



April 8, 2015, 4:00pm Fort Collins Montessori School Board Meeting Minutes

Present:

Board Officers - Ronnie Estelle, President; Lorie Federman, Vice-President; Kathy Lynch, Secretary; John Sanderson, Treasurer

Ex Officio Board Members - Jennifer Schiller, Guide Representative; Frank Vincent, Head of School

Community – Doc Wiener, HOS Mentor; Ryan Hannon, FCMS Guide

1. Welcome and Reading of Vision and Mission – Read by Board President Ronnie Estelle

February 19, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes Approval

Motion to approve the minutes from February 19, 2015 by Board Secretary Kathy Lynch

Comments: None

Seconded by: Vice-President Lorie Federman

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

2. Public Comment No public comment

3. Financial Report from Board Treasurer John Sanderson

Draft budget for FY 2016 for PSD

Revenues:

- Revenue lines: Added more specific lines of revenue for more precise tracking of income.
- Public schools took a big hit in the 2008 economic crisis which resulted in a one-time payment of \$200 per public child for FY 16 to make up for the cuts of 2008.
- In FY 15, we had a fundraising goal of \$9,600. We reached that goal, and are increasing the goal to \$15,000 for FY 16 – an ambitious goal, but we should build a culture of giving, such as a monthly small donation to FCMS per child. Certain spending line items might be curtailed if we don't reach our fundraising goal, such as: scholarships, playground, field trips, and consulting teachers.
- President Ronnie Estelle asked if it is possible to add the \$200 per child to our fundraising goal? John suggests that we keep the one time increase in funding separate from our fundraising line.
- While we do not yet have 501 c (3) status, all donations to FCMS are tax deductible because we are considered a government entity under PSD.

Salaries:

- Presented as a lump sum and line item for the following positions: HOS School, HOS Assistant, Guides and Guide Assistants for FY16.
- Board has a goal to bring salaries on par with the PSD eventually. To begin to meet this goal, the Finance Committee recommends raising the salary line item by 5% for FY 16, contingent upon PPR as determined by the Legislature in May 2015.

President Ronnie Estelle referred to an Executive Session held in March to discuss staff salary increases based on the CO legislature's PPR for FY 16. The CO legislature will not announce changes to the PPR rate until roughly May 7, 2015. How will FCMS support a 5% increase in the salary line item for FY 16 if the Legislature does not raise PPR by an equal rate? Treasurer John Sanderson responded that we will then need to revise our budget by cutting items elsewhere – budget revision and cuts are common. The total amount we may be short by would be approximately \$5800, and this amount could either be trimmed across several line items, or could be taken directly from line items such as scholarship, playground equip, field trips, or specialty teachers without too much pain to our overall program.

- HOS recommends that the Board consult him to suggest cuts if the PPR is not adequate. The Board will consider the HOS suggestions.
- We cannot make salary offers until the PPR figures come in. The legislature closes on May 7, which is very late for our Guides to receive offer letters. We should consult Terry Lewis at the Colorado League of Charter Schools for guidance on how and when to make offer letters with salary. Our Treasurer will follow up on this with Ms. Lewis.
- Comments: Is there a budget line for Professional Development and Custodial Services? Yes, PD comes from CDE in FY 16; Custodial is on pg 1 of the budget.

Motion: FCMS Board will submit, by April 15, 2015, the draft FY16 budget, as amended, to PSD for review and approval by PSD Financial Officer Dave Montoya. Motion by Board President Ronnie Estelle.

Seconded by: Lorie Federman

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

4. Head of School Report from HOS Frank Vincent

a) Calendar

We are well within the PSD teaching day requirements.

Comments: Vice President Lorie Federman asked if we are following PSD calendar as we did last year. HOS Frank responded that the calendar is not exactly like the PSD calendar, but we are very close. Teacher contracts were for 199 days during the 2014/15 school year. This school calendar proposes 195 days for teachers during the 2015/16 school year. Since we no longer have the extra effort of all the start-up school needs in Aug 2015, we can reduce the number of work days in teacher contracts for 2015-2016.

Motion: FCMS adopts the 2015-2016 School Calendar as prepared & presented by Frank Vincent, HOS. Motion by Board President Ronnie Estelle

Seconded by: VP Lorie Federman

VOTE: All in favor, motion passes

b) Enrollment

We have wait lists for every age and we need to keep a balance. It is possible that we may need to look at a reconfiguration of the primary ages 3's and 4's to ensure a balance of ages in those classrooms, but as it stands today we will be at full capacity in the fall.

President Ronnie Estelle commented on the need to vote on caps for each age and has asked HOS Frank Vincent to bring cap suggestions to the board.

Treasurer John Sanderson: If we haven't determined caps, how have we determined admissions at this point?

HOS Frank Vincent: Knowing that it is difficult to get commitment for full-day 3's, it was essential to do a preliminary count/configuration of 8-7-5 in each primary classroom. President Ronnie Estelle commented that HOS and she discussed a preliminary configuration based on the current classroom space and balance of 20 students (3's, 4's, & 5's) per preschool classroom while also considering our budget. The numbers by age in these classrooms approximate our suggested numbers in our charter application, and are reduced by the smaller space available in each primary room than originally anticipated when the application was approved by PSD.

5. Facilities 2015-2016 reported by President Ronnie Estelle

- We have a slight increase in the lease rate for FY 16 due to added office space for next year.
- We will continue to pay custodial fees.

***Motion:** FCMS shall renew its facility lease with ICRC for 2015-2016. Motion by Board President Ronnie Estelle.*

***Seconded by:** Treasurer John Sanderson*

***VOTE:** All in favor; motion passes*

6. Conflict of Interest Policy reported by President Ronnie Estelle

Comments: Treasurer John Sanderson commented on the definition of "board members" in **Section 2.0**

***Definitions:** Fort Collins Montessori School applies its Conflict of Interest Policy to all Board members, employees, and committee members, but herein defines the term "Board members" to be inclusive of all said groups.*

Treasurer John noted that because the use of *board member* is used frequently throughout the document, it is perhaps too general in its usage and excludes employees and committee members. Instead, the use of "*Interested Parties*" should replace the use of "*board members*" in this policy because this is more inclusive of all said parties: "*Fort Collins Montessori School applies its Conflict of Interest Policy to all Board members, employees, and committee members, but herein defines the term "Interested Parties" to be inclusive of all said groups.*"

Motion: FCMS shall adopt the attached Conflict of Interest Policy as amended. Motion by Treasurer John Sanderson.

Seconded by: Secretary Kathy Lynch

VOTE: All in favor; motion passes

7. SAC Directions Report by Vice-President Lorie Federman

- Responsible for accountability and parent engagement.
 - President Ronnie Estelle: Initially in August 2014 at school start up three parents volunteered to form a committee to coordinate parent volunteers. Now there are six parents who want to be part of this committee to help with parent volunteer coordination and engagement. President Ronnie Estelle suggests that the “Parent Volunteer Coordination Committee” now be made a subcommittee under our SAC.
 - FCMS Webmaster has created a Parent Portal that is password protected and will be available for a communication tool with Parents.
 - To increase parent and community engagement on social media we need to ensure that media permission/photo release sheets are signed by parents.
 - Need to invite more teachers to share on Facebook as administrators.
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8. Increase in Guide salaries for 2015-2016 *Because we adopted our Budget for FY 16, and all staff salaries are covered as a single line item therein, we have no need to proceed with the agenda item to vote on a motion to increase Guide salaries. This is taken care of in our approval of our budget for FY 16.*

9. Doc Wiener, HOS Mentor – Presentation of proposal from HOS mentor, Dr. Wiener, to the FCMS Board

As part of our CCSP grant technical assistance requirements, the HOS, Frank Vincent, receives mentorship hours (40 hrs) from a professional assigned by the Colorado Department of Education. Doc Wiener has been serving as the mentor to HOS this school year. The HOS has asked his mentor to assist HOS as he works with the FCMS Board to:

- Clarify and Define Roles and Responsibilities and Refine By-Laws
- Strategic Planning

Questions and discussion of proposal: The Board agreed to consider Dr. Wiener’s proposal and to make adjustments to it if needed. It was agreed that the Board and Staff Training on April 9, 2015 will help the HOS identify the areas where he needs the most support in working with the Board.

10. April 9 Staff Retreat – Primrose Studio, 8:30am-4:00pm reported by President Ronnie Estelle, shared logistical details regarding the Specialized Training.

11. Closing and Adjourn

Motion to close and adjourn by VP Lorie Federman

Seconded by: Treasurer John Sanderson

Vote: All in favor; Meeting adjourned