



Heartwood Montessori School grows community by empowering children through respect, independence, and discovery.

BOARD MEETING Minutes

July 21, 2021

Attending: Kate Murray, Jessamay Pesek, AmberJean Hegge, Emily Erickson, Stephanie Malone, Keith Johns, Ashley Paguyo (parent), Chris Jones (parent), Sarah Walbridge-Jones (parent), Kristi Curme, Ricardo McCurley (parent), Mellissa Olson

Consent Agenda (7:00-7:05 p.m.)

Approve last meeting's minutes [HERE](#) - (July)

Approve [public meeting minutes](#) from July for posting on the website

Open Table (7:05-7:20) Reminder that open table items requiring a vote will need to be tabled to next month's agenda and/or require a special session.

No items.

Director Updates (7:20-8:00):

- Status of summer programming
 - Moved into pods -
 - No one currently on waitlist for summer
 - Fully staffed
 - **Alondra will be leaving.**
- Still waiting on licenser to come for annual visit (ready for the visit!) and Emily will use this time with her to also discuss Toddler Community licensing needs
 - **The licenser called. Emily expects they will visit within two weeks.**
- Operational items
 - Status of fall 2021 enrollment
 - **19 kids in full day**
 - **17 in school day**
 - **12 in half day**
 - Status re half day classroom potentially expanding to full day; currently recommend keeping it half day
- ProCare
- **Email sent out email to families about ProCare today (7/21)**
 - Rationale and timeline:

- Roll out for billing in August; will need to work on messaging with parents
 - Why the app is important for equity (Parent Aware)
 - Financially beneficial for the school
 - Necessary for toddler community
 - App has various features and a lot of options
 - Will want to have a coordinated communication plan that comes from the Board and Emily together
 - Erica and Emily met; will be set up as Montessori platform; good to go and we can customize it to our needs as we go
 - Erica's role to work with staff on use of the app as it pertains to the Montessori method and use by guides with our family community
 - Tuition Payment Costs with credit cards versus bank transfers
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Board Strategic Discussion & Work: Top four strategic priorities for the next 3-6 months, as identified at our Strategic Planning Meeting on 4.17.21 (8:00-8:30)

Health & Safety Protocols/Planning for Fall

- Communication about protocols available next week from MDH, wait for official guidance. Expected that MDH will primarily follow CDC guidelines.
- When planning, we need to be careful considering kids, who can't be vaccinated.
- Some changes that we may consider: May not need to screen temperatures, potentially have parents drop off children inside. Masks may still be required. More to discuss before final decisions are made.
- Emily, Kate, and Staff plan to meet to discuss guidelines after MDH posts info. Consider the option to get family preferences.
- Will need to determine if pods would be able to share the basement play area if inclement weather requires inside gross motor skill time.
- Discuss the option to have an info session for families to prepare for the guidelines.
- Action: Continue conversation to prepare for fall. Once decisions are made, communicate with families.

Communication with our Community

- Newsletter or ways to communicate with families in the fall
- Suggestions: Frame conversations around our "Heartwood Community", more communication the better, discuss options on how to connect with new families. Ideas: New school year family event, discuss more opportunities to connect through the parent-engagement committee, put family/playdates on a calendar.
- Parent comment: Flyers can be effective for important events.
- Parent engagement committee: How do parents like to receive information?
 - Emily: Option: Send out a survey focusing on parent preferences. Also, meet with staff to discuss options.
- Utilize ProCare to communicate with family.

- Family Poll: We did one 2019-2020, and 2020-2021. Included info about communication preferences on that poll.
 - Result: Newsletter was well received.
 - Currently sending out the poll is on the December list of Board duties. Should we move it to September?
- Plan: Do poll again mid to early fall 2021. Include communication questions.
- Next meeting: Review poll results.
- Emily: Check with staff about communication.
- Board/Director/Staff opportunities for fall community

Strategic Priority: Continue to strengthen staff compensation and benefits

Action steps:

- Melissa connecting Emily with Matt Vinez for benefits conversation. **Emily is meeting with Matt on Friday.**

Strategic Priority: A clear and transparent view of our finances that allows the Board to make strategic decisions

Action steps:

- 990 turned in. **Complete.**
- All in One Accounting not able to complete full reconciliation of the books- some discussion needed here with how we want to continue. **Need support through the end of the fiscal year. Request for \$1000 to complete this current fiscal year, add this to the budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Should now be up to date.**
- Emily provided an overview of the budget for the 2021/2022 academic year budget (excel)
- Opportunity for grants.
- Final budget approved in October.

Strategic Priority: Expansion and increased enrollment

Action steps:

- Toddler committee update
 - Had another contractor review the renovation work to have a second bid.
 - We may not have to go into the bathroom. May just need a sink and changing table.
 - Exploring options for financing.
 - Hopefully next month will have a formal timeline.
 - May have more info about the licensor visit regarding space needs.
- Update on negotiations regarding space sharing with Exploration HS
 - Negotiations ongoing
 - Discuss request for lease renewal - Church is ready to discuss lease renewal since contract for building modification has been negotiated. Three year with three year first refusal has been suggested, actual talks should begin next week.

- Status of doors
 - Received two bids, \$11,000 bid accepted; share cost with the high school; the church will pay for the fencing. Update fencing as well to provide entrance for Exploration. Keith shared a drawing of the plan. High school will enter on 13th Ave, Heartwood will enter on the north side of the building.
 - Filed permit with the city. Once we have the permit, the contractor may start the work.
- Signed shared space amendment to our current lease.
- <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ha8yiP4bsDRA7PC1jzFge7CviiaPyL4H>
- Also discussion on CDC and building guidelines:
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/child-care-guidance.html>
- Communicate with parents about Exploration. Highlight in school start up communication, or have an open house via Zoom.
 - Fall 2020. We did a Zoom Open House Session, and each pod went with their teacher for a breakout room. Prior we did this in person.
 - Suggestion: Have parent volunteers be present the first two-days at drop off to assist with orienting new families, and welcoming everyone.

Operational Board tasks (8:30-8:45) [Board Monthly Task List](#), [Board Guiding Document](#)

- August 14th Strategic Planning Meeting, There is a possible conflict. May change the planning meeting to Saturday, August 21.
- Upgraded online banking to [business version](#) - completed
- Revisions to proposed budget - Treasurer's update included, reviewed by board
- Parent handbook- Emily has been reviewing and will have Erica review it; wondering about how to proceed with Board review (ad hoc committee/asynchronous edits?)
 - Suggestion: Document Change Log. Document what was changed for each version.
 - Send to the Board with a request to review. It is in the Drive. Anyone may offer edits/suggestions.
 - Edits due: August 6, 2021
- Annual Report - Tabled
 - Aim to have one out in the fall. Need to add financials, and request Board feedback. Most of the Annual Report is done.
 - Could have a 2-year report.
- [Board-Staff Contacts 2021-22 draft](#) - please review for accuracy
- Google Drive cleanup. The Director may do what they wish with the Drive to meet their needs.

- Suggestion to transfer documents to the Heartwood account (not personal email account). Heartwood having ownership makes organizing the Drive easier.
- Need to save bylaws and meeting minutes.

Committee Updates (8:45-8:50)

- Treasurer's update / Finance Committee
 - AmberJean to email update
 - Listed above.
- Executive Committee
- Community Engagement Committee (Caitlin, Ashley)
 - Expectations for fundraising goals
 - Two dates in August at NE Farmers Market. Looking for volunteers.
- Toddler Environment Committee (Corinne)
- Building & Grounds Committee (Keith)
 - Question: Do we need a summer/fall preparation grounds review?
 - Consider: Soil testing for future (UMN does testing)

Add to agenda for next meeting:

- Ricardo McCurley's nomination to the Board (need a vote at next month's meeting)

Adjourn