

**Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor – Minutes of the Board of Trustees
Wednesday, November 7, 2018**

Present: Dilip Das, Knut Hill, Daryl Honor, Jim McCauley, Don Remboski, Heather Rindels, Tim Standke (via phone), Paul Trombley

Excused: Gary Banks, Mike McFall, Bob Rajewski

Others Present: Katrina Klaphake, Sian Owen-Cruise, Carolyn Raschke

Don Remboski called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 5:45pm.

Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes

- The agenda as distributed was reviewed with a change to add the Development Update.
- A motion to approve the October 3 meeting minutes with one small correction and all current reports was made by Knut Hill with support from Heather Rindels. There were no dissensions and the motion was approved.

Development Update

- Development Director Katrina Klaphake reported that the Board's Annual Fund donation goal was reached and that nearly 100% of full-time faculty have given. Her staff is working on a year-end campaign for those who want to give for tax purposes.
- Implementation of the third phase of Capital Campaign is being finalized by the Development Committee and will come to the Board for input in January.
- Plans for a Donor Wall in the new space is moving along well. We will use this opportunity for both cultivation and recognition.
- Katrina asks that each Board member write heartfelt Thank You notes to Capital Campaign donors. Katrina also asks that each Board member contact someone by phone for a more personal connection.

Waldorf Study – AWSNA Shared Principles (#7) – Tabled until December Meeting

- Sian Owen-Cruise noted that we are reviewing these at the Board level because they were recently released by AWSNA and are a backbone to our next accreditation.

2019-20 Tuition

- Dilip Das informed the Board that the Finance Committee does not have a proposal for the 2019-20 tuition increase for today's meeting. The Committee felt that a more robust discussion was necessary at the board level since the Committee struggles annually to balance the budget and has had to make cuts for the last several years to get to a zero budget.
- Dilip Das noted that the mismatch between our small school (enrollment-wise) and our large school infrastructure with its rich education is at a crisis level. It is not wise, feasible or responsible for the Board to consistently increase tuition when enrollment is the issue.
- It is imperative that we fund the school adequately with plans to reverse decreasing enrollment and contingency plans if enrollment doesn't increase.
- Concurrent with our struggles is the formation of the Enrollment Taskforce which was positive and had high attendance from people in the community. Subcommittees were established to move forward with ideas and strategies.
- Dilip Das was thanked formally for bringing this matter forward in this way.
- Jim McCauley noted that finding the target and finding contingencies are both imperative and asked about Board responsibilities in this process. Dilip Das responded that the Board must formally acknowledge the sense of urgency in this situation and make enrollment its top priority for the long term.
- Comparable area private school tuition rates were discussed briefly.
- Many topics and discussion items were brought forth:
 - Teacher pay and benefits – can we be more efficient?
 - Hollowing out from the inside – thin down in every area that isn't a classroom contact area – front desk, educational support
 - Sian Owen-Cruise noted that all Administrative staff are part-time except for Coordinators with a cap of 29 hours per week so that our benefits costs are low. This is a risk in a healthy employment market.
 - If enrollment doesn't significantly change, we will be forced to thin curriculum – as a school, we are heavy on full-time teachers in extra programs
 - A sustainable model with our current contingent of teachers is enrollment at 85-90% of capacity
 - Need to determine cost and outlays to run the school consistent with level of curriculum we need to run the school
 - How many people turn away when they see the tuition amount? We don't know.
 - How can we communicate our value and tuition in a different way?
 - Consider a different approach – Jewish Day School presents income scaled tuition and encourages very open discussion.

- What pricing strategy will optimize enrollment?
- How to use Rudolf Steiner's point that the school is intended for anyone who wants it?
- Full classes beget full classes and we may need scholarships that go beyond current tuition assistance.
- We need to be careful we don't discriminate or exclude current families who may qualify.
- How can volunteers be utilized more?
- Sian Owen-Cruise informed the group that the Enrollment Taskforce Subcommittee meetings are already scheduled and they are asked for two quick actions that we can implement in December and then bigger items to be implemented later.
- Dilip Das was asked to clarify the timing on the tuition increase decision by the Board. The Administration requests a decision for a January 2019 implementation.
- Jim McCauley noted that an optimization calculation would be useful. He also thanked Dilip Das on behalf of the Board for bringing the conversation to this level.
- Don Remboski summarized three main points of this topic:
 - Income scaled tuition
 - Scholarships to keep class at a certain level
 - Volunteer involvement improvement
- Sian Owen-Cruise closed the conversation by thanking the Board for their commitment to increased enrollment and by noting that parents feel more ownership through volunteering.

Enrollment Taskforce

- Sian Owen-Cruise reported that almost 50 people attended and that this is one way to encourage stickiness and buy-in.
- The Board requested the Enrollment Taskforce packets and names of subcommittee members.

Finalize Administrator Goals

- Don Remboski asked for any questions or concerns on the 2018-19 Administrator Goals.
- Sian Owen-Cruise requests that the School Administrator goals be finalized in June rather than November to coordinate more naturally with the school year and provide time during the summer for planning.

- Don Remboski clarified that there are two proposals: 1) to approve the 2018-19 School Administrator goals and 2) to move the approval of the goals to June annually.
- A motion to approve the 2018-19 Administrator Goals was made by Daryl Honor with support from Heather Rindels. There were no dissensions, the motion was approved.
- A motion to move the approval of the Administrator goals to June annually was made by Daryl Honor with support from Heather Rindels. There were no dissensions, the motion was approved.

New Business

- Given that State of Michigan voters legalized marijuana in yesterday's election, Don Remboski asked about messaging to parents, students and staff.
- Sian Owen-Cruise stated that we already have policies around drug use and the talking points are that marijuana use is legal for adults but not for children under 21 and not allowed at any school events or on school grounds. School employees are not to be on property or at a school event under the influence of alcohol or marijuana.
- Sian Owen-Cruise also noted that healthy lifestyle education is already part of the Grade 9-12 curriculum in the High School and involves many faculty members.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jim McCauley with support from Heather Rindels. There were no dissensions, the motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

2018-19 Board Meetings:

December 5, January 9, February 6,
March 6, April 3, May 1 and June 5