

MINUTES

Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT)
Tuesday, January 14, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m. | Monocacy Valley Montessori Public Charter School

BOT Members in Attendance: Travis Creamer, Nichole Dowlearn, Tara Dunsmore, Deb Knox-Teitel, Jeff Koehler, Jen Kuhn, Ellie Landru (MVM VP Elect), Kathleen Luttrell, Jen Mayo, Liz Seal, Kim Sexton, Molly Spence, Don Townsend

1. Call to Order/Welcome - *Introduction of BOT Members*

2. Community Comments - *none*

3. Consent Agenda Items

- *Evote approved 12/18/19 - Motion to approve up to \$2000 of MMCI Funds to procure legal advice from Andrew DiPasquale on contracts related to MMCI facilities purchase/lease. 11 aye, 2 did not vote.*
- *Evote approved 12/30/19 - December Minutes approved on 12/30/19: 7 aye, 1 abstain, 5 did not vote.*

4. Reports

- a. MMCI President (Molly Spence)
 - *none*
- b. CCM VP (Liz Seal)
 - *Verified legal consultation for CCM lease negotiations was covered in evote.*
- c. MVM VP (Kathleen Luttrell)
 - *720 students have applied to the lottery so far to both schools. 1300 applications total (most applied to both). 308 students from both schools have reregistered and 250 still need to reregister.*
- d. BOT Treasurer (Jeff Koehler)
 - *Jeff sent documents to the BOT. One item that has been discussed is putting MMCI savings in something with higher return but there is concern if we do something like a CD accessing money when we need to access it. Kathleen suggested various options but ultimately to speak to a financial advisor.*

5. Updates

CCM update (*Carrie Jean Rathmell / Marilyn Horan*)

- *CCM had a leadership meeting with Mark Pritts and got a draft of charter renewal language. Timeline discussed for monthly work group sessions. Probation will end June 2021 but CCM wants to have a plan in place in June to be accepted and hopefully off probation by the new school year. The work group will determine an*

assessment tool that may have an impact on both schools.

- Garden club is ongoing, chess club has three annual sessions, Upper Elementary went to Baltimore Symphony. There is a local Model UN that CCM will participate in this year.
- Parent education is upcoming on Cosmic Education - next Thursday at 6:00

MVM update (Amy Dorman)

- AMS Webinar professional development on positive discipline started last week. It was the first of four.
- Parent workshop coming up in February on math. A middle school fundraiser will provide childcare.
- MVM is realigning and had a serious vote to mitigate budget constraints.

Facility update (Molly Spence)

- There has been no MMCI level meeting since November. The next step in the process is to sign a broker rep agreement. Building Hope returned a document and MMCI needs to respond or seek new options.

6. Discussion/Action Item

- **Discussion/Vote:** Emergency savings policy and possible funds distribution (Tara Dunsmore/Jeff Koehler)
There is a policy to release money back to schools that goes over an expected savings level. The original policy was to keep \$125,000 in checking and \$200,000 in savings. The final approved amount on 6/16/18 was \$40,000 in checking and \$249,548.06 in emergency savings. Emergencies could include facilities issues or a major systems failure that a landlord does not repair. Also, overseeing 2 school budgets, it is important to have reserves in case anything catastrophic occurs that could cover either school for a period. Tara brought up that this amount wouldn't cover either school for 3 months and where would the responsibility lie (school vs. BOT level). When Amy O'Connor ran the numbers it was determined that there is \$150,000 over the budgeted \$288,271.95. At the time the new policy was created a distribution was made to the schools but none has been made since. Tara recommends this to become a recurring item. The BOT recommends changing the number in the policy of \$249,548.06 to \$250,000. The board feels that \$40,000 is a good amount to keep in checking.. Molly suggests an annual time that this is reviewed and the board can then decide annually if it is appropriate to return extra funds back to the schools. If the BOT becomes property owners the reserves will need to be higher. Jeff will write an intention statement and then the policy will be sent to both schools. The fund is to be reconciled at the end of the Fiscal year.
- **Discussion/Vote:** Coldwell Banker Broker Rep Agreement (Molly Spence)
The previous agreements we have entered with brokers have not promised 3% so this agreement will cover MMCI's broker so that if for some reason the seller will not pay 3% MMCI will cover it. MMCI could walk away from an agreement if the seller does not agree to this. JLL and Collier, previous contracted brokers, have no clause requiring MMCI as the client to provide the commission. Molly motioned to not move forward with the agreement with Danielle Balkin of Coldwell Banker and move

forward with another broker. Deb KT seconded. In favor: all
Travis motioned to seek a one time show with Ken Breen of Claggett to see New Horizon and then determine longer term who MMCI will work with moving forward. Second: Don Townsend. In favor: all
Don recommended not agreeing to a buyer commission in the future and Ellie recommended he write a policy which the BOT can then approve. Don agreed to write the draft.

(Don Townsend left)

- **Discussion/Vote:** Key Access Policy (Nichole Dowlearn) The BOT discussed the policy and tracking of the keys. There would be a sign in log and a turn in policy that would be maintained by Nicki Wangness. Only elected officials should be holding keys. The initial policy is from MVM perspective. BOT discussed if this applies to CCM. It was determined that there should be two policies, one for each school. The overall policy needs to have three parts: (A) MVM Building (B) CCM Building and C) the MMCI Office keys.
- **Discussion:** MSDE Infusion of Federal Charter School Funding (Molly Spence/Jeff Koehler/Nichole Dowlearn)
Information has not been released for the next year.
- **Discussion/Vote:** Fundraising Policy Updates (Tara Dunsmore) Motion: Tara motioned to approve the updated Fundraiser and Event Guidelines as suggested in October. Travis second. In favor - all

(Jennifer Mayo left)

Motion to approve the MMCI Donation and Sponsorship Ethics policy as suggested in October. Deb KT second. In favor: all

- **Discussion/Vote:** Proposed SOP changes from BOT members - Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Financial, etc. (all) Defer to January 29
- **Discussion:** BOT email and evote protocol (Molly Spence) Molly is looking into the email distributions and the BOT will review the BOT E-mail Discussion and eVoting Procedure voted on in March 2016 and discuss at the January 29 meeting.
- **Discussion/Vote:** Use of MVM by CCM for Talent Show (Carrie Jean)
CCM submitted the use of facilities to use MVM for their talent show and requested clear information on who MVM contacts are for building access and who they need to work with/notify. The date has been approved. Tara agreed to be the point of contact to arrange custodial and building access. Ms. Dorman will determine which employees will be on site. Molly motioned to approve the use of the MVM building for the CCM talent show as on the form. Second: Jeff. In favor - all
- **Discussion:** MVM Extended Day Care Proposal (Kathleen)
As part of the town hall financial realignment measures a group of parents came forward to propose (1) resume charging for preschool and (2) provide extended daycare for preschool for up to 20 kids until 3:45. Kathleen shared this would need to be run as a private daycare with MSDE certification and would also require staff and the age group requires a 1 to 10 ratio. The administrative costs and staff costs are being reviewed. This would require a commitment of MMCI for resources and program oversight. BOT discussed that the last program ended because of staff

burnout. The parent group is recommending a 3 year roll out. The BOT discussed that because this is not the expertise of the board, staff would need to be hired to oversee the program. Liz brought up concern that the board consists of volunteers and as such are usually uncomfortable with managing staff. The parent group is working to update numbers to get accurate costs and revenue. Year one recommendation is to create preschool aftercare. MMCI needs to decide if there is space that can be committed and is there enough interest at the BOT level. Marilyn suggested speaking with Clubhouse Kids about them overseeing the program. The BOT is open to hear more but a clear, detailed, and accurate proposal is needed. Administrative oversight is a concern that needs to be addressed. BOT is interested in hearing from Clubhouse Kids and what additional they would need to oversee the preschool component. The BOT currently is less interested in pursuing charging for preschool.

- **Discussion: FCPS Custodial Issues (Molly)** *A letter was received from Mark Pritts stating that charter schools will not be able to contract services that should be covered by FASE. CCM currently uses contract services and MVM has considered outsourcing this functioning. There are concerns that this could provide a precedent that could impact other services (building maintenance, plumber, etc.). The concern is that MMCI holds the lease to the building and is responsible for maintaining it. Marilyn recommended that we need to separate that this is a building/facility issue. Kathleen clarified that these are not employees, they are contractors which alters the nature of the relationship. Marilyn recommended sending a letter to the BOE. Tara recommended MMCI reach out the Classical Charter and their legal contacts because this will impact them. Tara recommended reaching out to Don for his legal expertise. Kathleen, Tara, and Amy all said they will help with editing and Nichole volunteered to create draft. Marilyn stated that we need to state clearly this is not a union issue at all because these are contractors and not employees.*

Molly Spence voted to adjourn the meeting, and Deb Knox-Teitel seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m..