



FIRST STATE MONTESSORI ACADEMY, INC

Public Session Minutes

Thursday, 7-23-15, 6:30 pm

Present: Courtney Fox, Kristin Chastain , Erin Carroll, Beth Carter, Yvonne Nass, Angela Angeny, Kayara Panula, Zeke Allinson, Chris Graham

Absent: Gina Castelli, Jed Donohue, Chanda Gilmore, Heather Townsend

Opening Comments (Co-Chairs):

Yvonne Nass proposed the Board approve the June 2015 minutes. Courtney Fox requested the tense be changed in the previous month's minutes, among other minor changes. Chris motioned that the minutes be changed to reflect Courtney's request. Jessie seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Monthly Reporting Package (Courtney Fox):

School revenues appear high due to FSMA's receipt of the Longwood Grant. Expenses are 85% of the budget. Teacher salaries must be put aside a year in advance, so they are showing up in the budget for the coming year (2015-2016).

Educational Services were coded to come out of three different buckets. Carryover is not true to the \$1,022,711.00 shown because this high number is comprised of several one-time donation items to include the Performance Fund, Longwood Grant and other funds.

FSMA raised \$300,000.00 this year, but we cannot bank on this amount from year to year. It is not a growing number. Courtney emphasized repeatedly that it is not a sustainable carryover. Revenue is more likely to remain at \$100,000.00 to \$150,000.00 annually in the coming years. Zeke Allinson emphasized this point

Angela Angeny stressed that FSMA did not cut anything from the curriculum in year two to maintain a good budget. She stated that the current budget model was/is sustainable.

Kayara Panula asked whether the budget numbers for contracted services were accurate. Courtney Fox said that they were.

Governance (Erin Carroll)

Erin Carroll asked whether the co- and vice-chairs from the board should share attendance and not be on separate board committees. Yvonne Nass asked whether this was viable.

Zeke Allinson told the board that the CBOC and Finance Committee had established their separate roles. He said that they had finalized their delineation of roles and responsibilities in a month with the goal of avoiding duplication of work.

Yvonne Nass stressed that it was hard to enter a new committee and quickly establish a purpose and sense of place. Expectations needed to be set. Trust in the committee chairs must be established, and committee chairs should make themselves available for support.

Courtney Fox questioned whether a regular sit in from members from other committees should be required. Erin Carroll questioned making this a requirement. Angela Angeny thought it was a requirement. Yvonne Nass also believed it was a requirement for those with a role on the committee. Courtney asked whether the vice- and co-chair should make themselves generally available.

Yvonne Nass thanked all committee members for providing their separate minutes.

Gina Castelli, though not present at the meeting, relayed a request through Erin Carroll that she not sit in on the governance committee. A final decision regarding this request was not made.

Academic Excellence (Kristen Chastain in place of Heather Townsend):

From the school end, this committee is still in the process of establishing its role. The committee wants to be included in school happenings. A “Montessori moment” will be added to this committee’s presentation in October 2015 to help the board become more familiar with the school, teachers, and teaching method.

Zeke Allinson asked whether we have a cheat sheet for Montessori principals? Yvonne Nass directed the group to Montessori resources including FSMA’s brochure.

Development (Kyara Panula):

FSMA will be holding a fall Thank You Event to show appreciation to all its donors. The event will highlight our financially and academically strong school and showcase its powerful momentum. Thank you letters were sent out to those individuals and families that bought tree leaves and offered other donations. Jed Donohue is looking to reach out to potential donors. Courtney Fox offered to help the committee direct its goals and targets. Yvonne Nass offered to make herself available for all FSMA events.

Yvonne Nass discussed the commitment of the Founding Board. She stressed that when events happened, the Founding Board members all came out and interacted. She stressed that having a committed public face is essential.

Head of School Report (Courtney Fox):

Courtney Fox told the Board that all school positions were filled and that all lead teachers would be Montessori Certified by year's end. Those lead teachers were receiving and completing their Montessori coursework in the summer of 2015 and then required a Montessori internship.

The school's HVAC requires work. Courtney Fox had gotten 3 bids for the work. All were different, and the project was still under negotiation. The final bid should be under \$50,000.00.

The school's gym floor must be redone. There are many layers to the current floor. It's a complex job. Bids have been unsuccessful. FSMA is down to a couple of offers and the leadership is deciding what the final floor surface will be. The project's cost may be beyond the \$30,000.00 budget, and will take an estimated 14 to 16 days of work. The bidding process started in April, 2015. Courtney Fox apologized that it was not further along.

Lighting needed to be upgraded in the school. The school leadership invested in \$40,000.00 in LED lighting with 3-year warranty.

All plumbing contracts have been finalized and will be ready for the 2015-2016 school year. In 13 months the new, more efficient toilets will pay for themselves.

Courtney submitted the Consolidated Grant on July 15, 2015. She explained how the grant process worked and brought the grant to illustrate the sorts of documents required at the state level. Yvonne Nass thanked Courtney Fox for her hard work. Filling out this grant requires an intimate knowledge of the school's numbers, and the grant's requirements change annually.

Closing Comments (Open):

Yvonne Nass stressed that the Board Minutes needed to be made available to the public systematically and on a monthly basis. She requested that the Board Secretary send them to the school librarian each month for online posting. She also requested that Board pictures and bios be submitted to the school librarian.

Courtney Fox stressed that she and Liz Madden analyzed student numbers and dynamics. She stressed the need to maintain students at the middle-school level. The school and board will assess the need and creative ways to accomplish this goal. A Board committee will be selected to spearhead this effort. Zeke Allinson asked about any potential constraints on the building if the school were to expand. The subject was tabled for a future Board Meeting.

Yvonne Nass motioned to adjourn the public session, and Kristin Chastain seconded the motion. All were in favor.



FIRST STATE MONTESSORI ACADEMY, INC.

Executive Session Minutes Thursday, July 23, 2015

Opening Comments (Erin Carroll):

Erin Carroll recommended we slow down and continue with strategy planning to help solidify a vision through to October, 2015. She suggested we use the DANA training as a loose base. We need more time to get the strategic plan together. We have a roadmap from DANA activity. It provided a framework.

Angela Angeny asked how we should address this. She emphasized that we needed to finish what we began. She felt that we lack a statement from the DANA training.

Yvonne Nass stressed that the Dana trainer, Maryanne , was challenged because we are a new group. She also felt that we are where we need to be.

Angela Angeny asked whether we should we do a post mortem of the first year.

Erin Carroll suggested that the Board fill out a collective evaluation of our DANA training.

Kayara Panula questioned whether we need an evaluation.

Yvonne Nass mentioned the need for a Head of School Evaluation. Courtney Fox thought it had been done by Kendall. This was news to the board. Gina Castelli may have met with Kendall about it. Yvonne Nass thought that a co-chair and the Governance Committee must complete the evaluation. She stressed that she would will find out.

Courtney Fox mentioned that she must complete Director of Ed Evaluation to complete for next year.

Yvonne Nass asked that we provide a copy of executive minutes to all.

Erin Carroll asked that we to signify the board transition. What might that review and refresh look like?

Yvonne Nass called to adjourn the meeting. All were in fav