

Scattergood Friends School  
School Committee Meeting  
Open Session Approved Minutes  
25 October 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, Debbie Galusha (clerk), Ruthie Hampton, George Bergus, Rebecca Bergus, Roy Helm, Shana Wagner, Russ Leckband, Phil Henderson

**Absent:** Dan Schlitt, Karen Greenler, Doyle Wilson, Claire Cumbie-Drake, Bob Winkleblack, Katherine Young, Ruth Dawson, Harmony Dunn, Bob Winchell

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

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

All Friends, that are grown up in the life and power of the truth, see that when ye appoint your meetings in any open place, in the fields, on the moors, or on the mountains, that none appoint meetings in your own wills; for that lets in the wills of the world upon the life of Friends, and so ye come to suffer by the world. But at such meetings let the wisdom of God guide you, that some may be there to preserve the truth from suffering by the world; that all burdens may be kept off, and taken away. So will ye grow pure and strong. And when there are any meetings in unbroken places, ye that go to minister to the world, take not the whole meeting of Friends with you thither, to suffer with and by the world's spirit; but let Friends keep together, and wait in their own meeting place. So will the life (in the truth) be preserved and grow.

**Minute:** We approve the minutes, both open and closed, of our meeting on September 6, 2014.

We had a brief check-in about our Scattergood conversations within Monthly Meetings, and so far only West Branch has conducted their query session. A question was posed if Scattergood staff and students could attend these discussions, but the general sentiment was that those visits would be helpful beforehand but the Monthly Meetings discussions were internal conversations to help the Meetings with the fundamental and hefty questions about their relationship to the school.

We heard informative reports of the many projects and ongoing work of the school. Academic is excited about the recent Toshiba grant for a DNA sequencing lab. Admissions is optimistic there will be a few mid-year transfers, and that the relentless outreach efforts of Alicia, Christine and Jody are beginning to show results. Development is working on a strategic plan, and will soon announce the Target Red-Card program. Steering Committee is taking shape with Christine and Leslie Schiller as co-chairs, Phil Henderson, Amy Eilers (Des Moines), and at least one more person is needed. Facilities reported the Science Building boiler could fail very soon and we need to address this immediately. They are trying to manage the ongoing dilemma of a small capital budget with large capital needs. Fernando will fill for Dana with Spiritual and Community Life while she is on maternal leave. They have a few ideas for the year: organize visits of regional faith leaders to give students a broader understanding of

other religions; facilitate readings and discussions; bring in films on the weekends. Human Resources will organize a conference call and will likely do a shorter version of the Heads' Evaluations this year.

Consultation and Finance reported the audit conducted by Jim Jorgenson of Latta Harris was basically a positive review with a few adjustments. It was noted that the Gwen Shupe Fund cannot be counted as income because it is a designated donation, and the Foundation donation line includes the \$80,000 transferred in July. We are back to \$0 with our line of credit and have rescheduled the due date for next fall to coincide with greater cash flow.

**Note:** There was a request for more detailed breakdown of the Capital Budget.

**Minute:** We approve the financial report as of October 15, 2014.

Mark Quee led a conversation about the Farm projects, philosophy, and hopes for the future. He surmises we do a lot well but there is potential for growth in areas of student involvement, and livestock. Every prospective student visits the farm so expectations are high when they arrive, and the Farm needs to rise to the occasion. The packing house has greatly helped storage and managing winter supply but there is more to be learned about what we use and what is needed when. They would like more monitoring of production and kitchen use to help monetize what is produced.

Mark sees the student experiences and production for the kitchen as the Farm's priority. The amount of work to provide produce to other schools or the co-op may not be the biggest bang for the labor hour when we are already understaffed, vegetable farming is a high labor endeavor. There is a balancing act between the food production and work involved with the Outreach component which helps with Admissions. Activities like hosting PFI programs and trials, speaking engagements, and hosting numerous visiting schools is important because it gets our name out there and give a picture of how unique we are. Students are our best ambassadors and we hope more of them are able to attend events with Mark and Dana.

Many student programs are happening on the Farm: Mike Severino is teaching classes to research raising fodder feed for livestock and raising maggots as an affordable protein source for chickens so we can bring back chickens into the farm program. Students are also helping manage the worm composting venture, helping with PFI trials, and one student is stepping in to help with Dana's absence.

We expressed great gratitude for the long hours and dedication of Mark and the Farm crew who provide us with delicious bounty as well as helping to fulfill an important part of our mission!

Heads reported on how the many efforts of the last few years are beginning to bear fruit. Seventeen out of thirty nine students are new this year, and the transparency of the admissions process has resulted in good matches with students and the school. They feel the overall well-being with students and staff is good. Outreach efforts have been beyond considerable, and they are trying to balance resources between building new relationships and cultivating the ongoing ones.

Master Planning recommends a shift in focus. Instead of a new building, our resources may be better used addressing major infrastructure issues with green alternatives. Henry Freeman visited the campus, read the survey, interviewed staff and students, and made this observation. This was a similar message we received from the Clean Energy Coalition last year. Three lists were formulated:

- 1) **Critical Repairs:** Boilers x 3; septic system; new main well and farm well upgrade; roofs
- 2) **"Sellable" Green Enhancements:** Solar farm on soccer field; convert campus to geothermal; convert buildings for more natural light; update to LED lighting; doors/windows/insulation
- 3) **General Enhancements:** Dorms (*especially bathrooms*); science lab upgrade; demolitions of farmhouse and old gym; move cottage for a Welcome Center; dining room/kitchen upgrades; gym upgrade; staff housing

The survey suggests that our extended community will find this an exciting and responsible direction to take the school. The list from Clean Energy Coalition includes grants that may be available for these green initiatives. It was strongly noted that within this plan must be money for ongoing maintenance of any project. The next step is to gather estimates from Mark Shanahan and John Shaw. Our current challenge is to raise \$12,000 to pay for John but it cannot come out of the Annual Fund.

**Note:** Are Committee members available to provide a no-interest loan/donation, or do they have ideas for people who would lend/donate this money?

**Minute:** We approve signing a contract with architect John Shaw to assist with the master plan projects with a cap of \$12,000.

After brunch Phil and Debbie led discussions about the realistic long-term direction for the school. As a governing body we are charged with figuring out where we need to go, and though the school's programs are very strong our enrollment continues to be unsustainably low and we do not see this changing dramatically in the near future. We broke into two groups, asking ourselves the questions, "**What constitutes success? What is our appetite for change? How willing are we to consider significant changes?**" There were four categories we considered:

- 1) Do nothing different but do it better (*this is already underway*), the mission remains the same
- 2) The mission remains the same but make changes to what we're doing, (*i.e. encouraging more day-students or adding middle school program*)
- 3) Major change in mission (*international school; for refugees; or school for adjudicated youth*)
- 4) Close the school

These are a few notes from our conversations. There are more detailed notes in a separate document.

- We thought our mission was strong and we would prefer Option #2 over changing the mission.
- In Iowa City there may be more need for middle school alternatives than for high school.
- If we pushed the day-student program we'd need to be very intentional about community—there could be issues with two separate groups (*boarders and day*)
- A focused 5-day boarding option for Des Moines and Chicago?
- **We don't understand our market**---we need to do more research.
- Not at ease with increasing international student ratio
- Even full enrollment would not be financially sustainable, especially if not full-pay students
- Create a Friends in Residence program for elders in the Quaker community to strengthen relationship between generations and with the Yearly Meeting, and possibly build it into a residential program funded by outside sources. Build into a global program?
- What would we need to know to begin a middle school program? 1) What people want; 2) What we can legally do; 3) A clear sense of numbers and budget 4) Program research
- It would require at least one teacher and one classroom space.

It seemed the area's greatest need we could fill might be 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade day-students programs. First step is to conduct a survey of middle school parents in the area. We also need a person to research programs and legalities, then we assess what we have learned.

**Note:** Shana, Thomas, Rebecca and possibly Nan Faucett and Lucy Marsh will speak with Amy Weber for advice, create and conduct these surveys, and report back at our January meeting.

The clerk adjourned the open meeting to proceed into closed session.  
Ruth Hampton, recording clerk

**Next Meetings:** January 17, March 14 (Des Moines), May 9, and July 21