

## **Spring Garden Waldorf School**

### **Board meeting minutes**

**November 11, 2024**

Attendance: Brenda Leighton, Ken Ambler, Jeff Scott, Stephanie Bailey, Amy Hecky, Rocky Lewis, Julie Marchetta, Kelli Wright, Dionne LaRue, Kyle Strnad, Suzie Reich, Bridget Ambrisco, Gabrielle Aryeetey, Matt Slater, Darrin Griggy, Dan Kavouras

Guest: Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska

Absent:, Michael Gannon, Marie Paul

Meeting called to order at 6:32 PM with the reading of the Opening Verse

### **Approved Minutes**

October 14 Board Meeting minutes approved

### **Education and Inspiration – Stepanie Bailey**

Chapter III of *Partnerships of Hope; Building Waldorf School Communities*, by Christopher Schaefer, PhD., pages 51 to 71

### **Administration Reports**

#### **Administration and Marketing: Rocky Lewis**

- By Friday of this week, we will have 178 students, with two more contracts possible

Question: Enrollment funnel stats...how is “can not serve” determined?

Answer: Two reasons. First, upon a review of the records of the student/education, we find that “we can not support this child”. Second, we meet with the child and parent. For Grades 1 – 3, there is a visit and an assessment. For Grades 4 – 8, student meets with teacher during visit. Faculty in all occasions fill out paperwork and determine if we can serve the child.

Question: Are there any Waldorf School Special Education teachers?

Answer: Some schools are special education only. Some are adding special ed staff and support in the classroom. It is an evolution of the process.

Question: When do we finalize enrollment?

Answer: The total number of students is a moving number. We just closed midyear application process.

**Administration: Amy Hecky**

Amy thanks the Board for having 25% of goal already met in Annual Giving campaign.

Storage building is over budget approximately \$10,000

- More concrete is needed due to a change in Building department requirements for permits
  - Originally the building would be a pole building. City Building department wanted more than a pole building and requires a slab foundation and to dig down 42 inches for foundation walls. This increases cost.
  - Also, City building department requires a change from rafters to trusses. This changes the plan and increases cost.

Question: Are car barriers permanent?

Answer: Not decided yet. Area is for drop off/dismissal. We are trying to keep the drive open.

Question: How do we pay for the \$10,000 increase in cost?

Answer: Some money has been put aside in an account for overage in a restricted account.

Question: Why restricted account?

Answer: To keep the money from being reallocated for other purposes.

Motion for the Board to approve extra expense for building

Motion passed unanimously.

Question: QSEHRA insurance— how many people buy insurance?

Answer: Amy hasn't asked yet. Will try to find out for planning purposes.

## Committee Reports

**Finance Committee: Julie Marchetta**

*Budget spreadsheet handout, titled "11-6-24 YTD 2024-2025 Budget-Board .xlsx"*

- The current total of students for budget is 175 students

- Line 46 [Annual Giving] actual net is closer to \$14,000 as money comes in.
- Line 20 [Aftercare/Beforecare Wages] \$1200 positive
- We currently have a \$ -22,000 bottom line [line 122]. This is normal for this time of year.
- We are owed \$ 22,000 or \$23,000 by the State of Ohio, which is yet to hit the books

Question: Why is \$18,000 on hold for playground equipment [line 124]?

Answer: This is separate from auction money. It is an expense placeholder, not actual money. It is a request that is not funded in the budget.

### **Governance Committee: Brenda Leighton**

Working on moving the DEI committee from ad hoc to a standing committee. The request will be for the January Board meeting. The Board needs a 7-day notice prior to a vote on this.

## **New Business**

### **Committee Membership and Goals - Bridget Ambrisco**

This is currently in progress. Executive committee and Development are in process. The rest of the committees are done. Documents are in the Shared Folder.

### **Finance Committee Recommendation on tuition and salary increases for 2025/2026 School Year**

Guest Speaker - Joyce Gordon-Shapkaliska

Joyce was an original member of the Compensation committee that met three years ago and recognized a need to increase compensation. The Compensation Task Force looked out to 2026/2027 school year and created a roadmap for increases.

### **Tuition Discussion**

Differences between the plan and the current proposal

- Tuition has slightly increased
- The Plan was 10% increase for early childhood and 10% for Grades. Now 11% part time early childhood and 9% Full time early childhood and Grades.

Question: The plan is for 179 to 186 students. Is there an assumption ration built into that number for full time/part time students?

Answer: We looked at historical 5-year data and built on that.

Question: How can we fit more students into SGWS?

Answer: Early childhood has some spots, but we need to keep with teacher to student ratio

Question: At 186 students, do we have enough staff? Do we need to bump PT to FT staff?

Answer: We are fine at 186 currently. Student enrollment numbers go down per class year. The upper grades have a variation in number of students per class. We don't overenroll in kindergarten if we can't serve them in 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

Question: What is our max enrollment?

Answer: Max is 225 students, if every grade has 20 students per teacher. Early childhood is 12 to 15.

## Compensation Discussion

Using the same roadmap as Tuition, for the 2025/2026

- Will have a 2% retirement contribution.
- Will have a 4% increase in the salary matrix. The original plan had 3%, the current has a 1% increase over original plan.
- 3% increase for hourly and administrative staff
- Health benefits will continue.

Question: Is 4% increase related to the real cost of living?

Answer: We have not created a benchmark that we want to reach. We are spending what we can afford, not what we feel is appropriate. It is as much as we can afford. Base is \$43,000 for full-time faculty. The Matrix is a 4% increase, but the faculty will also get 1% for years of service and other increases.

Question: Is the Retirement benefit a 2% match?

Answer: No decision yet on matching. Currently it is a 2% increase based on the dollar amount of salary

Question: Both a 4% increase in salary and a 2% retirement?

Answer: Yes, these are separate items. Salary increase is built into the budget. Retirement is a new item.

## Discussion of the Budget Model

*Budget spreadsheet handout, titled "Board Approved Projection Model – Nov. 11 2024.xlsx"*

Where are we in comparison to the current budget/cash on hand?

- Having 3 to 6 months of cash on hand is standard for non-profits
- We accepted a lesser amount of cash on hand to increase compensation
- 2024/2025 is our thinnest year for budget. Our budget is also conservative.
  - Financial assistance is not being fully used
  - ERC money is in next year's budget
  - Budgeted health for July but this has been shifted to January, thus less money has been used

- Not everyone uses the max amount of money
- Funds in reserves not in the model but can be drawn upon if needed
- In 2026/2027 we will have 2 months cash on hand, which is higher than this year
- In 2027/2028 we are projected to have net revenue, not loss for that year and the following years

Question: QSEHRA limit increases every year due to costs. We only budget a fixed amount?

Answer: We should be able to do better than the model. Max is \$6300 per year. We are below this.

The Finance Committee Recommends the following:

- 9% tuition increase for full-time Grades and Early Childhood students
- 11% tuition increase for part-time Early Childhood students
- 4% increase to the salary matrix for full time faculty (not staff)
- 2% retirement benefit for full time faculty and staff

Summary of Motion on Tuition and Compensation:

- 9% tuition increase for full-time Grades and Early Childhood students
- 11% tuition increase for part-time Early Childhood students
- 4% increase to the salary matrix for full time faculty (not staff)
- 2% retirement benefit for full time faculty and staff

We are not voting on the 3% hourly/administrative salary increase.

A unanimous voice vote approves the motion

Announcement: No meeting in December. Next meeting in January.

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM with reading of the Closing Verse.

Ken Ambler  
(he/him)  
Board Secretary

**Next Board Meeting: January 13th, 2025, at SGWS, at 6:30 pm.**