

CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2023, TUESDAY – 6:00 P.M.

Board Members Present: Jess Goff, Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Carolyn Ganz, Sarah Stocco, Tyler Bouwens, Jean Melancon, Rohan Chougule, Jeremy Miller

Board Members Absent: Alyssa Schwartz (on leave)

Other Attendees: Chris Bewell, Molly McDermott, John Stachel from Abdo Finance (until 6:23), Joe Aliperto of Deici Finance (until 6:35)

Meeting called to order by Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Board Chair, at 6:06pm.

AGENDA

Public Comment Period: Comments limited to 3 minutes per person.

- Molly McDermott – Children’s House guide, has been at Cornerstone since 2016, licensed teacher. Shared things that are important to her - staff retention, particularly in early childhood; advocating for early childhood is really important to me; participating in a fellowship this year through Child Care Aware MN; collaboration between MCM and CMES is important
- John – Abdo Finance - here to present fiscal audit results

Consent Agenda

- September 2023 Meeting Minutes
- Policy 103 Whistleblower
- Policy 525 Tele-related Services
- Policy 725.2 Records Retention for Special Education
- FY23 Annual Report for UST

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA. TYLER SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	

Stocco	x	
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Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

JEAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EVENING’S AGENDA. SARAH SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Julaine asked whether, given the approved agenda, there were any conflicts of interest. None were disclosed.

Annual Financial FY2023 report – Abdo Finance – John

Report will include – Audit, general fund, food service

- The Auditor issued an unmodified/clean opinion and there were no compliance findings reported
- Enrollment graph – consistent overall
- General fund balance – currently very high (41.3%), policy is 20%, general fund expenditures have gone up
- Food service came in under budget, Employee Retention Credit has boosted our fund balance
- In general, trends are solid, consistent, and in line with state averages.
- Some discussion about data – was anything adjusted, is this a charter or district comparison when looking at the state numbers

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AUDIT REPORT. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	

Stocco	x	
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Treasurer's Report – Joe

- ADM is 139 at the end of September - this will change in October as we have gained a couple students
- Strong healthy cash balance and strong healthy fund balance
- Northeast bank deposit CD – earning interest
- No changes to upcoming grants at the moment – we will update as/when this changes
- Donations this month - \$500 personal check
- Joe took us through the charts and graphs and reports – things are looking good
- Budget and expenditures are as expected.

JESS MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

TYLER MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE \$500 PERSONAL CHECK DONATION. SARAH SECONDED THE MOTION,. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Head of School Report – Jess

- Alyssa's leave started September 27, Acting HOS, Jess Goff has been filling in since then

- Update on activities – generally things are smooth, some new students, working on hiring a new para, staff days coming up this week – good things starting with Embracing Equity and Conscious Discipline
- UST site visit will be rescheduled after Alyssa returns
- Upcoming events Board members are welcome to attend
 - Parent Partnership, 10/23 5:30-6:30
 - Cornerstone Café, 11/3 8:45-9:45
 - Middle School Options Night, 11/13 6:00-7:00

Director of Business Operations – Chris Bewell

- Gained three students on Monday 10/16 – which brings ADM up to 142 – if all stay we will end up close to what we have budgeted
- Dept of Education and Grant System – it's smoother, and there is more communication in a more timely fashion, but it is taking time -long term will be a time saver
- Busing is taking up a lot of Chris's communication time – (Jess thanks her for her tireless support in this area)

Advancement Committee

- Give to the Max Day is November 16, 2023!

October 2023 Updates:

- Confirmed Hardenbergh does NOT fund schools directly.
- Submitting RFP for \$50,000 from Casey's Cash for Classrooms on 10/16/2023
- Support AMI training of up to 5 staff members
- Support Embracing Equity training of entire staff/community
- Continued work on Dryfus RFP to submit in early November.
- Continued coordination with contracted grant writer with monthly to twice-a-month meetings
- Planning for Give to the Max Day (anticipated fundraising for an overnight 6th-graders trip)
 - Targeted search for matching donor of \$3k, with a goal of raising \$6k total
 - Advancement also needs as specific information as possible for fundraising purposes for Give to the Max Day. Can we create marketing materials, promotions, and begin drumming up donor support via Stepping Stones soon?
- The Advancement Committee would like to solidify a plan on how to host an informational session for interested community members before 11/16/2023.
- Question about Friends of the School Newsletter – seems like the matching donor request would be a great thing to include in this newsletter
- Discussion of wording of Give to the Max ask – but noting also that this isn't a grant
- Have we been given any feedback about grants we haven't gotten – yes, Tyler shared some feedback.

- Give to the Max is doing the Golden Ticket thing again – so we can think about how to share that information

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

- Thank you all for coming to the Retreat on Sunday! Good discussion and priority setting. Notes will be out by end of this week hopefully from Rohan and Jean.
- Continuing ongoing meetings scheduled for lease renewal discussions, targeting October 31 for completion dates. Not as far as Julaine would like to be on shared agreements so maybe an additional meeting.
- Tyler, Sarah, and I are collaborating to determine what to do with list of parents interested in committee work
- Is everyone available to reschedule the November Board meeting to Nov. 28 at 6 pm? Yes – so Chris will reschedule on the calendar. This means that we likely will not have a December board meeting unless something comes up.
- Marc Frankel training for the board – in person, not sure of location yet, Friday, November 17th in the morning – encourage people to go, let Julaine know if interested, expecting 3-5 members to go
- Agenda for next board meeting
 - Give to the Max update

Feedback – what went well?

- Jean highly recommends reading the annual report thoroughly if you haven't taken that time yet

JEAN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:08 PM. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

The next CMES Board Meeting is Tuesday, November 28th, 2023, 6 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Jess Goff, CMES Secretary.