

Scattergood Friends School
School Committee Meeting
Open Session
Proposed Minutes
6 September 2014

Mission Statement

Scattergood Friends School challenges students with a college-preparatory curriculum, farm experience, a shared work program, and community living in the spirit of Quaker faith.

Present: Lucy Hansen, Allan Winder, Phil Henderson, Dan Schlitt, Bob Winkleblack, Katherine Young, Ruth Dawson, Harmony Dunn, Debbie Galusha (clerk), Ruthie Hampton, Karen Greenler, Doyle Wilson, Claire Cumbie-Drake, George Bergus, Rebecca Bergus, Bob Winchell, Russ Leckband, Shana Wagner, Roy Helm

Foundation representative: Dan Treadway

Staff Present: Christine Ashley, Alicia Streeter, Louis Herbst, Thomas Weber, Jody Caldwell, Mark Shanahan

Friends settled into silent worship in a timely manner. The clerk shared the following quote:

“The goal of the Quaker meeting is the discovery of God’s will with reference to each matter of concern and is based upon the conviction that His will will emerge through corporate attendance upon Him and be recognized as such when it is given expression. Proper attendance upon the Light, therefore, ultimately will lead to a unified sense of the meeting, although long and often painful deliberation may be required before unity is reached. “

Richard Bauman
For the Reputation of Truth

We began by introducing ourselves to our two new School Committee members, Roy Helm and Shana Wagner.

Note: We will change the date of our next School Committee meeting from November 1 to October 25, 2014.

Minute: We approve the minutes, both open and closed, of our meetings on July 22 and 25, 2014.

Minute: We approve the School Committee Handbook.

We appreciate the vigilant work of the archivist to keep our documents current.

The subcommittee reports gave us more welcomed insight into the workings of the school. Admissions has been building relationships with educational consultants from the U.S. and the United Arab Emirates to increase our exposure. Since boarding schools are not the trend right now they are exploring ways to attract day students: lower day-student tuition, provide transportation from Iowa City, and consider offering 7th and 8th grade classes. Enrollment is currently at 39 students but they are hopeful of recruiting mid-year students. Development’s database is outdated and unsupported, and we will need an updated or new system before beginning a capital campaign. The development office has proposed switching to cloud-based e-Tapestry which is more versatile, user friendly, and is less

expensive. Henry Freeman has agreed to lead a two-day capital campaign consultation. We will ask Henry what this includes and this will help us decide which dates to be best for this visit.

Minute: We approve up to \$5,400 for the purchase and support fees of a new database system for the Development Office.

Minute: We approve \$2,000 plus transportation to bring in Henry Freeman for a two-day consultation on the Capital Campaign.

Spiritual and Community Life met with Dana Foster, the new staff representative for the subcommittee, but does not yet know which students will be involved. Facilities has been working hard on the beautiful lobby face-lift, is considering contracting out the lawn mowing duties, and recommend creating a Facilities fund for small projects. Farm reported the crops are doing well despite the program being understaffed. The vegetable washer is nearly finished, and it was suggested a YouTube video of it be posted. They also hope to work on a better record keeping system that can track the cost value of food produced for the school.

Note: Farm will give a program presentation at our October meeting.

After brunch new staff were introduced: Amy King Weber, Fernando Finot, Ann Hinkhouse, Jody Caldwell, Neal Shaffer (Friend in Residence).

Louis gave a presentation on the Academic programs, focusing on science and math. Critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration across networks have been practiced as students have worked on real-world projects such as an improved solar oven, designs for automatic temperature regulation in the library, a Freon-free air conditioner, and other designs using SketchUp software. Staff have either already been practicing or are adapting to this style of teaching, and our financial limitations stretch them to be innovative and creative. The School Committee expressed that we are grateful for this work, embrace that it matches well with Quaker teaching philosophy, and hope that a template is being created to carry this program into our future years.

Note: It was suggested this presentation could be brought to the Monthly Meetings. It was also suggested that if staff are moved to, they could make short YouTube videos of who they are, what excites them, and what innovative programs they are developing at the school.

Minute: We affirm the Human Resource subcommittee to do the Heads' evaluations.

Minute: We approve to add Thomas Weber as a signer at Hills Bank, Johnson County Community Foundation, and Great River Bend Community Foundation.

Thomas reported that the preliminary feedback from the audit by Jim Jorgenson from Latta Harris is positive and that there are no major red flags. They will make recommendations to the business office to improve accountability, and we hope to have the finished report in October.

Note: Consultation and Finance need to meet with the auditor at the meeting after which the audit is released.

Consultation and Finance reported the Foundation released \$80,000 to help us cover last year's shortfall. With only 39 students our budget is not balanced, but Admissions is confident in enrolling mid-year students. We are currently cash-rich so will pay down our line of credit and hope to change the credit payback schedule so it better matches our needs. Future financial statements will include a balance sheet that shows our line of credit, and we are working on a new system for monitoring financial health and projections. We discussed lowering the day-student tuition for the next academic

year to attract students, but agreed that more research needs to be done before that happens. We also briefly explored raising the maximum tuition and increasing the discount based on a sliding scale so there would be no use of the term “financial aid”.

Note: At our January meeting Thomas will bring more information on the sliding scale model, its impact, and any data to support this approach.

Note: Thomas and Consultation & Finance will work on the five-year projections and come back with a proposal, including tuition changes. Admissions would also be a part of the conversation.

Note: A three-page financial statement will be sent out with reports to give more details, but we will refer to the one-page version in our meetings.

Minute: We approve the financial report as of August 27, 2014.

Minute: We approve a 3% tuition increase for boarding students for the 2015-2016 school year, bringing full tuition to \$29,850.

Minute: We approve a 3% tuition increase for day students for the 2015-2016 school year, bringing full tuition to \$18,350.

Master Planning reassessed where we are currently in the planning process. Our pressing needs are residential, the boy’s dorm being the prime candidate for consideration. We need to fulfill both social and physical needs, green building is important, and HOW we build is as important as WHAT we build. Our next step is to clarify our plan by bringing in outside help. After looking at 3 other firms it is recommend we hire private architect John Shaw who likes and understands the school. He has given a proposal for a master plan priced at \$12,000, and we will confirm what exactly is included in this proposal. Allan Winder will be the project manager for this stage of the project.

Note: We will soon need to find and approve funding for this stage of the process.

Note: We approve Debbie and Phil to work on the October School Committee retreat.

Minute: We reaffirm our Statement of Non-discrimination with a change of the phrasing to include “gender identity and expression”.

Katherine and Ruth D. revisited our mission statement and affirmed that it is not inconsistent with our vision, and that we should not change anything at the moment. We can look at this more closely next September after the discussions occur within Monthly Meetings.

Minute: We reaffirm our Mission Statement.

Perhaps a shadow day could be considered for the future.

The clerk adjourned the open meeting to proceed into closed session.

Ruth Hampton, recording clerk

Next Meetings: October 25, January 17, March 14 (Des Moines), May 9, and July 21 (the Tuesday of Yearly Meeting)