



FCMS Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: January 21, 2016

Time: 5:30-7:30 PM

Location: At the school (1900 S. Taft Hill, Fort Collins), in Ms. Schiller's room (Lower Floor Annex)

5:30 – 5:35 Welcome and Reading of Vision, Mission and Values (Ms. Tellez)

5:35 – 5:40 Consent Agenda: Board members will be asked if they wish to discuss any items listed on the Consent Agenda. If so, these items will be moved from the Consent Agenda and placed under Items for Action. Items remaining on the Consent Agenda will be voted on together, pursuant to the following motion: "I move that the Board approve and adopt the recommended actions for the items on the consent agenda."

- Approve agenda for today's meeting.

Recommended action: *Adopt the agenda for the January 21, 2016 FCMS Board meeting.*

Attachment: FCMS Agenda Jan 21, 2016 FINAL.pdf

- Adopt meeting minutes from the December 17, 2015 Board meeting.

Attachment: FCMS Board Meeting Dec 17 2015 minutes FINAL.pdf

Recommended action: *Adopt the minutes from the December 17, 2015 FCMS Board meeting.*

- Adopt revised minutes from the August 20, 2015 Board meeting.

Attachment: FCMS Board Meeting Aug 20 2015 minutes FINAL REVISED.pdf

Recommended action: *Adopt the revised minutes from the August 20, 2015 FCMS Board meeting.*

Mr. Sanderson moved to approve and adopt the recommended actions for the items on the consent agenda.

Ms. Tellez seconded

No discussion.

Motion passed with all in favor, none opposed.

5:40 – 5:50 Community Comment

There was no community comment.

5:50 – 6:05 Board Member Nominee, Roby Hoxie (Discussion and Vote; Mr. Sanderson and Ms. Federman)

Ms. Federman introduced Robyn Hoxie, Board Member candidate. Ms. Hoxie has a background in business; specifically marketing and fundraising. She also has eight years experience in building a new organization from the ground up. Ms. Hoxie submitted a resume, application, and letter of interest to the Parent Council, and was interviewed by the Nominating Committee before being nominated for the position of Parent Board Member.

Motion: Mr. Danielson moved that the FCMS board elect Robyn Hoxie as a parent representative member of the Fort Collins Montessori School Board of Directors.

Ms. Tellez seconded.

No additional discussion.

Motion passed with all in favor, none opposed.

Mr. Sanderson: Addressed length and timing of Board of Director members. All terms start in April, the month in which FCMS charter was approved. Ms. Federman and Mr. Sanderson were on Founding Board. Bylaws indicate that one parent and one community member of Founding Board serve 3 years rather than 2, so that board members can be staggered and continuity can be established. Ms. Tellez, Ms. Hoxie, and Mr. Danielson have terms that are not in sync. Mr. Sanderson suggested that all terms expire in April; Mr. Sanderson and Ms. Federman's terms expire a year from April. Their positions are then up for renewal.

Discussion: Ms. Tellez commented that it is wise to stagger, and having experienced board members is important.

Mr. Danielson: Looking at a school year, April is an inconvenient time to leave the board. Might we turn over positions in summer?

Ms. Tellez: July gives time to read and prepare for the position.

Mr. Sanderson: This will be codified in the by-laws. By-laws will be tightened up soon. By-laws will be amended to have two parent board members; seven members maximum. Mr. Sanderson expressed the need for an attorney on the board.

Although there was consensus around how terms would be staggered to ensure continuity from year to year, no decision was made. The view on this topic will inform a future update of the bylaws..

6:05 – 6:20 Head of School Report (Presentation; Mr. Vincent)

- Re-enrollment and applications to date.

We are at 80% of full enrollment for 2016-17 school year. Biggest concern is that people who are currently enrolled need to re-enroll or they go to the lottery. We are required to do a lottery for kindergarten unless there is a sibling in the family; these children have priority if there is space.

Mr. Sanderson commented: We are currently in the third year of a start-up grant from CDE; federal law requires that while we are under this grant, we need to make enrollment available to all children, in a fully open process where every applicant has an equal chance to attend. We will have an opportunity to modify this policy after June, when our commitment to the CDE grant is over. Next year, we have more flexibility to set criteria, i.e., prioritizing a child with Montessori experience.

Fort Collins is a slower area for preschool enrollment in Mr. Vincent's experience. We are full at the preschool and primary levels in the current year (2015-2016), and we'll be expanding pre-school enrollment next year. We should be able to enroll all on waitlist for the coming year. We need to set up tours of both facilities now that we are getting another site.

- Setting enrollment expectations and caps for next school year.

Enrollment expectations: Mr. Vincent requests that the board set maximum and recommended class sizes for each age group: He recommends 20 children for pre/k with a maximum of 26; 24 for elementary with a maximum of 26 for lower el and 17 at upper elementary. For this site (Immanuel CRC), we will not

have room for more upper elementary students in the following year. Mr. Sanderson: The suggested range allows Mr. Vincent to arrange classrooms considering gender, ages, and other needs.

Motion: Mr. Sanderson moved: Whereas the current budget projection for fiscal year 2016-2017 is predicated on enrollment of 60 students in Primary classrooms, 47 students in Lower Elementary Classrooms, and 17 students in an Upper Elementary classroom, the FCMS Board approves recommended and maximum classroom enrollment for the following groups: Primary-Recommended enrollment of 20 students per classroom, with a maximum enrollment of 26 students per classroom. Lower Elementary-Recommended enrollment of 24 students per classroom, with a maximum enrollment of 26 students per classroom. Upper Elementary-Maximum enrollment of 17 students for the 2016-2017 school year.

Ms. Tellez seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Sanderson explained the difficulty of bringing in older children who have not had Montessori experience. It has been the experience of Montessori schools that children who transfer from traditional schools to Montessori schools after about 3rd grade have difficulty adjusting because the expectations for the student are very different and thus difficult to adapt to. This difficulty usually can be mitigated if there is only one new student in a large class, but as a generally rule, students will be brought into the school from pre-school and kindergarten.

Motion passed with all in favor, none opposed.

6:20 – 6:30 Charter School Support Initiative review (Presentation and Discussion; Mr. Vincent)

- Why are we doing a CSSI review?
- What does it cover?
- What happens with results of the assessment?
- What do we need to do to prepare?

Mr. Vincent explained that during the third year of a charter school, we receive a review from a team from the Colorado Department of Education. This will be February 16-18. The team will ask about all aspects of the school. They will interview board, staff, parents, and students over 3 days. We will receive a report. It will not be punitive, rather, a review designed to assist the school in moving forward. We can choose the areas on which we would like to work.

Mr. Vincent has read the preparatory materials and will review the language with the staff. Mr. Sanderson has sent the preparatory materials to all board members. He recommends that board members review *Standards 1-10 Detailed Report With Evidence Template* if you have a limited amount of time to read. Mr. Vincent thinks the CSSI visit and feedback will be good for transparency. Ms. Tellez expressed appreciation that the intention of the CSSI is for our benefit. Mr. Sanderson: The board also needs to do a self-assessment, which has not yet been done. Our current strategic plan is our charter; we will have to revisit that soon.

- For additional information on the CSSI visit, see: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/cssi>

6:30 – 6:40 Financial Report (Presentation and Vote; Mr. Danielson).

- Current status of FY16 budget.

Current status of FY16 budget: Donation revenue has changed significantly, but it will decrease a bit from what is shown in the December report because a few parents still need reimbursement because of the mechanics of recent fundraisers. Revenue and expenses Year to Date: We are in a good position with a

net profit of \$50,000. No major concerns. Mr. Vincent: State will look at our expenditures in relation to budget, which are good.

- FY17 budget process timeline and roles.

Mr. Danielson: We need to start finalizing and approving budget at March meeting for preliminary approval; then to PSD for approval with 30 days to approve. Final approval will be at April Board meeting. Mr. Vincent, Ms. Knight, and Mr. Danielson will work on this together.

Mr. Sanderson asked about the budget line for READ Act Revenue. Mr. Vincent will look into it. CSSP Grant Purchases: Mr. Vincent: We have secured a climate-controlled storage unit for the next shipment of materials. Everything has to be inventoried for CSSI, including books and materials. Parent volunteers will assist with this process. Mr. Danielson: If we can spread out CSSP expenditures it would be better for the budget. Money needs to be spent by July or we lose it.

Mr. Sanderson: We have a scholarship fund for tuition. Ms. Knight stated that we are using it. There is some question about how we account for scholarships. They are not actually an expense, rather they are a reduction in revenue because of reduced tuition and fees for students who qualify. Our accountant Sarah-Ginnie Collazio says tuition should not be an expense line. It should show as an offset on the budget. Discussion. Mr. Danielson will ask Sarah-Ginnie how this should be represented in the budget.

6:40-6:50 SAC update (Presentation; Ms. Federman)

- The committee has been reviewing documents and Power Points regarding the Unified Improvement Plan based on the overview of our testing data.
- At the next meeting, SAC will begin to create a parent satisfaction survey

PVC (Parent Volunteer Committee) Report:

- Still researching being a separate entity from FCMS. Do we need our own 501c3?
- Teacher work day and teacher appreciation week: PVC will be planning for both.
- PVC will continue to do small fundraisers, ie, Original Works and Equal Exchange, as were done this year.

6:50 – 7:25 Facilities (Presentation and Vote; Ms. Tellez and Mr. Sanderson)

- Ms. Tellez has agreed to be an additional Board representative on the Facilities Committee.
- Moving forward: (a) oversight of implementation of tenant improvements for WPC and obtaining Certificate of Occupancy, and (b) contracting for long-term facility needs—how to proceed?

Mr. Sanderson: Ms. Tellez will be our primary liaison for Facilities committee. Mr. Sanderson will continue to be involved with the committee and stay up-to-date on the status of our facilities search, but he will not be the primary liaison to the board.

Ms. Estelle (Chair of the Facilities Committee) and Mr. Sanderson met with PSD on Monday to discuss PSD's engagement with our expansion for 2016-2017, including sharing an updated version of a memo that presented all major aspects of our near-term facilities plan. Present at the meeting were Todd Lambert, Assistant Superintendent of PSD, Dave Montoya, Director of Finance for PSD, and Lauren Hooten, Charter School Liaison. PSD has given us the "green light" to move forward with our facility plan (note that in conversation with PSD staff, it was agreed that PSD staff or board does not have to

“approve” the plan). Mr. Sanderson expressed thanks to Ms. Tellez regarding the need to present both the practical and the legal arguments as to who makes the decision regarding approval of facility.

- *Update on negotiations and plans with ICRC, WPC, and the Poudre School District:*

In the negotiations with WMP we laid out a 2-year budget regarding move-in expenses. WMP is going to cover 70% of fire alarm expenditure. Certificate of Occupancy needs to be final at least two weeks before school opens. Ms. Tellez spoke of what is remaining to be done at Westminster: projects need to be done quickly, including fire alarm system, walking paths that need to be modified for safety, path to be constructed. She mentioned the possibility of making one or two projects a community event to construct path. We would like to get the school community involved in the projects needed. There is a need for someone to oversee projects and make deadlines. Mr. Sanderson: Permits are also important. We need to complete renovations with sufficient time to get the permits prior to opening. Ms. Estelle has already received tentative approval for all aspects of WPC to house our Primary classrooms, but permits are not issues until inspectors see the completed work.

Mr. Danielson: Brought up certificates of occupancy and American Disabilities Act compliance. Mr. Sanderson: We need ADA compliance for playground. Spoke with state and PSD about non-ADA compliance in bathroom. PSD will follow State’s decision. It appears that we will not have to make the bathroom ADA compliant unless we in fact enroll a student (according to enrollment policy) who has ADA needs, or whose parent/guardian has ADA needs. However, we will have to plan for the possibility of a child with ADA needs. We need a written plan regarding what we will do with money set aside for ADA compliance. We anticipate that ADA compliance for the bathroom would cost <\$25,000.

Long-Term Facilities Plan:

Ms. Tellez: Ms. Estelle and our architect have been looking at properties, making tentative plans for a permanent location. Kurt Connelly, who is an “owner representative” attended a recent Facilities committee meeting. He has been overseeing the building of schools for the last 15 years, including Montessori schools. He offered finance options, along with a timetable for building. He also gave a general description of how to coordinate efforts. Our architect has assisted in examining potential sites. We have a good beginning. Ms. Estelle has worked with the Colorado League of Charter Schools and many others to figure out how to proceed. We have well-informed people guiding us. Committee members are well qualified. We have a good starting point to create a tentative plan and bring it back to the board for approval, hopefully by next board meeting.

Stakeholder and community interest around facilities is written into our charter: We need input from staff, board, parents, and other stakeholders.

Mr. Sanderson moved: The FCMS Board will go into executive session to discuss current negotiations with facilities that could be compromised by not holding the negotiation details confidential. Mr.

Danielson seconded.

Discussion: None.

Motion passed with all in favor, none opposed.

[Executive Session]

Mr. Sanderson recused himself—and left the room—for the next conversation because part of the discussion includes paying Ms. Estelle for services related to facilities. Ms. Estelle is Mr. Sanderson’s spouse.

Mr. Vincent: Mr. Sanderson and Mr. Vincent have agreed to be objective and open. Mr. Vincent has input from long-term planning committee that we need an experienced person to be project manager to build a school. In the short term, for our immediate facility needs, these tasks could be accomplished by Ms. Estelle as overseer. Mr. Vincent recommends that Ms. Estelle will complete the short-term work, and that we pay her for that at an unspecified amount. It would ensure that the short-term site is completed. Specialized knowledge is needed.

Discussion regarding asking people to put in bids for project manager. If Ms. Estelle wants to bid for payment for facilities work, she would have to recuse herself from all committee work at the school. The board discussed alternatives for the long and short-range facilities work. Board would like to take bids for a paid facilitator.

Ms. Tellez moved that the Board seek a project manager for the long-term planning for the future site of FCMS, and that the Board seeks bids for the short-term work to prepare WPC for occupancy.

Second: Ms. Federman seconded.

Motion passed.

7:25-7:30 Conclude meeting (Vote; Mr. Sanderson)

Motion: The FCMS Board moves to adjourn the January 21, 2016 board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Lorie Federman, Board Treasurer and
Interim Secretary

Affirmed by:
John Sanderson, Board President

