

**Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor – Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, February 5, 2020**

Present: Gary Banks, Anni Fox Maniglia, Knut Hill, Mike McFall, Don Remboski, Heather Rindels (via phone), Bob Rajewski (via phone), Tim Standke, Paul Trombley

Excused: Elizabeth Head, Daryl Honor, Jim McCauley

Others Present: Katrina Klaphake, Sian Owen-Cruise, Carolyn Raschke

Heather Rindels called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 5:43pm.

Agenda Review and Consent Agenda Approval

- A motion to approve the December 4 meeting minutes (with one small correction) and consent agenda reports was made by Knut Hill with support by Paul Trombley. There were no dissensions and the motion carried.

A closed session began at 5:44pm and the regular meeting resumed at 6:14pm.

Development Engagement

- Katrina Klaphake updated the group on the Annual Fund campaign by class. She is proud to report that it has gone beyond our goal with over \$71k. The goal was \$70k. There are fewer parents this year due to enrollment but those parents gave more. The class matches of another \$5k are not included in the \$71k. Congratulations and a job well done!
- Katrina noted that the last phase of the Annual Fund campaign is the Alumni Campaign and it may fall short. Larger donors who were alumni parents may not give again; however new parents may step forward.
- The Development Department asked Trustees to write 2 thank you notes to class parent reps.
- Katrina thanked everyone who attended the Wilma's event on January 25. Thank you to Mike for speaking! This was the last official event for our Waldorf 100 celebration. Beehives will be installed in the spring at the High School to end our celebratory year.
- The Development Department is developing an IRA rollover plan for donors. Katrina has spoken to a few grandparents about it and hopes to follow up with them during tax season.

Accreditation Input – Articulated Decision-Making and Governance - tabled

Rebranding Input and Next Steps

- Paul Trombley informed the Board that the College held a discussion on rebranding and that it is supportive but suggests that it wait until staff time and energy are available. The College is supportive of investigating the possibility because it is a transition point for the school with enrollment impulse, accreditation, Waldorf 100.
- The group held a short discussion of the pros and cons of removing Steiner from our brand and noted that associations with Rudolf Steiner are not all positive. Rebranding at this point is inexpensive compared to previous times in our history and may result in free advertising and marketing. Rebranding could also support the Waldorf movement as a whole.
- Sian Owen-Cruise suggests that a decision be made before the end of the year. She will reach out to another school that did the same recently and ask for their process which could be volunteer run. The rollover process could be 1 day or 90 days – we would need to decide.
- A motion to continue investigating the rebranding of school was made by Tim Standke with support from Anni Fox Maniglia. Gary Banks revised the motion and added that Sian be consulted regarding workload. The updated motion was made by Tim Standke with support from Anni Fox Maniglia. There were no dissensions and the motion carried.

Board Self Evaluation and School Administrator Evaluation

- The Board Self Evaluation document with slight revisions was reviewed. The implementation of the survey will remain the same as in past years – it will be distributed via SurveyMonkey in February and responses will be reviewed in March.
- A motion to approve the revised Board Self Evaluation document was made by Mike McFall with support from Paul Trombley. There were no dissensions and the motion carried.
- The School Administrator Evaluation document was reviewed. It was noted that in the past, only Board members received the evaluation. Sian Owen-Cruise requests that the recipients be expanded to include her direct reports, select College members and at least one non-College faculty member from EC, LS and HS. The Board Executive Committee can finalize the recipient group.

- A motion to approve the revised School Administrator Evaluation document and changes regarding the distribution process was made by Tim Standke with support from Anni Fox Maniglia. There were no oppositions and the motion carried.

Nursery Program

- The College has been discussing and deliberating a Nursery Program over many meetings. The College unanimously supports this program and is very interested in providing Waldorf education at this age level. It is a long term program with full support from the College.
- A feasibility study has been done this year with an analysis of rates and costs, availability of teachers and students, researching Waldorf inspired infant and toddler programs, and assessing implementation in the Lower School campus.
- We have some challenges but feel that we can meet licensing requirements. The group was reminded that we have discussed satellite programs in other communities but right now, the College is interested in piloting the program at the Lower School.
- The next step is Board approval of the program and setting tuition rates. The financial projections were reviewed by the group.
- Overall, we see a strong need for this type of care in our area. We see a nursery program as a financial gain for the school as well as a chance for young families to develop an affinity for our program. We used Daycroft and Toronto Waldorf School as successful examples.
- Sian Owen-Cruise indicated that currently, we have no full-time employees with infants/toddlers who are in the age range of 18 months to 3 years so there is no remission in the financial analysis for 2020-21.
- There is no risk if the program is abandoned after the 2020-21 school year; but it is our goal to make the program successful.
- If we don't meet enrollment by June, the program would not move forward.
- We have been in communication with Lorraine's and Heart in the Hills (Damena Karoly) daycare programs (who currently have waitlists) and they are supportive.
- The marketing plan includes Facebook, messaging to our community, Child Care Network, asking Lorraine and Damena for their waiting list referrals, etc.
- One opportunity we have with a nursery program is the ability for a midyear move from nursery to PreK if there is room in the EC program at that time. Because nursery care is needed all year long, filling that space is not a concern.

- Sian also informed the group that a new baby parent/child program will begin soon.
- We will only be offering a 5-day option because we want the longer relationship with the child.
- The group agreed that this is a major, exciting initiative.
- Our enrollment goals are 6 students by June and then 2 more in September/October.
- A motion to approve the RSSAA Nursery Program to begin in 2020-21 was made by Knut Hill with support from Paul Trombley. Advance votes in favor were counted from Jim McCauley and Elizabeth Head. There were no dissensions and the motion carried.

College/Board Meeting

- The joint College Board Meeting is scheduled for 5:00-6:30pm on Thursday March 19 at the Lower School.
- Knut Hill suggested a brief from the College on the Nursery Program.
- The group also decided to add a College report to the consent agenda monthly.
- Don Remboski reminded the group of other discussion topics such as: the trajectory of enrollment, how to reach a larger part of our community, inclusivity, static tuition model, next hurdles and challenges, etc.

New Trustee Recruitment - tabled

Old or New Business

- On behalf of all Trustees, Gary Banks presented Sian Owen-Cruise with a gift and much gratitude for her success as School Administrator and the extra effort it involves this year. Trustees acknowledged that they can't give Sian any additional time but they can provide other support. Thank you to Sian!
- Sian formally acknowledged the faculty at both campuses, the Coordinators, especially Peggy Wilson, along with administration staff who provide her with so much support.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mike McFall with support from Paul Trombley. There were no dissensions and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38pm.

2019-2020 Board Meetings
March 4, April 1, May 6, June 3