

Spring Garden Waldorf School

Board Meeting minutes

November 14, 2022

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

- Meeting called to order at 6:33pm with the reading of the Opening Verse
- Minutes of October 2022 Board meeting approved as written.

EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION

This portion of the agenda was moved to the next Board meeting.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Director of Administration

Amy Hecky, Director of Administration, highlighted some of the areas detailed in her emailed report. Following her participation in Waldorf Administrators' training (Leading with Spirit), it has become clear that SGWS has extensive IT needs. Administration is taking steps to address this issue, such as, using EANS funds to purchase computers for faculty, exploring cloud-based data storage, and working with Untangled Technology and SageRock, Inc. to move email service and file system to a Google platform. The latter work can also be paid for with EANS funds.

Julie Marchetta, Director of Finance, attended an AWSNA seminar regarding the employee retention credit, which is government-funded and related to losses due to COVID. Specifically for SGWS, lack of an annual benefit auction and loss of enrollment. Further information will be shared at the January Board meeting.

In light of the proposed housing development adjacent to SGWS property, Amy asked for Board input as to whether it is a benefit to join the Copley Homeowners' Association. As a business, SGWS would be a non-voting member.

Amy also stated that SGWS is in need of contractors to install a heat trace on the roof and design and build a footer for a storage building.

Director of Admissions & Marketing

Board members did not have questions or comments on the report emailed prior to the meeting by Rocky Lewis, Director of Admissions & Marketing.

Director of Finance

Julie Marchetta reviewed the YTD budget. The current bottom line of -\$24,559 is typical for this point in the school year. She said that SGWS has not yet received any money from the EdChoice program and is due approximately \$130K. SGWS recently received an administrative cost reimbursement from the state of about \$20K. Our current money market accounts generate \$12-13/mo interest. Options for accounts with higher interest rates can be explored.

Director of Development

Joanna Caley, Director of Development, said SGWS has received \$10,205 in donations and pledges for the 2022-23 Annual Giving Fund since July 2022. Bridget Ambrisco, Board President, stressed the importance of Board member participation in Annual Giving. It was also suggested that we reach out to extended family for donations.

Joanna stated that the Development Committee will hold its first meeting this month and would like to add a couple more members to support the work of the Annual Benefit Auction.

Parent Council

Tricia Cottrell, a Parent Council Lead, reported that Parent Council facilitated a Mercurius Catalog sale on-line (Nov 1-15) and will have a fundraiser with Dewey's Pizza on Dec 12. She also reminded the Board to sign-up to volunteer at the Children's Festival (Dec 3). Further, she stated that Parent Council meetings have generated many good discussions on matters important to SGWS parents.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Nothing to report.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee report was addressed in New Business.

Governance Committee

Jen Vereb, Committee Chair, said that the November meeting has been moved to early December.

Nominating Committee

Nothing to report.

DEI Committee

There were no questions or comments on the minutes emailed before the Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Donation of Property to SGWS

Joanna Caley updated the Board on the progress of property donation by Mr. Nassif. Mr. Nassif would like SGWS to complete the paperwork for the transfer and pay upcoming property taxes. SGWS can pay the taxes directly rather than giving the funds to Mr. Nassif to pay. Loucile Powers, attorney and SGWS parent, is providing the necessary legal services. Joanna explained the various deeds that could be used and stated that Ms. Powers advised using a Quit Claim Deed. The Board agreed to proceed with a Quit Claim Deed, which will not include title insurance. The Board further discussed potential issues with the property. Any actual issues will be addressed by the Executive Committee.

Compensation Task Force Recommendations

Task Force co-chair, Bridget Ambrisco summarized the recommendation report that was emailed to Board members before the meeting. The Task Force Model for compensation and tuition addresses each school year through 2025. She stressed that the Board will be asked to approve the Model as a concept,

but that the budget for each year will be set by the Finance Committee with attention to factors influencing the budget at that time and using the Model as tool. The Recommendation details numerous issues to be addressed going forward, such as adjustments to the Model necessitated by fluctuations in enrollment, the need for an hourly pay matrix, tuition remission as a benefit, capital expenses, and a commitment by the Administration, Administrative Faculty, and Finance Committee to address these issues and annually review the salary matrix and benefits package.

During the Board discussion of the Recommendations and Model, it was noted that the Task Force reviewed SGWS financial aid options and included an extra portion of aid in the Model. Also, the benchmark of a starting, annual salary of \$40K is achieved in the Model for the 2025-26 school year. Board members discussed many of the nuances of the Model and the factors considered during its development. SGWS will continue to operate at a deficit, however, the Model takes into consideration building cash reserves. Further, SGWS currently has historically high cash reserves due to government funds received during COVID.

After a full discussion, Bridget made a motion on behalf of the Task Force that the Finance Committee use the Task Force Model and Recommendations to make proposals to the Board on tuition and compensation adjustments through 2025. Jen Vereb seconded the motion. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 12; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.

Motion passed.

Per the Recommendation, the work of the Task Force is completed.

2023-24 Tuition

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska moved that tuition for the 2023-24 school year be raised as follows: 17% for full-time Grades students and full-time Early Childhood students, and 19% for part-time Early Childhood students. No second was needed as the motion came out of Committee. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 12; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.

Motion passed.

2023-24 Salary

Also on behalf of the Finance Committee, Joyce moved that salaries for the 2023-24 school year be adjusted as follows: current benefits stipend added to base salary, then 6% increase to salary for salaried Faculty; and current benefits stipend added to base salary, then 3% increase to salary for full-time, salaried Administrative employees. No second was needed as the motion came out of Committee. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 12; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.

Motion passed.

Adjustments to hourly wages will be addressed after the hourly pay matrix is created. Administration commits to creating the matrix with the support of the Administrative Faculty by November 2023. The matrix will be sent to the Finance Committee for review and submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Board members were reminded to keep the issues discussed confidential until a formal announcement is made.

Meeting adjourned at 8:28pm with reading of the Closing Verse.

Dionne LaRue
(she/her)
Board Secretary

Next Board Meeting: January 9, 2023, at 6:30pm