

Cottonwood School for Civics and Science  
Board Meeting – June 7, 2018, 4:00 pm

In attendance:

Nicki Stewart  
Eddie Francis  
Greg Smith  
Dan Hunter  
Chris Beckley  
Rachel Hall  
Bruce Thom  
Carolyn Hauck  
Jeff Slinger  
Amanda McAdoo  
Ben Mendenhall  
Absent: Heidi, Joe

Minutes from May meeting will be approved at our next meeting since Heidi was not able to be present.

Financial report. Eddie reported that at the end of April the school's budget was \$58,000 in the black. He projected that by the end of the school year, CSCS will have a \$20,000 surplus. Additional contributions have driven up income. **The collection of fieldwork fees is also much more successful than in the past. What has seemingly made the difference are efforts earlier in the year to inform parents about the need to make these payments.** Eddie moves to approve the April financial. Dan seconds. All vote in favor.

Amanda's report. (1) Enrollment is the top thing. Enrollment is about where we were last year with regard to filling empty spots. Amanda recently met with kindergarten parents in an effort to begin building relationships with them and reduce withdrawals during the summer. (2) Hiring for next year. Elizabeth is leaving, so one of the 4-5 positions was open. She was able to fill this position today with a teacher just finished PhD in place-based education at PSU. She has done outdoor ed as well as classroom teaching. Will come with faculty to retreat next week. She has also hired Kara Kelley for the long-term sub position. Kara knows the school well since she has been subbing all year. Amanda is still looking for part-time art teacher and a PE teacher. She will also hire a full-time curriculum coordinator. The job description has been sent to staff right now so see if anyone is interested in moving into this position. (3) Recent learning activities. Third- and fifth-graders did the archeology road show at PSU. CSCS students are the only youngsters who make presentations at this event. Eighth graders will have their promotion ceremony at Mirabella next week. Current priorities: renewal contracts, hiring, enrollment, budget, continued teacher and student support, IEP. School will have full-time Learning Center teacher for special ed students next year. Coming up: Talent Show on Friday, Field Day on June 12<sup>th</sup>, teacher retreat after that at McMenemy's in Hillsboro.

Friends of the School update. **Carolyn Hauck** and Coral Thomas have taken over the reins of this committee. Carolyn is especially interested in enhancing communication with parents and families, and plans to draw on her experience in marketing to do this. She intends to meet with the fundraising committee about paring down asks and focusing on bigger fundraising events. **She hopes the Friends committee will be able to bolster families' sense of belonging to the school community and knowledge of how to become involved.**

Committee updates.

Jeff – (1) Safety checklist. This has been completed and resulted in the identification of things to work on. A few these items will be rolled into summer worklist. (2) New facilities search. This meeting will take place today. **Jeff plans to ask Dennis about reaching out to the building owner to get a sense about future rent increases once lease is up in 2021.** (2) Playgrounds. The hammock swing which has been taken down for safety reasons. Jeff has contacted the manufacturer about installing cables from the bottom of the hammock to reduce the height of the swing. The manufacturer will cover the cost of these parts. Cables will be installed during the summer. The last piece of playground is the slide. Metal part of slide has already been purchased. Jeff wants to build something with wood that fits into what has already been installed. Doing will require hiring a playground professional knowledgeable about rules regarding the design of slides. Leon has said it will take \$500 to build. **Jeff requests \$500 to do this plus an additional \$1000 for the wood for the supporting framework for the slide. Amanda suggests voting for this budget request on-line.** (3) **Summer volunteer work day. Jeff still needs to get wish list from teachers to finish planning this event.**

Finance Committee. (1) Eddie reports that issues related to policy have been on hold. (2) He has been able to create a teacher pay scale tied to educational level and years of experience at the school. Salary levels at the school are approximately 75% of the salaries paid by 10 school districts in the Portland metropolitan region. The scale has been drafted and is included in the current budget.

Governance. (1) Nicki reports that the governance committee will be conducting **Amanda's evaluation. Dan said that he is willing to help with this. Rachel Hall indicated that she has had experience creating evaluation forms and is willing to help with this process if necessary.** (2) Bylaws – Joe is working on this. Nicki believes he will be aligning the bylaws with the responsibility matrix discussed in January. (3) Board terms. Personnel from the State Board of Education have suggested increasing the length of these terms. After several minutes of discussion, it is agreed (without a vote) that people initially be invited to serve a one-year term that can then be renewed for two two-year terms meaning that board members could potentially serve for five years. A strategy like this would reduce the difficulty of transitioning new people onto the board every two years. It is also suggested that officer terms be as follows: president—two years, secretary and treasurer—four years each. The value of sharing information about potential board members with parents is also discussed as well as the possibility of allowing them to participate in the selection of new board members. (4) **Dan**

**indicates that the non-profit corporation form required by the Secretary of State's office needs to be revised to include Nicki's name as president.**

Fundraising – (1) Dan spoke about three new members of the fundraising committee, each with significant experience as a fundraiser. (2) 80s event. Recognition that there was not enough coordination and communication. Out of that came suggestion that there be an event committee that attends to the details of event planning. Fundraising committee only wants to deal with macro issues. Friends of the School committee is seen as an appropriate group to take on this task. (3) **Calendar. We need to have a calendar for the entire school year to facilitate both communication and planning.** (4) New members of the committee suggest that board receive a monthly report about payments for **monthly pledges. People who have not kept up with their payments should be asked for clarification about why payments are not forthcoming. Nicki said that she will do this; Dan volunteered to be back-up.** (5) Communications committee—wants to follow up with more information about messaging. Suggests that all fundraising should be centralized. This will allow us to know where and when asks are taking place. (6) **Timing of fees letter and fundraising letter was discussed. Letter encouraging people to pay their fees should be sent out on July 1 indicating that fees should be paid no later than September 11. Letter regarding fundraising should go out in early September.** (7) **Class basket. Contributions for this part of the auction should be requested earlier in the year.** (8) Question raised about whether money raised during the Run for the Arts could be made available for other projects. Amanda observed that one of the reasons this event has been so successful is because people want arts in schools. Nicki said, however, that there isn't anything that would prevent some of the money raised during this event to be directed to other purposes since it is an event run by the school rather than another organization. Jeff suggested calling it Run for the Arts+. (9) **Corporate relations. Relationships with potential corporate sponsors/contributors need to be cultivated more systematically. Members of the fundraising committee will organize these and develop a consistent message for either Amanda or the new curriculum coordinator to deliver.** (10) The fundraising committee requests \$15,000 to organize the fundraising auction event for next year. Their plan would be to create an event that would net \$40,000 beyond expenses (requiring gifts and contributions totally \$55,000). The committee already has a venue in mind but will need \$750 to reserve it. Dan acknowledges that planning for this event (and the selection of venue) is complicated because of the need to involve parents of students in grades 4-5 in the planning of the auction. At the same time, it is imperative to select and reserve a venue as soon as possible.

Mission/Community – (1) Greg reports that the committee has been exploring diversity issues in more depth with Hector Roche, a diversity consultant. This process has led to a recognition that specific goals developed during the board retreat in January were premature. The committee will be meeting for a half-day retreat to have a more in-depth conversation about what we mean by diversity and potential directions for change. **Greg asks whether any other people in the room are interested in participating in this process. Carolyn Hauck raises her hand.** (2) Greg acknowledges that efforts to involve the board more in the day-to-day life of the school did not happen this spring. **The committee will seek to develop a mechanism to**

**encourage more visits to classrooms, faculty meetings, and field trips by board members during the 2018-20189 academic year.**

Action item – Board approval of request for waiver allowing children of teachers to attend the school without participating in the lottery. The initial request to the State Board of Education in May was held up because the board asked the school to indicate how this request would or would not align with their equity lens. Amanda had met with some members of the Mission/Community committee as well Hector Roche to determine how to proceed. It was the decision of this group that the request for waiver did not meet the requirements/expectations of the diversity lens. Amanda had spoken with the charter school liaison at the Department of Education about how to proceed. She said to go ahead with the waiver request. She asks the Board for permission to do this. **Dan moves that we seek a waiver allowing children of teachers to attend the school without participating in the lottery with the stipulation these children constitute no more than 2% of the total population of the school over a five-year period Eddie seconds the motion. Jeff says it is important for board to support teachers. All board members present vote in favor of the motion.**

Salary scale. Eddie reports that salary scale now is %75 of 10 local school districts in Portland metro region. Built on educational background, raises are built in for each year a person teaches at the school. This year, everyone will get a raise aligned with the scale. Raises are more than we have given in past running from 2% of the current salary to 11% depending on where the person is on the scale. **Dan moves that the board approve the new salary scale. Chris seconds. Motion is approved unanimously.**

**After this vote, a question is raised about the budget item regarding fieldwork fees. The amount listed as income is greater than 100% of the fees. Bruce is asked to investigate this discrepancy.**

Approval of budget. Eddie runs through the different budget lines describing those that have remained flat and others that have gone up or down given expenses for the current year. Expense lines that have gone include salaries, payroll taxes, and PERS contributions given the board's approval of the new salary scale. Repairs and maintenance expenses during the 2017-2018 school year were higher because of H-VAC issues and bathroom repairs. Some budget items that have remained flat include health insurance, substitute payments, contractor, printing/binding, profession development. Items for the phone and internet went down as well as fundraising. This leads to a discussion about whether fundraising budget could be increased if the amount anticipated from these efforts is increased as well. **Dan moves that the board approve the budget with increases in lines for 10 (fundraising) and 40 (income from the auction) are increased by \$10,000. Chris seconds. The motion is passed unanimously.**

Nicki asks about summer board meetings. **We agree to not meet in July and meet next at the school at 5:00 p.m on August 2, 2018.** Nicki indicates that meeting times for future board meetings will vary between late afternoon and early evening so that either teachers or parents will be able to attend.

At 6:20 we go into executive session.

We resume the public meeting at 6:38 during which Eddie moves to approve the updated budget with increased salaries for teachers and director. Dan seconds the motion. All approve. Jeff speaks, as well, to the value of meeting with the state charter school lobbyist to discuss ways to persuade the legislature to increase from the current 55% the percentage of the student school allowance directed to charter schools.