



Board Meeting Minutes

Desert Sky Montessori

Virtual Meeting

March 16, 2022

Jessica Loukonen called the meeting to order at 5:47pm.

Present: Jessica Loukonen, Cara Nowak, John Eskew, Dave Trexler, Daisy Sexton, Kevin McKennon (5:50pm arrival)

Also present: Jodie Borgia, Julia Sutter, Heather Phillips, Pascaline Myers, Deli Thordarson, Ute-Anja McDonald, Jared Michaels (until 6:07pm), Jordan Sledge (until 6:07pm)

BUSINESS

- A. Jared Michaels: IT [Information Technology] Security Presentation
 - a. Introduced himself; stated he has been working in IT for 10 years, focusing mainly on cybersecurity; works with Jordan Sledge who has experience working with big enterprises
 - b. Maintains the hardware DSM purchases by using remote support
 - c. DSM is currently built around Microsoft for staff and back-end use, Google Suite for educational use by parents and children (ie remote learning), and state testing software which is set up according to state mandates
 - i. DSM pays for the use of Microsoft; Google Suite is free
 - d. Current services that are conducted by Jared Michaels and Jordan Sledge include checking the firewall for security lapses, providing training on a case-by-case basis for any new members of DSM's staff and board, building out the cybersecurity incident response plan and policies around the way the hardware is used, providing support afterhours when needed, and supporting the website
 - e. Outlined DSM's current challenges and some solutions
 - i. Unreliable printers
 - 1. The type of printer DSM currently uses was picked because the Montessori model of education is not typically paper-heavy; needs have changed with the current Covid pandemic
 - 2. The current printer has an issue staying connected to the network, which requires Jared Michaels to go in remotely and reconfigure it each time
 - 3. Recommends new printers for the new campus
 - ii. Non-standard computers

1. DSM needed more computers quickly when opening, so the cheapest ones that would fit the needs were purchased; these computers were not intended for heavy usage
 2. Would like there to be a goal of homogenizing the computers used and slowly phasing out the current computers
 3. Recommends not using Apple products because the current back-end would not work as well with Apple computers and they would be more difficult to support
- iii. Slow internet
1. DSM's current plan with Bend Broad Band is on the lower side; could up this
 2. The Wi-Fi equipment was old when it was purchased; it is great equipment, but it does not give the best coverage or speeds
 3. Would like to get as many things connected as possible and move away from Wi-Fi
- iv. On-site support
1. Believes this could be managed remotely if the staff were willing to help
 2. DSM could find someone local to help with this
- f. Any additional questions will be emailed to Jared Michaels because of the time constraints for this meeting
- g. Jared Michaels offers to put together a new proposal for the new site; notes that there is currently a 6-month lead time for equipment

2022.03.16.01 Cara Nowak moves to approve the February Minutes and March Special Meeting Minutes. Kevin McKennon seconds. The February Minutes and March Special Meeting Minutes are approved by unanimous vote.

B. Jodie Borgia: Head of School Report

- a. Enrollment numbers are steady
- b. Currently working with the leadership team concerning how to fit the students into the classrooms on the new site
 - i. All of the current children will fit
 - ii. The numbers are currently too high in the lower el [elementary], so those spots will not be refilled if any vacancies come up; currently there will be no elementary places offered, only kindergarten places
 - iii. Having 2 K-1 classrooms next year would allow 21 kindergarteners to come into the school; ideally, 24 kindergarteners would be entering the school
 - iv. Would need to lose 10 children from the upper el in order for those classes to move out of the larger classrooms; waiting for the lottery to be pulled to see how the upper el changes, so there should be a firmer idea of the numbers by the next board meeting
- c. Feedback around unmasking
 - i. No feedback was emailed; one parent spoke with Jodie Borgia in person concerning this
 - ii. Deschutes County is currently in the low-risk category
 - iii. Staff did well on their retraining; made sure to emphasize that everyone would have the same educational opportunities regardless of their masking preference

- iv. No feedback from the teachers that there have been any issues between masked and unmasked children
 - d. Still working on the OSBA [Oregon School Boards Association] policies; plan to finish with their piece in about a month and then the board can review them as they will
 - e. Staff have requested help with meals and snacks being brought in and some would like parents to volunteer for outdoor lessons
 - f. Staffing
 - i. Have lost 2 substitute teachers
 - ii. The lower el teaching positions have been advertised; 1 application has come in from someone who is licensed [Oregon state teaching license] and Montessori trained
 - iii. Priorities will be shifting towards hiring for next year
 - iv. Jessica Loukonen: wonders if DSM should join one of the Montessori groups/websites in order to recruit teachers
 - 1. Jodie Borgia: licensed teachers are needed for these positions; will reach out to Montessori Northwest to connect with the teachers who are coming out of their program; could also contact St. Mary's, but these candidates would have a California license; if the school could allocate money towards current teachers getting their licenses, it could help to motivate staff
- C. Julia Sutter: Business Director Report
 - a. Regarding the Memorandum of Understanding at OWC: DSM is breaking the lease early at OWC, so will need to pay 5% of the rent back to the owners for the months DSM will not be there; thinks Jessica Loukonen and John Eskew feel comfortable with the way this is written in the agreement
 - b. The first draft of the budget is available for the board to review as of today; DSM is running on a deficit for the first time
 - i. Staffing will continue to change from now until June when the budget is voted on by the board
 - ii. Willing to meet with board members to discuss this
 - c. Facilities
 - i. In the process of getting quotes for work to be done; will be getting 2 quotes for most jobs except for the plumber and electrician as DSM has used them for years
 - ii. Kevin McKennon: Juila Sutter has been working hard to get bids, but we are waiting for additional bids to come in; would like to lay out a timeline for projects to be completed at next month's board meeting
 - 1. Julia Sutter: will have the budget for what DSM needs to spend on construction and moving to the board by next month's meeting
- D. John Eskew: Treasurer Report
 - a. Not much has changed; DSM does have more cash at this point than was available at this time last year
 - i. Based on the uncertainty of the way things will work out next year, DSM could use part of the excess funds to cover the deficit that we are looking at
 - b. Would like Julia Sutter to get all of the items for construction and moving to the board in its entirety before next month's board meeting

- i. Julia Sutter: expects to have all of the numbers available in the next 2 weeks
- c. Kevin McKennon: would like to have a financial proposal for Jared Michael's services
 - i. Julia Sutter: should have that within the next 2 weeks also

E. Head of School Search

- a. Jessica Loukonen: the hiring committee conducted 4 interviews on Saturday [March 12, 2022] and has an interview scheduled for tomorrow with 1 candidate; planning for the second round of interviews to be held the week of April 4, 2022; will begin calling the candidates' references tomorrow; candidates' scenario questions are due to her by this Sunday [March 20, 2022]

F. Jessica Loukonen: Board President Update

- a. Will begin providing meals for staff on the first Friday of the month—can be homemade; the board could provide this in April, the PCA [Parent Community Association] could provide for May, the board could buy meals for staff in June
 - i. Kevin McKennon: will be bringing pizzas to both buildings tomorrow for the staff's lunch

2022.03.16.02 John Eskew moves to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for One World Center. Dave Trexler seconds. The Memorandum of Understanding for One World Center is approved by unanimous vote.

G. Renewing Secretary of the Board's position

- a. Cara Nowak: is willing to see this school year out as secretary, but would like to begin transitioning the position to someone else during the next school year

2022.03.16.03 Jessica Loukonen moves to renew Cara Nowak's term as Secretary of the Board. Daisy Sexton seconds. Cara Nowak's position as Secretary of the Board is renewed by unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 6:42pm.

Recorded by: Cara Nowak

Minutes approved at 4/20/2022 Board Meeting