

## **Minutes of the Board of Directors September 23, 2019**

**Board Members Present:** Beth Kligher, Illene Crawford, Michael Doolittle, Babz Rawls Ivy, Robert Parker, Wendy Battles, Monica Maccera Filppu, Kyleen Anderson, Errol Saunders, Terri Snell.

**Staff Present:** Kimball Cartwright, Lizanne Cox, Betsy Sneath, Joel Tolman

### **I. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

### **II. Business Requiring Approval**

**Minutes from the August meeting.** Who moved? Who seconded?

One amendment was proposed: to change the date of the May meeting from May 25 (Memorial Day) to May 18th, one week earlier.

The minutes, as amended, were approved without objection.

Kyleen made a request that the Board minutes be shared a week after the meeting. Errol, secretary, recommended sharing draft minutes soon after the meeting, and that they be approved at the following meeting. These notes should also be published as a draft online in order to comply with relevant state law.

**Establishing a Business Account at TD Ameritrade.** Kimball Cartwright explained that establishing a TD Ameritrade account will allow us to accept appreciated stock, and sell it for cash. We have used ScottTrade in the past, but that account was closed when Melissa Spear left as Executive Director. Doing so requires board approval.

Illene Crawford moved that the resolution, Kyleen Anderson seconded. The resolution passed without dissent.

**Revised and new school policies.** Monica Maccera Filppu and the school committee brought the following policies with minor edits from last year with no substantive changes -- e.g., because of updated staff contact information:

- [Inclusive Staff Recruitment and Hiring Policy](#)
- [Student Handbook](#)
- [Non-discrimination Policy](#)
- [Sexual Harassment Policy](#)
- [Homeless Students Policy](#)

- [Safe School and Climate Plan](#)

In addition Monica and the board

- [Student Record Confidentiality](#)
- [Electronic Information Security](#)
- [Student Data Protection](#)
- [Information Security Breach and Notification Policy](#)

The school committee (Mike, Bob, Wendy) recommends the adoption of these policies. Ilene Crawford made a motion, and Babz Rawls Ivy seconded. The motion passed without objection .

### **III. Finance Committee Report.**

**Presentation of Full Year Budget v. Actuals.** Beth presented the finance committee's report, including full year budget v. actuals for 2018-19. We ended the year with a \$50,000 deficit, which was different than May projections, which showed a \$33,000 surplus. Monica shared factors that contributed to this difference: Most significantly, the payroll for June reflects the 3 summer months of salaries for school 12-month employees. While we were able to generate more revenue (e.g., in community programs fees), we went over budget by approximately \$120,000. This is the result of (1) moving positions from part-time to full time, (2) overage in particular areas like copying and printing, and (3) larger-than-expected site and facility expenses (due in part to aging equipment and new, complex facilities). Children's program fees bring with them credit card processing fees, so more program fees means more transaction fees. Melissa also played a key role as a fiscal manager, so could help manage a balanced budget; her departure partway through the year was also a factor.

To address this dynamic moving forward, program managers will meet with Monica and Betsy quarterly to help them manage their budgets effectively. The finance committee has also discussed reviewing financial management systems. Kimball and Monica are discussing how to identify additional unrestricted funds.

Kyleen asked whether we had a cash reserve, and asked how it is possible for us to operate given this budget deficit. It represents a reduction in cash assets from the start of the year to the end of the year. Beth suggested that it might be helpful to budget for building a cash reserve in future budgets.

Staff are asking questions about composition of the development team, clarifying medium-term roles on the finance team, seeking external expertise in evaluating our financial systems, etc.

Betsy explained that we report annually to the state about revenue and expenditures.

Ilene noted that we are looking primarily at budget v. actuals; Monica responded that there may be other tools that are useful for the board to consider in evaluating the financial health of the organization.

**Financial Dashboard.** Monica also shared the board financial dashboard, with a focus on variances from projections:

- A potential of up to \$110,000 in additional revenue, depending on our student population
- \$25,000 in salaries that are different than budgeted.
- Site is essentially maintained by one person -- this is a place where we may need to make additional investments.

We currently have 49 days of cash on hand, which is very similar to our position a year ago. The target from the state is between 30 and 60.

### **III. Organizational Update**

**Strategic Planning Update.** Monica reminded the board that, last year, staff and board members wrote a draft strategic plan, which was shared as part of the ED search process. One of Monica's priorities is to use this as the basis for making an annual strategic plan for the organization. She began with the strategic priorities and 3-year plan objectives from the plan developed last year, and then identified the organizational and personal goals that would help us drive toward these objectives in the current year. Monica proposes that the personal goals and outcomes in this plan could be the basis for her evaluation in the year ahead. Monica requests that board members take time to read this document, and follow up with comments, suggestions, and questions. One underlying assumption: Common Ground staff are working hard, and in alignment with the strategic priorities. Monica's focus will be naming what we are doing, and identify what supports are needed -- avoiding top-down management in the year ahead. A major focus is asking everyone on the team to set goals for the year, aligned with the strategic priorities, and supporting effective work by managers. Monica is working to add value by supporting managers to support their teams. A specific priority for Monica this year is to build a 3-year budget. A shift Monica is working to make: Shifting from "Common Ground needs to" to "I need to."

Wendy asked whether managers have had the opportunity for training as coaches. Monica plans to start by seeing what capacity she can build, and pull in others as opportunity and need arises.

**Program Dashboard.** Joel shared copies of the organizational dashboard.

Kyleen asked about the development goals v. YTD graph. The numbers provided are the goal for 2019-20, though the legend indicates they are for 2018-19.

Kyleen also asked about the potential budget impact of losing NHPS bussing to Kids Unplugged. Monica explained that we are trying an advocacy approach to preserve this support, which hundreds of kids rely on to get to a variety of after-school programs.

Kimball shared feast results: We raised \$66,000, which was close to goal and better than many years and expected. The auction and above and beyond fund did well, and sponsorships were below goals. We had more people buying tickets than before ... 260 or 270 people! We added an option for kids/child care, and new chefs -- Tavern on State and Sanctuary Kitchen. The next step is to invite the people who came to Feast to be involved in different ways. Some people have expressed an interest in helping shape Feast for the future. The silent auction continues to raise more revenue, as well. Ilene spoke to the value of experiences and consumables in the auction. We will aim for a later date next year, to make student engagement stronger. Tariq was an awesome speaker, and other students were really positive and awesome.

Kimball asked that we share: 1) the 3 people you talked to, (2) what worked well, and (3) what should change.

#### **IV. Old Business**

**Charter Renewal: Site Visit Planning.** 11:45-12:45 in Springside Breakout is the time for board members to be here. Staff from the State Board of Education will be asking questions about the board's role in governance.

**Public Hearing Preparation.** Our ask is that all board members can write testimony by October 1st, and that about 3 board members can testify on October 10th.

#### **V. New Business**

**Demonstration of how to access board documents on the shared drive.** Monica walked through the process of accessing documents on the team drive for Common Ground's board. Right now, Monica has shared with both your NHEP email and board members' personal emails. The goal, over time, is to stop sharing with personal gmail addresses for security reasons. Board members can use the agenda as a guide for accessing documents.

Kyleen requested that two versions of the bylaws be shared: the original version, and one with

**Report on teacher evaluation systems.** Monica gave a report to the board on our teacher evaluation system. We use the teacher evaluation system model that's provided by the state, with minor modifications. We use google docs to manage this process. Teachers have their own google site where they keep their reflections and observations.

## **VI. Adjourn**

Babz moved to adjourn, and Michael seconded. The meeting adjourned without objections.

Next Meeting: October 28th, 2019, 5:30 PM