



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

BOARD MEETING Minutes

September 15, 2021

Attending: Board Members: Kate Murray, Jessamay Pesek, Keith Johns, Emily Erickson, AmberJean H, Corinne Ivanca, Kristie Curme, Terrijo Mikulich, Carissa and Alex, Ashley Paguyo, Quincy Craft, Natah, Nick Bauch, Anne Kemper, Charlotte Thompson, Sarah Walburge Jones, Ahmed El Shourbagy, Becca Poindexter, Melissa Olson

Consent Agenda (7:00-7:05 p.m.) -- moved to vote after the toddler community presentation

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

Motion carries to approve minutes at 7:45 pm
Vote made after toddler community presentation.

Special presentation: Toddler Committee (7:05-7:35) Committee members have requested to give their update at the beginning of the meeting. There will be a 15-minute presentation followed by 15 minutes for questions.

Presentation by toddler committee (PowerPoint presentation)

- Review of existing toddler care centers. Demand is present in the community.
- Timeline: Start design and board approval in September. Construction aims to start in December, with hope to do interior work during the winter break. Goal to have the toddler room open in March. Total time: 6 ½ months.
- Discussed staffing needs, projected salaries.
- Summary: There is a need. There is support. We have the space. It makes financial sense. Serves as a feeder to our children's houses.
- Motion for Heartwood to move forward with plans to move forward with adding the toddler community.
- Motion carried. Approved at 7:42 pm. Vote: All voted approved. No opposed.

Open Table (7:35-7:45) 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 (7:45-8:15):

- Status of fall programming
 - Waitlist-none
 - Staffing-fully staffed (welcome Natah!)
 - Operational items
 - Status of fall 2021 enrollment
 - 24__ kids in full day (including in Cedar room)
 - 16__ in school day
 - 12_ in half day
 - Emily has given several tours. Anticipate we will fill more spaces.
 - ProCare- Going well so far! Parent feedback has been positive and that it's easy to use.
 - Update on EXHS. Also started their school year last week.
 - Grants update
 - applied for the Child Care Aware Regional Grant this week.
 - Ongoing Child Care Stabilization Grant.
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Board Strategic Discussion & Work: Top strategic priorities for the next 3-6 months (8:15-8:40)

Identified at our Strategic Planning Meetings on 4.17.21 and 8.21.21

Health & Safety Protocols/Planning for Fall

- Shared and presented mitigation plans at Orientation Night
- Brief update from Emily on how it's going in practice (masking, tests, reaction from staff and families, other considerations)
- Emily reports all is going fine. Weekly testing seems to be going well. Emily is working on logistics ordering tests.
- Challenge K-12 qualifies for more testing opportunities. Preschool is not included in this.
- Discussion on when to test. If your child is sick with anything, keep them home. RSV, etc is also going around.

Communication with our Community

- Newsletter going out soon. Wanted to give space given the large volume of information that families received in August. Newsletter sent out today (9/15). Moving forward will be sent out the first week of the month.
- Parent survey - timing/plan? Plan to send it out this month (October)

Continue to strengthen staff compensation and benefits

Action steps:

- Update from Director
 - We did go ahead and are offering a dental and vision group plan, long-term, short-term, and life insurance. And, HRA (future discussion if to increase HRA).

We are still researching retirement, flex spending, and other benefits in the future.

Expansion and increased enrollment

Action steps:

- Toddler committee (presented at start of meeting. Motion passed)
- Lease extension Connected with the Toddler room. Need to move forward with the lease.
- Space sharing
 - Doors and fence installed

Other priority objectives:

- Continuing to support board & staff's implementation and understanding of anti-bias, anti-racist (ABAR) education - Emily and Erica will bring recommendation to Board. The grant we will find out early November.
 - Increase Board membership and diversity.
 - Ongoing call. Under 10 board members currently. Good to have at least 10 to ensure full participation and voting. Discussed options.
 - Scholarships/Financial assistance - Parent Aware cohort starting in January means we will be able to accept scholarships March 31, 2022
 - Diverse income streams: grants, endowments, large donors
 - Fundraising ideas.
 - Suggestion: raise craze - fundraise by doing acts of kindness <https://raisecraze.com/>
 - Filling classrooms
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Operational Board tasks (8:40-8:50)

- Annual Report - On our task list for this month; previously tabled
 - Still aiming to have one out this fall? Need to add financials, and request Board feedback. Most of the Annual Report is done.
 - Need to add financials and make final edits.
 - Do we need a committee for this. Not at this time.
 - Google Drive cleanup - tabled for now

September Board Task List:

- Begin Annual Report process (see above)
- Participation in Give to the Max Day in November
 - Need to know what our goal is and what the money will go for (toddler community)
 - Goal: \$7,000.00
 - Will utilize Mailchimp to send out messages.
 - Include some explanation for new parents. Some companies will match amounts.

- Explain to parents and the Heartwood community and have them look for the Mailchimp newsletters.
- Note for families: Check with companies to see if they offer matching.
- Note: Still need to vote on Employee Handbook (August task) once benefits are finalized
 - Make a motion to add the addendum to the employee handbook. AmberJean seconds.
 - Motion carries. Approved at 8:45 pm.

Committee Updates (8:50-9:00)

- Treasurer's update / Finance Committee
 - Next month will present the yearly budget to the board. Budget will cover the full year as a whole. Time for the presentation next month, request: 15 minutes
- Executive Committee
 - Nothing to report.
- Community Engagement Committee (Caitlin(?), Ashley)
 - Month of August at two NE Farmers Market. It served as a way to attract new families.
 - Will be there Sept 25, 9 - 1:00 pm. Looking for volunteers.
 - Oct 16, closing day - have not confirmed.
- Toddler Environment Committee (Corinne)
- Building & Grounds Committee (Keith)
 - Consider: Soil testing for future (UMN does testing)
 - Discussion. Reinstating the landscaping committee

Add to agenda for next meeting:

Adjourn

Kate makes a motion to adjourn.

Corinne seconds.

Motion carries at 8:58.