Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: January 11, 2016

Held at: The Birches Academy
419 South Broadway, Salem NH

Present: Kara Christesen (Chair), Alyssa Ross (Secretary), Andy Ducharme, Dael Angelico-Hart (HOS), Jessica Wachsman, Christine Miele, Christie Storniolo, Dianne Wright (C-Treasurer), Erin McArdle (Teacher Representative), Alexa Stewart, Jody Ronayne (Co-Treasurer), Melissa Magnuson

Regrets: Nicole Charest (Teacher Representative)

Public: Mike Gendreau, Diane Kruzel

KC called meeting to order at 6:31 PM

1. Student visitors from The Bark, the new school newsletter. Lead by Janine O'Donnell, students Julia Storniolo, Zoe Wachsman, Corrie Smith shared about the new publication.
2. Meeting Minutes from 12/14/15
    - AD motions to approve minutes, CS seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
3. No correspondence.
4. Head of School Update
    - No change to enrollment numbers. May be adding a 6th grader next week. 6th grade remains the biggest wait list.
    - Kindergarten lottery has been moved up due to other towns requiring decisions. Have 27 on the wait list and would like to get that up. Advertising has been done via Facebook for one week for $40 and gotten 1100 impressions and had 16 likes. CM put flyers in the libraries and will look at the Boys & Girls club as well. CM will also send information on advertising rates in the Salem paper and the Parenting mag.
    - 2 teachers went to a literacy conference last week.
    - Decision to add a math mid-term at the middle school level and create study guides at the end of this trimester for other courses.
    - Lengthened math period and DAH is doing classroom observations.
    - Next week professional development day with a focus on arts integration in the common core. Board has been given the living Google doc that tracks the arts integrated curriculum.

- Charter renewals by the state are still about 18 months behind; DAH is to check back with the commissioner's office in the spring to get a better sense of the timing of our application. CS suggests that DAH get that reply in writing.
- CS suggested that we add an item to an upcoming agenda on middle school application process and Birches transition. AR to email ideas to CS. In the meantime, DAH is going to email all parents to tell them to contact their local schools.

5. Finance Update
    - KC shared that AS revised the letter to the landlord, with copies to property manager and planning board.
    - Donor Relations job. Last meeting everyone agreed the idea of the job is good but asked the finance committee to go look at the funding source. Finance committee reviewed and recognizes that 10 people had been planned to take benefits but only 6 did, so there is currently a 20K surplus there even though that could change any day. Salary of this position would be no more than 8K through end of FY; recommendation of the finance committee is to take the funding from that line item. 10 hrs/wk at $30 is the estimated amount, with variation each week. KC has not heard back from Jim regarding his input on the reporting structure; DAH or JW will try to reach him to discuss via phone. Need to vote on transfer of funds line item from benefits to salary for the remainder of the FY. AD moved. CS seconded. All in favor. None opposed.
    - Last 3 months of financial reports.
        i. October. CS moved to accept. AS seconded. All in favor. None opposed.
        ii. November. CS moved to accept. AD seconded. All in favor. None opposed.
        iii. December. CS moved to accept. CM seconded. All in favor. None opposed.
    - Over Christmas break there was some fraud in one of our accounts, so we changed the bank card. Decision made to cancel the card each January for protection. Also looking to add a credit card for online purchases.
6. Outreach
    - AR provided update on recent promotions, including Griffin boys and poetry winners in Windham Independent and Greystone visit in Carriage Town News.
    - Discussion on if tours should be required for admission, and what does that mean for advertising. Decision to discuss further in the fall.
7. Foundation Update
    - Annual appeal is going well
    - Gearing up for adult night; casino night will start to take place every other year. Looking at doing a trivia night this year instead.
    - First year the school ran a lottery for 10K; looking to do that again this year. Considering details now, especially from a tax perspective.
8. Bylaw revisions.
    - Made revisions on pages 5-9.
    - KC to make changes and send to all; everyone must review and we will approve next meeting.
9. Middle School recruitment.
    - Specific open house for middle school. Focus on both academic and social. Can do a Q&A panel with students. To be scheduled, likely March 3.
    - Poll parents and kids about extracurricular activities that they want; DAH to add to parent survey.

- Look into dropping a recess once/week in middle school to build clubs into the daily schedule.
- Add a survey question about how parents found out about the Birches and use that as a way to advertise.

10. Misc.
    - JW went to hearing for Windham Charter school last week. The State Board postponed because they felt they had been given new information by the presenting committee; they said it was just newly formatted. Presenting committee agreed with recommendation. State Board cited holes in curriculum and said they can present on February 11.
11. No public comment.

8:47 meeting adjourned**.**