

MK I guess maybe it's the development part of it. I haven't had enough time to even think about it.

AS Perhaps a meeting with you all to discuss details. Maybe we hold off on the motion, but I don't want to stop any progress that's being made.

MM That is stopping fundraising and writing grants. Maybe there wasn't enough dialogue to say, hey, I need help. But we found someone who was willing to help. We didn't get pushback when we said we'd start grants, so I'm confused by this.

AS Maybe we can make it a simple verbal agreement that you all meet to hash out these details to clear up any confusion.

BF Maybe the work that MM and I would've opened this organizational can of worms anyway. If we eventually hire a Development Director they'll work with Parent Council to develop a plan. The proposal on the table is to help MM and I to do the work we've been wanting to do for a while. I'm confused about the pushback as well. I'm proposing this position that will support the work we're already doing

BF Moved to appoint Sophie McCurley as Development Parent Volunteer, who will act as a liaison between Parent Council, the Board, and Administration, and will work with Ben Fong and Myriah Mhoon to report to the board. AS second. The following discussion took place:

DM I think it would be nice to leave out the parent liaison bit since she's just working with the pair of you.

KK Any other discussion?

NG Are we rewording?

MM It's BF's motion.

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BF I understand the disconnect there. Restated motion.

BF Moved that Sophie McCurley be appointed Development Parent Volunteer, who will work with the Board, specifically Ben Fong and Myriah Mhoon, to strategize and streamline fundraising. AS second. No further discussion. Votes in Favor: KK, AS, JT, SE, BF, NG. Opposed: DM. **Motion passes.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

KK 04/15 there is no school as it's Good Friday. The next board meeting is 04/20 at 6:30pm via Zoom.

KK moved to conclude the Wednesday, 04/06/22 VSWEA board meeting. DM second. No further discussion. Unanimous vote in favor: KK, AS, JT, DM, NG, SE, BF. **Motion passes.**

CLOSING VERSE

AS read the closing verse.

KK Thank you, AS, and board and guests and the remaining attendees. Have a great night and the rest of your week.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Prepared by AS on 04.06.2022.