

Petoskey Montessori Children's House and Elementary School

Board of Trustees Minutes

February 27, 2024 5:30pm

PMCH Elementary Classroom

DRAFT PENDING APPROVAL

AGENDA

Call Meeting to Order 5:34 pm

Attendance: Byron, Walts, Kuhlman, Neils, Collins, Roth, Campbell

1. Review of Agenda-Motion to Approve Agenda: Jessi, 2nd Natalie, unanimously carried
2. Review of Previous Meeting Minutes-Motion to Approve Previous Meeting Minutes: Walts, 2nd Kuhlman, unanimously carried
3. BOT Updates
 - Staff Updates: Sarah A. will be departing; we are grateful to the amount of work she's put in during her time with us. Angie will be stepping in to fill in the admin role on an interim basis until a permanent replacement has been hired. Morgan has been promoted to YCC classroom lead. We have extended an offer to Ashley, who has been interning with us while finishing up her Bachelor's this spring. Shiloh was hired in primary and Miss Mary returned to YCC.
 - Annual Meeting Update: The bylaws state that there should be an annual meeting held in September. There has not been a meeting this year and there has not been one since at least 2017. The oversight was pointed out and it was decided to schedule an annual meeting in March of this year and then the third Tuesday in September going forward per the bylaws. Question from an attendee: What is the function of the annual meeting? Response: trustees shall be elected, no agenda yet, opportunity for more parents to come meet the board. There was a parent suggestion to revise bylaws to clarify purpose. We will share a trustee manual
 - New Fiduciary Partner Proposal & Discussion with public comment/questions: Interested charter partner with Concord Boyne – management fee 5% - similar to our current management agreement with PSP – potentially moving forward, AMI-accredited program can continue, Russell will need to decide if he will continue with Petoskey Montessori or move to traditional PSP classroom. There is also another potential candidate that could fill the elementary guide role in the event that Russell elects to move to traditional PSP classroom.
 - PSP Presentation corrections: handout with figures provided to clarify issues; reached back out to PSP School Board to clarify misunderstandings and ask for reconsideration. We'd like them to have correct information. Supporters from City Council, Bay Mills, and others in the community have reached out to offer support and assist with plans to move forward.

Open Discussion/Public Comment Period:

- Concerns about Concord Boyne, passionate about continue to reach out to the PSP board to smooth things over. Other pieces that are beyond financials seems negotiable – i.e., admissions, kindergarten teacher in another classroom.
- Concord could be a bridge to a potential independent charter if we can grow program.
- Does Concord Boyne org agree? Authorizer: LSSU – Midwest (management company) would submit an amendment for approval to authorizer LSSU. Amending would add Montessori as a separate location (multi-site school), Midwest has been participating in the conversation.
- Timeline concerns. A new independent charter takes 18 months – 3 years, but an established charter can be quicker with just an amendment; timeline ambiguous until we decide to move forward, no anticipated issues with program readiness for 24-25 school year
- Enrollment numbers concern. No set enrollment numbers in the discussion with Concord Boyne
- Budget outside of payroll – Concord Boyne’s awareness. We’ve not been in a position yet that we’ve received enough funding from PSP that would even cover the staff that we do have let alone overhead etc.
- Primary room impact – kindergarten – Concord is aware that we manage the childcare side as well. A lot of our facility costs do impact the students in Elementary and Primary.
- State aid regulations, co-mingling of funds – Early discussions with Concord, we are providing our financial data that includes childcare and school revenues and how some are shared (e.g., all programs contribute to snow removal, building upkeep, etc.). We have been diligent about appropriate use of funds including a third party bookkeeper, outside auditors, clean audit records, and have confidence in our accuracy. Trustee Campbell offers to address specific concerns offline.
- Strong preference to keep Russell as lead guide for elementary. Discussion whether there is opportunity for a different guide to shadow Russell given a different scenario.
- Audit documents requested from the past three years, which are publicly available on the IRS site. Other specific documents can be requested directly to the board – full transparency.

4. Financial Updates

- Variance Reports
- Cash Position – successful fundraiser – revenue down; stabilization funds are available for schools with declining enrollment – PSP got 77% of funding requested, we are eligible for 4.3 students, we anticipating getting approximately 77% of that share. Declining enrollment is a trend across the state. Bay Harbor fundraiser – net \$15,000, gross \$22,000 plus expected May/June 2024 raffle

- Payroll Penalty Update – Update to parents about the outstanding fees related to the former administrator’s failure to pay payroll taxes. The taxes have been paid but we currently owe approximately \$35,000.00 in late fees and fines. We are attempting to have the penalties abated from IRS and are receiving assistance from Senator Stabenow’s office in our discussions with the IRS. The IRS has requested an extension to make their determination due to tax season.
- Restitution Update - There was an unexpected gap in monthly payments but we just received \$150. Approximately \$26,000 of \$140,000 total has been paid thus far. Byron reaching out to judge and probation officer to get update on next steps.

5. Committees Updates

- Maintenance Committee – spring clean-up is the next big push – April date TBD
- Fundraising Committee – applied for a grant from Petoskey Harbor Springs Community foundation – with the hopes of getting a sail shade for YCC playground, picnic tables and greenhouse. We are hoping to have an Art Show spring fundraiser – auction off art from the children, partner with CTAC possibly. Will also raffle off pellet smoker received for auction that did not sell and we have the annual end of year 50/50 raffle coming up – the winner is announced at all family picnic/graduation
- Social Committee – winter social postponed due to lack of winter weather
- Finance Committee – nothing new to report

6. Administration

- Enrollment Updates – a new baby starting in Nido in March; As of March – 1 MWF spot open in YCC; Nido – 2 spots. Sarah is reaching out to families on the wait-list and we anticipate filling them shortly.
- Program Updates – journey night was a success; p/t conferences coming up before spring break

Adjourn 6:33 pm

Next Meeting – March 12, 2024 @ 5:30pm, PMCH Elementary Classroom