Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes OPEN

Date: April 17, 2018

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

Present: Christie Storniolo (acting Chair), Alyssa Ross, Michael Gendreau, Dianne Wright, Christine Miele

Admin: Jessica Wachsman, Admin: Ruth Templeton

Regrets: Kara Christesen, Teacher Rep: Erin McArdle

Public: Bob Hawkes, Aimye Haroutunian, Michelle Cole

CS called meeting to order at 6:35pm

1. Approval of Minutes: March 20th for approval. CM motions to approve with changes, MG seconds. AR abstains.
2. No correspondence.
3. Advancement policy was developed by JW and RT; Board will receive prior to May meeting and discussion/voting to take place in that session.
4. Upcoming meetings
    a. May 8th – 5:30pm Finance, 6:30pm Board
    b. June 14th– 5:30pm Finance, 6:30pm Board (note: a change from June 12th)
    c. Will discuss in June meeting July and August meeting dates; will also discuss optimal day of the week for Board to meet for next school year
    d. CS reiterated that Board policy is that people do all they can to attend unless sick and not call in
5. Board Candidates
    a. Bob Hawkes
        i. Vote was tabled from March meeting. AR motions to vote, MG seconds.
        ii. AR, MG, CS vote yes. CM, DW vote no. Motion carries. BH now a Board member.
    b. Potential Members/Recruitment
        i. CS to reach out to Emily Haswell had previously expressed interest in joining.
        ii. JW to add information about Board openings into some Birches Bulletins as well as Facebook.

iii. Will advertise in the Chamber of Commerce over the summer; CS to reach out to CoC.
iv. JW to reach out through SpringSchool.
v. AH to reach out to Granite State Board of Advertisers.

6. Foundation
    a. As of end of March at $47,725 on goal of $80K
    b. Charity Gaming check from Cheers received; lower than expected due to a slow start at the establishment and weather. Received $7326. (Amount is not included in the end of March total.) May try Chasers next year. Have a one-day make up which may be able to use at Chasers.
    c. Mega Cash Raffle – 98 tickets sold of the 300. Ticket sales table will be set up at all Birches events. Deadline May 31st. Will ensure it's on the main Facebook page, including that they can pay online.
    d. Scholastic Book Fair taking place this week.
    e. Special Friends Day taking place this week (April 19).
    f. Teacher and Staff Appreciation – second week in May
    g. Clothing Drive – May 22/23
    h. Second round of Annual Appeal letters are out. Behind donations from last year but we tend to get them late to not a major concern at this point.
7. School Update
    a. 219 students; lost a 7th grader due to relocation – based on timing unlikely to fill the spot this school year.
    b. Sent out 2018-19 Intent to Return form; still coming in but only a few no's so far which were mostly due to relocation.
    c. All K have accepted for 2018-19; 54 people on the waitlist.
    d. Saplings Spirit Night held Friday, April 13 – very popular, well run.
    e. Have started state testing; used a mix of laptops and iPads but iPads kept crashing so will only use laptops and test smaller groups at a time.
    f. Had Poetry Alive team from NC come in for Poetry Month; successful and will look to rebook for 2019.
8. Finance
    a. May meeting: Board will approve February, March and April budget actuals
    b. Reviewed draft budget for 2018-19; most items do not change year over year but some highlights include:
        i. 3% raise for all staff
        ii. Add another middle school teachers
        iii. Some furniture and equipment for new middle school classroom
        iv. Reduced art teacher materials budget (due to ongoing underspend/good budgeting)
        v. New laptops (~12)
        vi. Some additional funding for grounds (mulch, tick spray, etc.)
    c. Motion to approve 2018-19 budget which also approves the changes to the middle school program. AR motion, CS seconds. All in favor.
9. Personnel
    a. JW put 8th grade math/middle school teacher on SchoolSpring.
    b. JW shared teacher contract with lawyer for review since it had not been reviewed since its inception.
    c. Contracts to be given out in May with new salary information.

d. HOS Hiring Committee
    i. There are concerns with the effectiveness of the hiring process
        1. CM, DW believe it needs to be streamlined to move much more quickly so that we capture the best candidates
        2. Staff has had great insights/questions but having such a large group is slowing down the process due to trying to coordinate schedules, timing, etc.
        3. Recommendation is a new 4 step process:
            a. Resume screening: CM, DW, RT, JW; done within 24 hours of receipt; most are likely easy yes or no, but if not sure MC will phone screen
            b. Interview: CM, DW, RT, JW (if one person can't come from either Board or Admin, only one person from each team)
            c. Extended tour: start with meeting with MC from an HR perspective, tour of school by Admins, meet and greet with teacher committee
                i. After rounds 1 and 2 all involved must meet as quickly as possible/maximum within 24 hours to share input and recommendations
            d. Interview with the full Board (public session interview, deliberations closed) – will be in a special meeting (48 hours notice) that can have public comment but not questions, though we will give people an opportunity to submit questions to the Trustees address
    ii. MC to rework on the interview matrix adding weighting to help score candidates
    iii. JW will share the new process with the teacher committee

10. Outreach
    a. Alyssa will be sending in pictures Stage Adventures to local publications.
    b. Website to be updated in the summer; proposal in development.
11. Public Comment
    a. Michelle Cole said community members are concerned that there is not a lot of progress on the hiring process. JW will add a short piece in the next bulletin.

BH approves to adjourn/MG seconds. All agree.

8:59pm meeting adjourned**.**