

Spring Garden Waldorf School

Board Meeting minutes

August 8, 2022

Attendance: Bridget Ambrisco, Stephanie Bailey, Tricia Cottrell, Miriam Daniel, Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska, Amy Hecky, Brenda Leighton, Rocky Lewis, Kristen Oberhaus, Marie Paul, Jen Vereb, Kyle Yoder, Dionne LaRue

- Meeting called to order at 6:35pm with the reading of the Opening Verse
- Minutes of June 2022 Board meeting approved as written.

Education and Inspiration

Kristen Oberhaus spoke about how a Waldorf teacher spends the summer. A teacher's summer is devoted to weeks of intense training, physical preparation of the classroom, mental preparation for the upcoming year, and lots of extra reading. Ms. Oberhaus is focusing on how to inspire and excite her class, specifically in math. She led the Board through an activity she plans for her class to encourage them to approach math with an open mind. She shared books for parent and teacher inspiration: Mathematical Mindsets by Jo Boaler and iRules by Janell Burley Hoffman.

Administration Reports

Administration Reports were (and will continue to be) emailed to Board members before the meeting for review. Time in the Board meeting is allotted to brief summaries of each report and for questions or discussion.

Director of Administration

Amy Hecky, Director of Administration updated the Board on the planned apartment development on property adjoining SGWS property. Amy and other SGWS representatives continue to meet with representatives from the county, township, and developer and attend public meetings regarding the development. She is still negotiating with the developer as to the areas of concern for SGWS: fencing, a playground on the development property, and water run-off and quality. As to traffic on Jacoby Road, Amy reported that there are no plans to conduct another traffic study; SGWS is against a proposed emergency access road in the development becoming a general access road; and SGWS is considering ways to change our drop-off and pick-up procedures to alleviate congestion should the development go forward. Also discussed was the storage that was to be built with funds previously approved by the Board. The area in which the storage was to be built contains underground gas lines, preventing construction. Other areas for construction are being considered.

Director of Admissions & Marketing

Rocky Lewis, Director of Admissions stated that applications for Fall enrollment at SGWS continue to come in. Additionally, Rocky is managing the Waldorf accreditation process and an initial meeting has been held.

Director of Development

Rocky also gave the report for Development. She stated that the Director of Development position should be filled by the end of September. Additionally, SGWS artist-in-residence has nearly completed her work on the classroom doorways as well as the art installation for Elizabeth Park.

Parent Council

Tricia Cottrell, a Parent Council Lead, said that the recent cultural event featuring the Himalayan Arts, Language and Cultural Academy was very successful and Parent Council is beginning to plan the Welcome Back Dinner on August 29th.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Bridget Ambrisco, Board President stated that the Committee has had one meeting and primarily focused on drafting the agenda for the August Board meeting.

Finance Committee

Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska, Board Treasurer, gave the report. ~~She stated that the YTD budget shows SGWS should end the fiscal year with a deficit of \$18,138.~~ She stated that the 2021-22 financial year ended with a deficit of \$18,138. This is far less than the deficit predicted at the beginning of the year, partially due to increased fundraising. Historically, a large deficit is predicted at the beginning of the year, but by the close of the year, that deficit has significantly decreased. The Finance Committee is considering this issue and exploring ways to predict the deficit more accurately. Additionally, the Committee is planning to develop a goal as to an appropriate amount to be kept in reserves to allow funds to be used as needed.

Governance Committee

No report as no meeting was held since the last Board meeting.

Nominating Committee

Jen Vereb reported that Committee member Daren Brake will replace her as chairperson of the Committee. Also, the Committee will soon offer a candidate to fill a current Board vacancy.

New Business

Board (re)Orientation

Various Board members spoke about the responsibilities of service on the Board and documents in the Board binder. Dionne LaRue, Board Secretary, will provide Board binders for the 3 new faculty on the Board. The decision-making process for SGWS must be more clearly delineated. This is potential work for a Joint Board-Faculty meeting. Also, there is an opportunity for more communication with the Faculty as to what the Board is working on.

Committee Members & Goals

The chair of each committee should submit goals and a list of members to Bridget by September 6 for presentation at the September Board meeting.

Update from Compensation Task Force

By October 2022, the Task Force will present a plan to improve the compensation of SGWS employees. To date, the Task Force has engaged an outside consultant who conducted a survey of faculty and staff and gathered data on salary and tuition from other school. The Task Force has initiated a plan to communicate its work and plan to the greater school community. It was stressed that SGWS and the Board must clearly and honestly communicate the need for increased compensation and the resulting tuition increases to families in a timely manner.

Finance Committee Motion

In June, a group of SGWS Administrators and Board members met for a budget workshop. During the workshop, it was decided that in the interest of clarity and transparency, decisions on the school's most important expense and primary source of income should be made at the same time. Therefore, Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska made the following motion:

The Finance Committee moves that decisions regarding salary compensation increases be made on the same timeline that is used for setting tuition. In other words, rates for both tuition and compensation for the following school year will be approved by the Board in November.

As the motion came out of committee work, a second was not necessary.

Motion passed unanimously.

Miscellaneous

The Board discussed the need for central, electronic storage of Board documents. Amy stated that this is a need for the Administration as well and that the advantages and disadvantages of various methods are being considered.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm with reading of the Closing Verse.

Dionne LaRue

(she/her)

Board Secretary

Next Board Meeting: September 12, 2022, at 6:30pm