



**Granite State Arts Academy**

Board of Trustees Meeting

January 8, 2019

6pm @ GSAA

**Attendance: Don Erdbrink, Tony Polito, Chrissy Caron, Jeff Marquis, Alison Gangler, Frank Sharlow, Paula Trout, Jamie MacFarland, Michelle Barrow, Leah Rogers**

**Guests: Jim Hollingsworth and Karen Drago**

Called to order: 6:05\_pm

- Public Comment – none
- Approval of Minutes from last meeting: Ms. Trout made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting from December 11th. Mr. Marquis seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

**Treasurer's Report:**

1. Current Status of funds:
  - Games of Chance is open through Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>, but is moving slowly; Mr. Marquis mentioned he is concerned that this initiative won't bring in the amounts expected and hoping that the expected amounts will come in.
  - The next adequacy deposit is Mar 1<sup>st</sup>
  - The security deposit was refunded in the amount of \$10,000 and will be applied toward the debt
  - Attaching the budget with amounts to these minutes
2. ACH update – Funds collection update
  - The Autodrafts are helping to collect the Art Fees
3. Solution for families owing multiple years of fees was not discussed

**Teachers Representative:** No updates to report

## Chair's Report:

1. Alarm / entryway system update
  - alarm is now installed at the entry; the check arrived for the remainder of the speakers.
  
2. Tech Discussion –AWS – New info
  - Research on Amazon Web Services from Mr. MacFarland and Mr. Hollingsworth.
  - Mr. Hollingsworth has experience with AWS: allows virtual desktops through the cloud; pricing models - pay for what is used; the school falls into the education tier so fees and licensing are reduced.
  - In order to save costs, there are alternative software packages that can be used(opensource): alternatives to Photoshop, video software, Pro Tools
  - Demo system is available in order to try these tools.
  - Mr. Erdbrink mentioned that Dave Early had worked on the school network and would perhaps be able to provide an analysis whether the network can be improved (speed).
  - A discussion was held regarding concerns about the school network speed and whether this could cause issues to use cloud services.
  - Mr. Erdbrink will check with Dave about the hardware in the school already available prior to the Gala.
  - Another benefit is that students can use the cloud applications outside of school.
  
3. Enrollment Update
  - Enrollment is now at 118; a couple of students have left.
  - We know we are gaining 2 students; 12 are interested already for the fall (shadowed) and showing concrete interest.
  - Relationships with Birches, Microsociety, Gate City and St. Joes are now closer so the hope is that more students will be interested in attending.
  - Common theme in reaching out to other schools is that they don't know that GSAA exists.
  - Change needed to enlarge school presence in the community.
  - Ms. Radziszewski has been reaching out to other businesses about the Gala, so this is also increasing school presence in the community.
  - 1/17, 5:30-7:30pm: Tuscan North will hold an event where the board could provide more presence and speak to people about the school.
  - Also attending committee and chamber of commerce meetings can improve presence and increase awareness of the schools.

- Mr. MacFarland asked whether it's possible to speak with Guidance counselors in schools about GSAA. Mr. Polito mentioned that Guidance will reach out if the student is having issues at school.
- Ms. Trout suggested reaching out to music schools in the area to publicize the schools; board members can get posters from Ms. Radziszewski.
- Ms. Rogers discussed the possible chamber of commerce meetings available to help increase awareness of the school; there will be more events and meetings starting the end of Feb and beginning of March.
- Home and Heros is a great networking event to know people and publicize the school; also participate in the Salem Parade. Also, the Boys and Girls Club have an annual dinner which is also positive outlet for connections.
- The board was encouraged to take posters and publish them in the community, Palace Theater, etc.
- **Mr. Erdbrink to add an agenda item to list events and ways to increase school branding**

#### 4. Fundraising Update:

- Dates for "Painting Nights"?
  - Mr. Sharlow will consider dates in the Spring time-frame; budget will include publicity funding.
- Gala Update
  - Tickets are not yet for sale; The date is 3/15/19; Ms. Barrow suggested that ticket sales should start later with layaway to increase ticket sales.
  - Mr. Erdbrink requested that the board members try to commit to filling a table each.
  - Ticket prices: \$60/ticket; \$500 per table.
  - The average number of attendees in past years was ca. 200.
  - Entertainment: Mr. Trout's band can play this year.
  - Gala meeting will be held next week.
  - Board members need a letter in addition to the sponsorship levels.
- Poker room update - Already discussed
- Outreach – Oz Performances / Adverts placed
  - Oz performances have finished and reached the following groups: Birches, Gate City; Greystone; Salem Haven caroling
  - Adverts are ready to go; Ms. Radziszewski is waiting for the quote on the cost of adverts.

#### 5. 8<sup>th</sup> Grade? Pros / Cons

- This initiative is not currently in our charter and does not need to be done together with the Charter renewal.
- Comments from Mr. Polito: Freshmen - most are average to above average students but need some additional help to get acclimated. Some have poor

- academic skills and study habits. He feels that they arrive lacking in English and Math skills; triage needed to cover these deficiencies which prevents getting the entire curriculum done in 9th grade. This creates a backlog across the four years.
- Adding the 8th grade would allow triage to start them in a stronger position in 9th grade. Also teach them academic skills, writing papers, researching; and would help over the 5-year period they are attending the school.
  - In an arts curriculum, this would also allow the students to make further progress in all the arts, adding courses in the upper levels to be similar to AP levels of Art and Music.
  - The staff would not change because there is currently room to expand enrollment without needing to increase staff. Mr. Polito suggesting a cap on 8th grade of 20-25 students. This would increase enrollment to ca. 145, also increasing funding from the state.
  - The Cons: it is not a traditional time to transition to the school (7th instead of 8th); Interestingly, many 7th graders come to look at the school and express interest about attending in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - There are already K-8 Charter Schools in the area, but this would be more for students in public middle schools;
  - Another concern: Parents sometimes feel uncomfortable sending their students who are still not mature for High School because they are with older students (11th and 12th grade).
  - The school already has a strong support system among the students where the older classes provide support for younger classes. The needs of 8th graders are different, and these would need to be met; emotionally and psychologically needs would have to be considered: social activities separated out perhaps.
  - Mr. MacFarland suggested that the 8th graders would need to be strong students, for example: pre-algebra. He asked whether the students be chosen more selectively? Mr. Polito replied that the school must accept all students except for those that the school can't service; if the district doesn't provide the needed services, then the school wouldn't be able to meet the needs of the student.
  - The suggestion was made for having a class of 8th-9th Pre-algebra and 8th-9th English to move together as a group. This would allow the 8th graders to get ground training and help the 9th to get the remedial skills. This would also provide more flexibility in the curriculum.
  - Ms. Barrow asked if there are only 5 students who want to enroll in 8th grade, would the plan still take place? Mr. Polito mentioned he'd have to consider this situation. He mentioned that there would be a min of 15 and max of 22 students in this 8th grade group; some classes wouldn't be the same (Health and PE); but add other courses could be directed at this 8<sup>th</sup> grade class level: mandatory study skills, homework skills, research skills, computer literacy.

- Pros of this idea are: the students would be familiar with the school and get a good introduction; this would help slow the attrition in enrollment.

#### 6. Renewal Process – DOE

- A discussion was held of the renewal process and looking at the documents prepared for the DOE visit; the group discussed the policies which are mostly boiler plate.
- The suggestion was made that the list might need changes specific to the school: how the school policy would be if the policy is broken and this would be then in the handbook.
- The Board vote needed on the policies: either individually or in toto group.
- Discussion of when the decision of Charter renewal will be given - in Concord; critique will be given.

Ms. Barrow made a motion to accept the policies A-J as written; Mr. MacFarland seconded the motion; all in favor; the motion carried.

**Action Items: None**

**HoS Report:** All items are included in the Renewal Process documents discussion

**New Business \***

**Wrap Up and Adjourn:**

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm. Mr. Marquis made a motion to adjourn the meeting and this was seconded by Ms. Trout; all approved and the motion was carried.