

Spring Garden Waldorf School

Board Meeting minutes

May 8, 2023

Attendance: Bridget Ambrisco, Stephanie Bailey, Daren Brake, Joanna Caley, Tricia Cottrell, Miriam Daniel, Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska, Darrin Griggy, Amy Hecky, Brenda Leighton, Rocky Lewis, Julie Marchetta, Kristen Oberhaus, Jen Vereb, Dionne LaRue

- Meeting called to order at 6:35pm with the reading of the Opening Verse

- April 2023 minutes approved as written

EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION

Board President, Bridget Ambrisco, invited members to share an experience that reminds them of why they have chosen to be part of the SGWS community.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Director of Administration

Amy Hecky, Director of Administration, included in her Board report a letter from the Copley Township attorney to the Director of Community and Economic Development for Copley Township regarding litigation involving the proposed Jacoby Road Development adjacent to SGWS. In essence, the project is stalled due to the Court's most recent ruling. The developer cannot continue the project with the current zoning. Copley Township officials are working with residents; however, the residents are well organized against the proposed development.

There are currently many open Faculty positions. Amy reported that there is a decent pool of candidates for the Grades teachers and that interviews begin soon. Additionally, certain positions are posted internally initially, and former Faculty are often contacted about vacancies.

Director of Admissions & Marketing

Rocky Lewis, Director of Admissions & Marketing reminded Board members of the key dates for Board participation in the Accreditation visits this Fall and next Spring. She also asked members to respond to a survey she drafted as part of the Accreditation process. Additionally, she would like volunteers to review a few sections of the Accreditation Self-study report before the final version is presented to AWSNA.

Director of Finance

Julie Marchetta, Director of Finance, reported that the Grand Total for the 2022-23 looks good at \$51,381. This is due to funds raised during the Auction and the latest administrative costs reimbursement from the State. In response to a Board member question, Julie explained how that reimbursement is determined.

Director of Development

Joanna Caley, Director of Development, said that the Auction was very successful. There was a good mix of attendees with various connections to SGWS, some alumni families donated auction items, and funds raised for the playground exceeded the match set by an anonymous donor. Additional funds for

playground improvements are also included in the budget. Joanna asked for feedback regarding the Auction and the possibility of a survey was discussed. Brenda Leighton commented that those who helped set up the Auction were impressed by the effort Joanna put into organizing the process, so everything ran smoothly. Joanna is also setting up new software for a donor database. Joanna and Rocky are collaborating to make sure the new Admissions software and new donor software work together.

Parent Council

Tricia Cottrell, a Parent Council Lead, updated the Board on the work PC did for Teacher Appreciation Week and the continuing work planning a picnic for the Last Day of School, and securing class reps and PC leadership for next year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Issues raised during the most recent meeting were discussed during New Business.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee report on the 2023-24 Budget was discussed during New Business.

Governance Committee

There was no new report from the Governance Committee.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee update regarding new Board members was discussed during New Business.

DEI Committee

There were no questions for the DEI Committee chair.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed 2023-24 Budget

The Proposed 2023-24 Budget was submitted to members in advance of the April Board meeting for review and discussion. No changes have been made to the Budget since that time. Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska, Finance Committee chair, reminded members that the deficit shown is lower than predicted, but the models also show SGWS will continue to operate at a deficit through 2026-27. However, that prediction is variable because many internal and external changes can affect the actual budget outcomes over the next several years. One such change is the Board's November 2023 decision on tuition and compensation for the 2024-25 school year.

Amy Hecky drew attention to lines 109 and 112, funds for SEED programming. Amy mentioned that interest in the SEED programs has waned, therefore other options are being explored to continue the school's DEI initiatives. The amounts for funding can remain with the option to change the title of the line items going forward.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Joyce moved that the Board pass the Proposed 2023-24 Budget. Jen Vereb, Board Vice President, seconded the motion. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 11; Opposed: 0; Abstained: 0

Motion passed.

Action on new 2023-24 Board members and officers

Board President Bridget Ambrisco thanked retiring members Vikram Bedekar, Jen Vereb and Kyle Yoder for their service and dedication to the SGWS Board.

The nominees for the 2023-24 Board were: Kenneth Ambler, Dan Kavouras, and Kyle Strnad. Resumes and introductory information on the candidates were distributed to Board members in advance of the meeting. Daren Brake, Nominating Committee chair, reminded the group that Dan is an alumnus with a strong connection to SGWS and is excited for an opportunity to engage with the school community. Amy Hecky spoke about Kenneth, with whom she consulted to begin the current Human Resources Audit. He is a former co-worker of a current SGWS parent. He has a diverse background and is willing to lend his expertise in various areas of Board work. Kyle Strnad and his family have been members of the SGWS community for many years. Jen Vereb spoke about the many ways he and his family have supported SGWS. Kyle has committed to fulfilling the final year of the unexpired term of a retiring Board member.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Daren moved that the Board accept the three candidates offered for membership. Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska seconded the motion. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 11; Opposed: 0; Abstained: 0

Motion passed.

The Nominating Committee offered the following slate of candidates for Board officers, each with a one-year term: Bridget Ambrisco, President; Brenda Leighton, Vice President; Dionne LaRue, Secretary; and Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska, Treasurer.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Daren moved that the Board approve the slate of 2023-24 Board Officer candidates. Miriam Daniel seconded the motion. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 11; Opposed: 0; Abstained: 0

Motion passed.

Action on spending for bathroom repairs

In advance of this meeting, Board members received a copy of the itemized quote submitted by John Miles and Bechter Plumbing for necessary repairs to the urinals in the Boys' Bathroom at a cost of \$10,400-11,000. Both John Miles and Bechter Plumbing have connections to SGWS that suggest they will be particularly invested in the outcome of the project and some of the project materials may be donated. Facilities Manager, Matt Plevrakis, and the plumbers have worked together to determine that the work proposed in the quote is an appropriate course of action. Because the cost of the project is over \$5000, three quotes must be obtained. SGWS is seeking two more quotes for the repairs. However, it is also important that work begins as soon as possible. Amy Hecky and the Finance Committee recommend that the Board approve the quote submitted by Bechter Plumbing with a cap on spending at \$15,000 to allow for contingencies, with the caveat that if the Finance Committee receives a quote that needs Board consideration, it will be brought to the attention of the Board. This project is not currently reflected in the budget.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska moved that the Board approve spending for the bathroom repairs. Daren Brake seconded the motion. The Board voted accordingly:

In Favor: 11; Opposed: 0; Abstained: 0

Motion passed.

Board Self-assessment Survey

Jen Vereb informed the Board that a link to the survey will be emailed, and the results will be reviewed at the June Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm with reading of the Closing Verse.

Dionne LaRue
(she/her)
Board Secretary

Next Board Meeting: June 5, 2023, at 6:30pm