

Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Wednesday, October 9, 2024 Meeting

Trustees in Attendance: Elizabeth Head, Cindy Schoen, Angela Gladstone, Jenny Rajda, Dana Sutton-Myers, Robert White, Heather Lomason, Walker Barnes, Don Likosky Lubhit Girdhar, Gary Banks

Others Present: Elizabeth Kozisek, Jane Ford, Knut Hill, Sheena Anand, Caroline Golden, Jill Schneider

Absent: Elizabeth called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Agenda Review and Consent Agenda Approval

A motion to approve the consent agenda reports, including the meeting minutes from the September Board Meeting, was made by Jenny with support from Walker at 6:34 pm.

New Board Membership

A motion to nominate Don Likosky was made by Jenny, after she spoke to his character, talents and knowledge that would make him a good Board member. A motion was made by Elizabeth with a unanimous decision at 6:39pm

Development Update

Jane updated the Board about the Generations Campaign and the onboarding process with the team and advisor, who is a Waldorf Alum from the Cedarwood Waldorf School in Portland, Oregon. There will be bi-weekly meetings with the Advisor, including the Development Director and School Administrator to help with the pre-planning phase.

Jane also spoke to the launch of the Annual Fund and Board appeal and the work needed to steward the donor base, which will come through the individual Board assignments.

Finance Update

Refinancing for the school's mortgage is going well, however, the process has been slowed down by the bank, giving us the potential to have a lower rate, or a "re-cast".

Brian informed the Board of a major gift that has been pledged for this year which is great news in a year in which enrollment is down. In lieu of enrollment being down, Brian announced that there was a need to evaluate the budget this year.

Administrator's Update

Knut informs the Board that school is going well. He also acknowledges that our newly hired Administrative Coordinator, Katie Simon, is doing an amazing job juggling running enrollment and learning all there is to the job.

The enrollment drive is under way, with lots of enthusiasm and new ideas. Knut speaks about bridging parent and student education to strengthen retention, especially in the transition from middle school to high school. He also informs the Board of new strategies in marketing, admissions and recruiting, especially by way of social media and a refresh on our marketing language.

College Update

Gary discusses with the Board how Sian leaving has had a big impact on the school, leading the College to review the governance process, job descriptions and rethinking the governance structure. It has taken a series meetings to review governance plan, trying to line up with what document says and bring everything in alignment. Now that there are Pedagogical Coordinators, we need to figure out how Pedagogical and Administrative Coordinators work together. Until the new governance model is approved, we will be operating under last year's governance.

Board Treasurer Succession Plan

As Lubhit was standing in as an Interim Treasurer, he now needs to step back; Sheena Anand, who's background is in finance, has joined us today for our meeting to see if she would be a good fit and vice versa.

Administrator Search

The Board would like to start the Administrator search now and would like to form an administrator search committee. Jenny makes a motion to form a committee, Donny as second, with unanimous support, at 7:19pm. The Board will form a committee by the end of next week.

Board Development

With a pretty new Board and a new interim administrator, this year feels like freshman year of college, creating a need for Board Development and to become more comfortable and confident in supporting each other and the school.

Elizabeth discussed the human importance of philanthropy, giving purpose by being helpful and knowing how to reach out and asked for that help.

New Business

The Alma Partner Modules have been share with the faculty, encouraging everyone to participate.

Knut reminded the Board of the Eurythmy performance at end of month.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Cynthia, with support from Jenny. There were no dissensions, and the motion was carried out at 7:32pm.

Minutes taken by Elizabeth Kozisek