Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Date: September 15, 2020

Held via Zoom videoconferencing

Present: Chair: Christie Storniolo (CES),Vice Chair: Secretary: Alyssa Ross (AR), Michael Gendreau (MG), Debbie Kruzel (DK)
Staff: Chris Smith (CDS), Jessica Wachsman (JW), Aimye Haroutunian (AH), Erin Balfe (EB)
Regrets: Christine Miele (CM), Bob Hawkes (BH),
Public:

CES called meeting to order at 5:37pm

General

This meeting is taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic; we are holding the meeting via videoconferencing software. The public was notified and invited to join. CES noted that even when school reopens the Board may continue to meet via Zoom in order to limit activity at school.

Approval of minutes from August 25 regular meeting. MG motions to approve, DK seconds. All approve. None opposed.

Correspondence

- none

Next meetings

- October 6 5:30pm Finance committee
- October 13: 5:30pm Board
- November 10 5:30pm Finance committee
- November 17: 5:30pm Board
- December 8: 5:30pm Finance committee
- December 15: 5:30pm Board

Dean of School update

Enrollment

- 2020-21 enrollment at 225, wait list at 128

- 25% fully remote

School Reopening

- Students have returned in person; physical dividers are in place and students have been generally patient and respectful of the safety protocols we have put in place
- A few families moved to remote at the last minute
- Several parents have reached out with helpful suggestions, and we have made some changes as a result.
    - For example, 5th grade students will have access to Birches emails so that teachers can send their assignments directly. This will help parents who have multiple students especially as they receive a lot of emails currently.
- CDS has urged teachers to take some risks as they develop their online lessons using new programs and different strategies.
- Having teachers work together on Wednesday in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) has been successful so far, and all of the teachers were able to implement video technologies into their classrooms.

Personnel/HR

- Hired third grade TA
- Former TA hired to teach middle school science
- Hired a health officer, who is supervised by a nurse

Foundation update

- Foundation Financials:
    - Waiting for August report
- Current Fundraisers:
    - Three Rivers Wreaths & Plants
        - Selling mums and bulbs
        - Goal is to raise $1,000; at $521
- Upcoming Fundraisers:
    - Cash calendar - November
        - Tickets to be sold late September and October
        - Tickets both hard copy and remote learners
        - $10 or 3 for $25
        - Goal is to raise $10,000; asking each family to see at least 15 tickets
    - Meadow Farm Catalog (in place of Yankee Candle who has discontinued sales)
        - 8 different catalogs - wrapping paper, candy, etc.
        - Sales direct ship to purchaser
        - Online store will open 10/1/2020-11/30/2020
    - Three Rivers

        - Holiday wreaths
        - Middle school DC trip fundraiser; 6th graders can participate and funds will be banked
    - Charity Gaming
        - Trying to get on lists; calendars have been shuffled due to canceled COVID dates
        - Reaching out to Concord Casino to see if we can get some dates.
    - Spirit Wear**:** Online site will open late September
- Ongoing Fundraisers:
    - Tuft & Needle 25% of all mattress sales will go to the school.
        - We earned a free mattress to raffle off
        - No set goal; at $1368

Committee updates

Finance

- July 30 and August 31 financials budget to actual. AR motions to approve, MG seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- FEMA announced they will not be reimbursing schools, but recommendation was to work with municipalities to tap into that funding - but because we are not associated with one, JW to explore what we might be able to do.
- JW meeting with auditors in October to discuss COVID expenditures that were not included in our total budget to understand the impact on our 2H020-21 budget.

Capital Campaign

- CM met with William to discuss new timing
- Initial thought is to hold off on launch until early 2021, with major kickoff being Fill Your Cup in the spring
- July 1, 2021 is first date to let landlord know of our plans

Governance

- Have 6 potential new members
- Confirmed the process is each potential new member will meet with 1-2 Board members once they have expressed their interest

Outreach

- Last meeting: September 14, 8am
- Next meeting: October 7, 8am
- External Social Media:
    - Seeking a new intern, ideally a local one who can come to the school on a regular basis to take pictures and generate ideas.
    - Revisiting the daily Facebook and Instagram calendar
    - Alyssa met with Chris to update website
- Ongoing Projects:

    - Christine will update Bloomerang with all donations since February.
    - Christine and Debbie will create an Alumni/Past Donor newsletter. We will not be sending out yet but are preparing the template so content can be added easily.
- New Projects:
    - Alyssa and Christine to discuss and create a crisis communication plan
    - Debbie is keeping an eye out for possible new building opportunities

Personnel

- CDS 2019-20 review in process with subcommittee of AR, CES
    - Board members to give input then survey will go to CDS for his input.
    - Once CDS input is in, AR to schedule time with each Board member to review.
    - Initial goal suggestions for CDS
        - Remain current on cutting-edge/best practices in educational technology and sharing learnings with/encourage to share best practices amongst one another to optimize hybrid/remote learning
        - Further develop personal public speaking and communication/organizational skills
        - Be an active participant in discussions and planning for Project Treehouse
        - Continue data analysis to identify trends and incorporate student learning modifications to shape the school's curriculum
        - Support Arts Integration in the classroom while also tying this approach with our STEM offerings (once we can resume use of the Maker Space), as a way to position the unique offerings of the Birches Academy

Assessment & Accountability, Curriculum, Strategic Planning

- All need to schedule meetings

Policy Reviews

September policies to review

- Child Restraint and Seclusion. Discussed input and changes, including who is the trained resources. AR motions to approve, MG seconds. All approve. None opposed.

October policies to review

- Personal Medical Leave

No public comment.

No non public session.

MG motions to adjourn. DK seconds. All agree. 7:01pm meeting adjourned.