

## MINUTES

Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT)  
Wednesday, February 10, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m. | Carroll Creek Montessori Public Charter School

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

1. Call to Order/Welcome - *Molly opened the meeting.*

2. Community Comments - *none*

3. Consent Agenda Items

- *December Minutes approved on 12/30/19: 7 aye, 1 abstain, did not vote.*
- *January Minutes approved 2/10/20: 8 aye, 5 did not vote.*

4. Reports

a. MMCI President (Molly Spence)

- *Reminder to BOT to check email regularly and participate in eVotes*
- *Molly, Carrie Jean Rathmell, Marilyn Horan, Katie Mosquera, Regina Chadwick, and Amy Dorman met with Mark Pritts regarding CCM probation. The purpose of the group is to discuss and brainstorm resources and potential benchmarks and tiers of support for special education progress. Four more meetings are scheduled. One of the goals of the meetings is to determine the right way to show success with Montessori. FCPS is open minded to the process but it is important to prepare and present. The next meeting will be in March.*

*(Shemica Sheppard arrived)*

b. CCM VP (Liz Seal)

- *none*

c. MVM VP (Kathleen Luttrell)

- *The MVM GC is still working through decisions that were made in December and January. The FCPS decision to not allow contracting custodial made a huge impact on potential savings and the GC came up with additional positions to cut which were not approved. The administration asked for a Montessori Specialist which was narrowly approved and the case was made to support the teachers through all of the changes. MVM will need to take another look at the numbers since the two positions were not approved and see if other changes are necessary.*

d. BOT Treasurer (Jeff Koehler)

- *Jeff sent an email update to the board. He included savings and spending*

*month to month and asked the board to review the document that he is hoping to use as a month to month template for reporting numbers.*

## **5. Updates**

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

- *CCM received the signed copy of the charter to have on hand.*
- *Two people attended the Maryland Excels certification. The certification is good for 3 years.*
- *Carrie Jean is working with Tara and Amy to have contracts in place for extracurricular activities.*
- *Michael Beth Edwards stepped down from her GC role after years of service and Katie Mosquera stepped up in her place.*
- *11 students will be going to NYC for 4 days for Model UN.*
- *Many field trips upcoming, career awareness day, Egypt day.*

*(Don Townsend arrived)*

### **MVM update** (*Regina Chadwick*)

- *There will be movement on the GC as Regina will only be chair until June and the GC will be voting on the plan for the rest of the year shortly.*

### **Lottery update** (*Kathleen Luttrell*)

- *There are over 1000 applications. Based on the trend Kathleen is expecting over 1200 total.*
- *Find Out First announcements have been bringing large increases.*
- *The BOT discussed methods of increasing communication to make sure all populations in Frederick county are receiving information about the lottery.*

### **Facility update** (*Molly Spence*)

- *The MMCI Facility Committee is still working on figuring out whether New Horizon Way is feasible based on zoning and space. Ken Breen has been working with the group and also informing when new spaces come available.*
- *The zoning issue is that it is GC (General Commercial) which means that a public school must reapply for a zoning change every year which isn't a problem for leasing but is an issue for purchasing especially with lending. The MMCI Facility Committee is looking into a permanent exception.*
- *There was an MMCI Facility Committee meeting that decided to work with Ken Breen based on history with him and his knowledge of Frederick County.*

### **Fundraising Committee** (*Tara Dunsmore*)

- *Tara is working on setting up a meeting to discuss MMCI level fundraising and capital campaign. She would like to look into if it is possible to raise different levels of money using only MMCI resources. Tara has observed that since MMCI decentralized fundraising and put it at each school level it has decreased so she would like to brainstorm multiple scenarios.*

### **Grants Committee (Jeff Koehler)**

- *Jeff sent a list to the GCs and BOT of several possible grants. If anybody is interested in any grants they need to reach out to Jeff. Nichole Dowlearn is applying to one for the MVM library.*
- *Kathleen suggested applying to a grant that might apply for a build-out if the new building gets traction.*

*Closed Session:*

*Topics: MMCI Personnel Item (15 minutes)*

### **6. Discussion/Action Item**

- **Discussion/Vote:** *Bookkeeper Merit Increase (Tara) Tara motions that we award a merit increase in pay to the MMCI Bookkeeper of \$2 per hour effective the current pay period. Jeff seconded. The board would like to put something in place so that this can become more of an annual process. In favor: All*
- **Discussion/Vote:** *Approval of contract with Ken Breen, real estate broker. Molly sent the contract to Andrew DiPasquale. He had one concern with some wording that was changed and other small edits. Kathleen will make changes and get to Ken and the board will eVote.*
- **Discussion/Vote:** *Approval of contract with Building Hope for project management services for MMCI future facility(ies) (Molly) Building Hope is reviewing MMCI's most recent financial audit. They are happy to work with MMCI while the contract is being finalized. Kathleen suggested MMCI stay open to getting financing from JLL and dividing out services. This agreement is for project management. This will possibly be an eVote once there is a final document from Building Hope.*
- **Discussion/Vote:** *CCM Lease Renewal (Carrie Jean Rathmell) The current lease expires June 30, 2020 and CCM has the option to continue for one year with the same terms and an increase of 3% of base rent. Notice must be provided 4 months in advance of the expiration so the deadline is the end of February. The lease was reviewed by Andrew DiPasquale. The recommendation was made not to renegotiate terms and sign the one year extension with the 3% increase for a total of \$440,598. Jen Kuhn made a motion to extend the CCM lease by one year under the current lease conditions with a 3% increase, Tara seconded. All in favor.*
- **Discussion:** *Talking points for next BOE Meeting (Molly) Molly encouraged the board members to provide any talking points by Wednesday when leadership will meet to discuss.*
- **Discussion:** *Intention statement for emergency fund and cash on hand(Tara Dunsmore/Jeff Koehler) Moved to work session on SOPs*
- **Discussion/Vote:** *Key Access Policy (Nichole Dowlearn) Only the MVM policy is to be discussed tonight. Nichole asked who should approve keys and Ellie suggested that the GC Chair and Principal should both be aware. Ellie mentioned the key sponsoring process and Tara recommended that outside group access should be addressed in the procedure. Nicki Wangness will maintain the spare key and in order*

to check it out the GC Chair will have to approve. The CCM Policy and MMCI Policy will be covered in the SOP Work Session.

- **Discussion/Vote:** Proposed SOP changes from BOT members - Ethics, Conflict of Interest, Financial, etc. (all) - Moved to SOP Work Session
- **Discussion:** BOT email and evote protocol (Molly Spence) moved to SOP Work Session. The BOT discussed email distribution groups. Specifically, should non-members of the BOT be added to the BOT distribution. Carrie Jean is concerned that the principal's expertise is not being utilized in important conversations. Several BOT members expressed concern that the principals are not part of the corporation of MMCI and there is a line of protocol for needing to invite certain individuals when they are needed. Molly mentioned leadership meetings and other opportunities where information is freely shared. Ellie shared an example where a parent may lodge a complaint. Tara mentioned how structurally the principal reports into the BOT and having them a part of the group is messy. Kathleen discussed that the principals are on the GC and part of the school decision making, these decisions bubble up to the BOT, but the BOT is ultimately responsible for certain decisions that the principal is not. Carrie Jean mentioned that one issue is that certain larger decisions are made over email because when they are made in meetings principals can be aware and participate.

(Tara Dunsmore left the meeting)

Molly identified it as a two part issue. Communicating properly and making sure we are communicating with the proper people. The BOT will discuss during the work session to create norms and policies. Molly would like to keep the status quo that members of the BOT are the only ones who get the communication intended for board members.

- **Discussion:** How to make the MMCI Office useable (Tara) moved to policy workshop
- **Discussion:** FCPS Custodial Issues (update) (Nichole) The BOT discussed the importance of making our impact and opinion known in a respectful way. It is important to share that it is a detriment to our schools due to financial impact and also the principle that MMCI maintains the buildings, they are not FCPS maintained buildings. The board felt that we should remove text offering solutions and to make the goal of the letter to state our position. Don Townsend will create a draft and send it to the BOT.

(Christopher Chandler left the meeting)

Molly recognized that the BOE has generally been open to respectful statements and understands MMCI is coming from a different perspective.

- **Discussion:** Buyer commission policy (Don Townsend) - removed due to addition of Ken Breen contract, this additional policy is not necessary.

Molly motioned to adjourn, Kathleen seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.