

Scattergood Friends School
School Committee Meeting (Conducted via Zoom)
Open Session Minutes – 21 July, 2020

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: Ruth Hampton, Laël Gatewood, Charlie Johnson, Bob Winkleblack, Rebecca Bergus, Roy Helm, Kent Tjossem, Ann Robinson, Alex Lippitt, Bob Winchell, Tom Wahl, Aaron Woolfson, Matt Zisk, Karen Greenler,

Staff: John Zimmerman, Kendall Smith, Kim Jones, Sam Taylor, Sonja Spondheim, Jamie Newton, Shari Sollars

Friends settled into silent worship in a timely manner. With new members present, we all introduced ourselves. We expressed our gratitude to those leaving the committee: Rebecca Bergus, Ann Robinson, Dan Schlitt, Debbie Galusha, Lucy Marsh (who will remain on Spiritual Life and Community sub-committee) and Karen Greenler (who will stay for part of the year.)

FYI, there is a SC page with information on the school website. Drop down under “About” and click on “School Committee” and Ruth will send instructions how to access beyond that.

MINUTE: We approve the minutes, open and closed of May 2, 2020. The update to the Operating Statement was sent out as requested.

We noted two minutes we had approved by email since the last full School Committee meeting:

MINUTE: We approved asking IYMC for \$54,000 for the 20-21 fiscal year.

MINUTE: We approved Aaron Woolfson and Matt Zisk as full members of School Committee and Preben Borch, Ayanna Dewer and Nan Fawcett as new associate members of sub-committees.

Development: We celebrated meeting our Annual Fund goal for AY 19-20 and discussed whether to change that goal for next year. The current goal has been \$280K; do we want to increase it to \$330K? If there is an increase, should the new goal be stated or unstated? These are difficult financial times and we don’t know what to expect from our donor base and if a silent goal would be harder to meet. Kendall wants to focus on alumni this coming year and several sub-committee members are alumni.

Farm: The IYMC report was sent out in advance. We found the report eloquent and it will be a great benefit to the Yearly Meeting.

MINUTE: We approve, with appreciation, the farm report to the Yearly Meeting,

Academic: The committee appreciates Sam’s excellent reporting over the last year. The Middle School Director will be asked to join the Academic sub-committee in fall. We talked about transitions needed in the next year, given the pandemic’s exigencies. The checklist in the Coronavirus plan addresses priorities and the sub-committee will revisit changes to these planning documents as the year starts. Iowa City schools are probably closed until October; Cedar Rapids hasn’t decided whether to begin remotely. This doesn’t necessarily affect us, but will inform our decisions.

Facilities: The sub-committee will meet later this week. Kent and Matt toured the campus in early July and the work accomplished was impressive. Matt has been working on the apartments and on plans for the sprinkler system, the well proposal, and other projects. We appreciate Matt’s hard work.

HR and Transition: HR didn’t meet, but the HR committee is all on the Transition Committee and so they have met in that context. HR will conduct an exit interview with Thomas in the not-to-distant future. The Transition

Committee and staff have worked hard to prepare the way for our new Head of School, including clarifying processes, collecting documents and materials to help make the transition as successful as possible. The committee will continue for the next year to provide support as needed.

Consultation and Finance: The Operating Statement looks better than it did in late April. We are only about \$60K in the red, which is much better than expected. Much of the savings is due to students being gone from campus in spring. Over \$100K of deficit is expected for upcoming year. We walk the edge every year and usually something positive happens to keep us going. Cash flow problems will become more pressing soon because classes (and so payroll) is starting early and our line of credit may not be adequate. School Committee members are urged to contribute now so that 100% of governance has contributed; this is an important fact for further fundraising. A token donation can always be followed by another contribution, and there is a monthly donation option online. Thanks to Kim for the work on adjusting to the pandemic, applying for the PPP money, and, with others, learning the new financial forecasting model offered by NAIS, which will be very helpful for long-range planning. This model will be a base-level document for planning and reporting by all departments.

MINUTE: We accept the operating statement as of June 30, 2020.

We are comfortable with next year's sub-committees as proposed although we will officially approve the sub-committee list at our September meeting. Our clerk brought forth a proposal for a new assistant clerk position for this next year. There has been an informal clerk support team over the last couple of years, and the clerk would appreciate making this a more formal position as a trial for the coming year. After this year, we could make the change permanent in the handbook, if we desire. Many Quaker organizations use an "emeritus, present, and future" clerk team structure, which we may want to explore. We also need to think about how to nurture and develop leadership on the committee.

MINUTE: We approve the position of assistant clerk, with Roy Helm serving, for the upcoming year.

Spiritual and Community Life: The report stands. The school community stayed together last spring as it functioned virtually. It was, of course, less than optimal, but that it worked was remarkable. There is excitement about starting up in fall.

Admissions: Coronavirus has been good for admissions! There has been a lot of interest and an uptick in applications so that we might see an increase in HS numbers. The middle school is maxed out at 15 students. There is a lot of excitement in seeing this plan come to fruition after years of planning.

MINUTE: We approve the HOS report to the Yearly Meeting.

MINUTE: We approve the following dates for School Committee meetings for the upcoming year: 9/12, 11/7, 1/16, 3/13, 5/1, 7/20.

MINUTE: The Tuition ad-hoc committee will be reformulated to consider tuition for the 21-22 AY. Kim, Alex, and Shari will serve. Ruth will ask Ayanna if she would like to join.

In September, we usually affirm the handbook and the mission statement. We decided to maintain the school's mission as written for this year and consider it in greater depth next year. The handbook also will need greater consideration this year, but we will let it stand for now. There is need for a complete and in-depth review to ensure that the Student/Parent, Staff, and SC handbooks are in agreement with each other. This work will be undertaken over the course of the year by an ad-hoc committee to include Lael, John, and others. When the question arose which parts of the Staff Handbook are decided by the school and which by the School Committee, John suggested that we have both a governing document that is approved by the SC and an operations document that is used and overseen by Head of school.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Greenler,
Recording clerk