

**Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT)
Wednesday, August 24, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting: meet.google.com/fcv-mjvy-utv
Join by phone: +1 346-808-1766 PIN: 378 965 061#**

- ~~Diego Alvarez (Treasurer)~~
- ~~Molly Carlson, CCM Parent Trustee, Facilities Chair~~
- ~~Julie Clark, CCM Parent Trustee~~
- ~~Nichole Dowlearn, MVM Parent Trustee~~
- ~~Tara Dunsmore, BOT President~~
- ~~Michael Beth Edwards, CCM VP~~
- ~~Elise Goodwin, MVM Parent Trustee~~
- ~~Ellie Landru, MVM VP, Facilities Chair~~
- ~~Kathleen Lutrell, Friend of Ed~~
- ~~Jennifer Mayo, CCM Parent Trustee~~
- ~~Meggan Sombat, Interim BOT Secretary~~

- ~~Nikki Burgee (CCM GC Chair, non-voting member)~~
- ~~Amy Dorman, MVM Principal~~
- ~~Marilyn Horan, CCM Principal~~
- ~~Jen Kuhn, (MVM GC Chair, non-voting member)~~
- ~~Brandon Sowers, MVM Assistant Principal~~

Regular Meeting Agenda

1. Call To Order **7:00 p.m.**

Tara Dunsmore called the meeting to order at 7:03pm, and started the recording.

2. Welcome/Introductions **7:02 - 7:05 p.m.**

Tara introduced members present. See above for attendance.

3. Community Comments **7:05-7:10 p.m.**

There were no community comments this month.

4. Consent Agenda Items

7:10-7:12 p.m.

Meggan Sombat read the consent agenda item.

- EVOTE closed on August 19, 2022 - [Approval of July 2022 MMCI BOT Meeting Minutes](#) - MOTION PASSED with 5 Aye, 2 Abstain, and 4 didn't vote.

5. Member & Committee Reports and Updates

7:12-7:30 p.m.

- MMCI President Report - 5 minutes (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara reported that Amy Sullivan has accepted a job with FCPS at MVM, and she has had to step down from the BOT Assistant Treasurer position. It is an important position to fill. The current term runs through 6/30/2023, and then is up for reelection in November. Please contact the BOT Secretary with interest. We also have a vacant Parent Trustee for MVM and/or BOT Secretary. Meggan is willing to fill either position.

Tara also said that this is a big school year, with lots going on at both schools and participation and engagement is needed from the community, volunteering on committees and for facilities projects. Community members are invited to reach out to anyone on the board to volunteer.

- BOT Treasurer Report - 5 minutes (Diego Alvarez)

Diego Alvarez submitted reports ahead of the meeting. July expenses were standard, and Diego invited the Board to reach out with any questions. The audit is ongoing and being handled by Amy O'Connor.

Diego said that he wanted to bring the MMCI reserves to the board's attention. He has suggestions for how we might spend the money, putting special attention to fundraising efforts for both schools. Diego will provide scenarios and recommendations at the September Meeting.

- [MMCI Financial Report 7/2022](#) (access restricted)
- [MMCI Finance Summary 7/2022](#)

- [MMCI Facilities Committee Update](#) - 5 minutes (Tara Dunsmore/ Molly Carlson/ Elizabeth Landru)

Molly Carlson sent a Facilities Committee Task Force update. Molly said that the LOI for CCM to purchase their current building was accepted by the landlord, and they are in process

for financial services and project management. Molly said they are excited about the potential to align the financing with MVM, if possible. Molly said that the MMCI Facilities Committee had a lot of questions about MVM's project and is looking for an update.

Tara said that the MVM team needs an additional volunteer to help carry the load of the Facilities project. We are looking for someone with more time and dedication to schedule regular community meetings and coordinate the final stretch of the project. Tara asked anyone interested to please reach out to Ellie Landru to volunteer.

Darlene Overholtzer asked if MMCI was planning to come to Back to School Night to ask for volunteers and give an update for facilities.

Tara confirmed that she and the MVM GC Chair, Jen Kuhn, will be in attendance. She said that the MMCI Facilities Committee is mainly made up of members of MMCI and GC's, so we are primarily looking for a volunteer from leadership.

Tara said that the MVM architect has been working on the test fit and MEP Evaluation. They have run into some issues because the CAD drawings are incomplete. They have worked with the realtor and seller's agent to obtain these documents. At this point, we may incur expense to have the CAD drawings completed. We are continuing to work on the test fit, and moving into the next step, which is the survey process.

Tara said that she spoke to the architect about the 90 day due diligence deadline, and the firm is working toward that deadline, getting the test fit complete, and answering major questions within the timeline.

Tara restated that every avenue for obtaining the CAD drawings is being explored, and invited anyone with questions or suggestions to email the Facilities Committee. It looks like we will have to pay to have the drawings done, and it is an unexpected expense, but not unheard of in projects like this.

In answer to some additional questions from the Facilities Update, Tara said that the 90 day period ends on September 22 (*DATE CORRECTED FOR RECORD), and we are not looking at an extension at the moment. FCPS does have a status update. Finally, Tara said that the MVM GC made the decision to put the plan B project on hold when they began the due diligence on Toll House.

Molly said that she appreciates the updates and looks forward to further discussion at the upcoming facilities meeting.

FOLLOW UP - Tara needs support from additional members of leadership for facilities projects and updates. Position open for a MVM Facilities Chair. (ALL BOT/ ALL MVM GC)

Molly asked if Facilities Project management companies could provide that support, and Tara said that Building Hope has not been as supportive of the Toll House project.

Tara said that one thing that needs to be done is to compare project management companies, and have MVM make a decision.

Michael Beth Edwards suggested that MMCI could use Molly's research for MVM decisions as well.

Tara agreed and said that they will discuss sharing research and info at the upcoming facilities meeting, so that efforts do not need to be duplicated.

Tara said that there are additional facilities topics on the agenda. We've discussed making a decision on a Financial Services provider. However, Michael Beth said that we are not ready to decide and vote tonight. They are continuing to research, and within the week Michael Beth will present data to the BOT and initiate an Evote.

- [MMCI Lottery Committee Update](#) - 1 minute (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara mentioned that the Lottery Committee is still seeking volunteers from each school to manage the software for our Lottery system, working with spreadsheets and lottery administration.

FOLLOW UP - Lottery Committee Volunteer needed. (Meggan Sombat)

- MMCI Grants and Fundraising Committee Update - 1 minute (Meggan Sombat)

No update this month.

Tara encouraged both schools to take a look at their fundraising calendars and get some events and fundraising plans on the calendar. Community building events, participation and involvement are equally important to donations.

FOLLOW UP - GC Chairs requested to share Fundraising Calendars with BOT. (Jen Kuhn/ Nikki Burgee)

- MMCI Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee Update - 1 minute (Tara Dunsmore/ Jennifer Mayo)

Jennifer Mayo sent the communications statement to send to the community to invite members to join the DEI Committee. Tara said this will be combined with a Back to School Communication, and discussed later in the agenda.

School Updates:

7:30-7:40 p.m.

- [CCM Report](#) - 5 minutes (Marilyn Horan/ Michael Beth Edwards/ Nikki Burgee)

Marilyn said that the beginning of the school year has been pre-covid good. Students have come back so excited, and practicing grace and courtesy, and it's more than we could have imagined. Kindergarten started August 8, which has been wonderful for the kids. Middle school students report that they are happier with interactions and relationships in a Montessori environment. Marilyn said that the staff and parents at CCM have built a community. They are planning many community building field trips for all levels. Testing starts soon, and Spanish assessments begin in October.

Michael Beth added that the CCM GC wants to look at their funding for teacher training

structure. Their philosophy has been to reimburse tuition, but they haven't addressed travel. Online learning is more prevalent since covid. In-person trainings are fewer and the GC is looking at the issue.

Tara asked if CCM could bring the research to MMCI so that it can be shared with MVM, and potentially implemented organization-wide.

FOLLOW UP - CCM to share teacher training funding research with MMCI, include Amy Dorman in the conversation (Michael Beth/ Nikki Burgee)

- **MVM Report - 5 minutes (Amy Dorman/ Elizabeth Landru/ Jen Kuhn)**

Amy Dorman said that MVM welcomed an Assistant Principal, Brandon Sowers. He is getting to know the school and students. MVM also had a staggered start for Primary classes. They are working on team building and prioritizing relationship building and academics.

Amy said that there are still a few staff positions open. Special Ed positions are still challenging to fill. Spanish teacher is part time (.35), and MVM may share with another school. They also need to fill an Upper EI teacher position. The class is currently being taught by their Montessori Teacher Specialist. Please send recommendations to Amy.

Amy said that students are interested in starting clubs and planning events.

Amy shared that they've been very intentional about sharing a message of civility this school year, and they lead with a pledge every morning. The Meerkat Pledge - "I pledge to practice civility, by using kind words, by leading with compassion, and by standing up for myself and others every day." This is what it means to be a Meerkat, and is coupled with announcements and words of wisdom messages. Also on Wednesdays, School Counselor Cindy Green does Wellness Wednesday.

Tara complimented Amy on a successful carline for the first week of school.

Amy answered that carline is parent volunteer run, and they are opening the doors earlier this year, and the line gets moving sooner.

Jen Kuhn added that we had an Open House and the energy at MVM is really great this year. There are a lot of new families and everyone is excited to be there. MVM's First Day Flowers tradition continues, and this year they added bringing a flower to specials teachers as well.

Jen and Ellie joined the SIP meeting this year, and it was great to hear staff collaborate on improving the school.

Jen is excited that several key volunteer roles have been filled recently, such as Building and Grounds and Communications. The AP position is filled. MVM's next priority is to roll up their sleeves and focus on the High School Committee.

Ellie Landru added that MVM has a new maintenance mechanic, Mr. Rudy. The building has been challenging. Lead testing was completed, and a link is included in Ellie's written report. MVM's water bill will be more expensive this month and causes are being investigated. Ellie reported that the asbestos inspection was done at MVM, with Tori McCarthy as lead. There have been HVAC issues recently at Dill Avenue. Pest management is going smoothly and being addressed monthly. There is also an electrical issue being managed at Dill Ave.

Ellie said that she requested 5 year Budget Projections from the MVM GC, however they haven't been completed. A task force meeting will be scheduled this week to get the updated 5 year budget projections to the BOT.

FOLLOW UP - 5 Year Budget Projections from MVM (Jen Kuhn and Ellie Landru)

Ellie said that the MVM GC is considering adding members (2 Parent Reps and 1 Staff Rep) because student numbers will increase next school year, and they will be voting in September. This means a possible change to the bylaws.

Molly mentioned that the CCM GC decided to include 17% as facilities cost in 5 year projections, for lenders, and MVM could consider doing the same.

Tara said that the 17% was the number we used for previous projections.

Ellie said that nuances with future expenses lead to challenges with budget projections.

Michael Beth said that the financial advisors reassured them at meetings that these did not have to be accurate.

Tara added that the goal of the previous projections was to show that we were not at a deficit. Estimates were mid-level averages. The projections are not being voted on, they are a resource for financing companies.

Ellie said that projections in the past have shifted how the GC saved money and made decisions. They are committed to getting it finalized and accurate.

6. Follow-ups/ Action Items

7:40 p.m - 7:55 p.m.

- [BOT Action Items - July/August 2022](#)

Tara asked everyone to please follow up on action items and please update accordingly.

7. New Business: Discussion and Votes

7:55 - 9:00 p.m.

- **DISCUSSION/ VOTE: FY2023 Budget - CCMPCS (Josh Rathmell)**

Josh Rathmell presented slides from the CCM budget.

1. PPA from FCPS was a 24.8% increase, which is a large increase and is unusual. For this year, FCPS changed the number of students in calculation, they counted the PreK 3 and 4's. PPA per student increased 5.9%. Historically the increase has been around 3%. Blueprint for Education is one big factor in the increase.

2. Josh explained CCM's expenses and surplus. FCPS holds a backlog of surplus, and this year CCM is taking some of that out and putting it in the budget, partly for their facilities project (renovations, purchase, reserves, as well as reserves for potential retirement pay outs).

Tara asked about the surplus being held in FCPS. Josh confirmed that \$600K is being pulled out,

and the remaining \$600K is held by FCPS.

3. Josh explained CCM's overall budget - Admin, MMCI, salaries, materials and instructions, services, health, facilities rent, other salaries, buybacks for FCPS services, maintenance, benefits, overtime pay, building project - capital reserves, and building.

Tara asked about the operating reserve - will it be held in the MMCI savings account? Josh said ultimately probably it will be, but pulling it into the operating reserve makes sense for flexibility.

Tara agreed that we would prefer it to be in the MMCI account for interest.

Molly said that we have been saving each year, and she expects that we will need more than \$336K in cash for the project.

Ellie agreed that CCM will need money available for zoning and other expenses related to the facilities project.

Molly asked if this is voted on, will that eliminate the ability to move funds?

Tara said that funds are flexible unless they are donor directed funds. The GC can move funds between accounts and still has control over funds.

Tara thanked Josh for working on the budget.

Tara stated the motion.

MOTION by Tara Dunsmore: I move to approve the CCM FY23 PPA Budget as presented.

Ellie Landru Seconded.

MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye, 1 did not vote.

ACTION ITEM: Forward approved CCM FY23 Budget to FCPS (Diego Alvarez)

- **DISCUSSION/ VOTE: FY2023 Budget - MVMPCS (Jen Kuhn)**

Jen Kuhn thanked Rachel Schooley (MVM Budget Chair) for being there and presented the budget spreadsheet.

Tara asked about inclusion of the HS budget in the MVM FY2023 budget, and said that none of the staffing positions to be added mid-planning year were included in MVM's proposed budget.

Tara said that she expected that the HS grant would offset expenses, but that the positions would still be reflected in the total budget, and that the MSDE grant would be included as income.

Rachel said that she asked at the budget meeting and was told that the only position that would hit this year was the AP, which is its own line item. Some of the other positions fall under the salary tab. There is coverage for long term substitutes, which can be applied for a portion of the year for new hire salaries. The positions wouldn't be listed individually.

Rachel said that because so much is not known about the HS and our budget, and the facility, there will likely need to be additional discussions and modifications as we move through the year.

Tara mentioned that Amy O'Connor worked on an itemized budget that breaks down the staff salaries. Tara shared the document with Rachel.

Tara said that also we are in fact using grant funds to pay for half of the principal salary, not the AP. Tara asked if we should revise the budget before it is submitted to FCPS, or should we submit as is.

Ellie answered that the task force meeting will address all of those details.

Tara said there likely isn't enough time for the task force to meet, make the changes, and then vote on it and submit to FCPS before 8/31.

Michael Beth said that she got the impression from the meeting with FCPS that this year is weird, and it sounds like the GC could answer any potential questions from FCPS.

Tara said that the concern is adding staff positions for the High School, and asked for confirmation that we could submit a revised budget to FCPS if needed.

Michael Beth said that revisions can be submitted, but are only necessary if there are big changes, and line item changes do not need a revision.

Ashley Lynn, MVM Hiring Chair, asked if she can hire a position that isn't in the budget, and shared that she is concerned about the timing.

Tara said that there would need to be a budget revision, and that hires will happen in the spring, and salaries would begin in June. The process for timelines needs to start now.

ACTION ITEM - Schedule staffing plan meeting for the MVM High School (Jen Kuhn/ Ellie Landru).

Tara said that the MVM GC should be intentional about creating their budget for this year to include the High School, and confirmed that the BOT would move forward with Rachel presenting this budget as prepared, with the understanding that the MVM Finance Team is going to meet, and will provide the 5 year projections asap, and provide an updated budget to BOT when available.

FOLLOW UP - MVM GC Finance Team meet to provide the 5 year projections asap, and provide updated budget to BOT when available (Jen Kuhn/ Ellie Landru).

Ellie reiterated that Jen mentioned that the High School committee is the MVM GC's priority going forward.

Rachel presented the budget beginning with the budget memo. She reported on the increase in PPA due to inclusion of PreK students, as well as a surplus from last year being held for a new facility. The Assistant Principal position was added. The Long Term subs category has a surplus of 161K that is a buffer, and can be moved to other categories if needed. Rachel said that health room supplies are up, and additional line items are higher due to Covid. There was an increase in natural gas last year; some line items were standard such as maintenance; benefits; new building is a large sum, which is a buffer for a move to a new facility soon.

Marilyn asked if there was a difference between CCM and MVM savings.

Tara said that money has been going into MVM savings for years. Surplus has been moved into facilities savings, and that the question for CCM was to see if that would be the plan also.

Rachel clarified that the MVM surplus would remain as a PPA line item at this point. Tara said that typically MVM would move those funds to MMCI savings later in the year.

Rachel asked about moving the surplus to class 15 - and Tara said that this needs to be a discussion. In keeping it in FCPS vs moving it.

ACTION ITEM - Schedule a finance meeting to discuss how we handle the surplus, and how we withdraw that money (Tara Dunsmore/ Diego Alvarez)

MOTION by Tara Dunsmore: I move to approve the MVM FY 23 Budget as presented.

Ellie Landru Seconded.

MOTION PASSED WITH 10 Aye, 1 Abstain.

ACTION ITEM: Forward approved FY23 MVM Budget to FCPS (Diego Alvarez)

- **DISCUSSION/ VOTE: FY2023 Budget - MMCI (Diego Alvarez)**

Diego shared the MMCI Budget, and said that the budget is straightforward. Salary and facilities are the biggest items. Reserves are continuing to build out. Operating reserve is for 12 months, and we are continuing to build facility savings. There are additional details in classes. At the end of the year, we are expecting \$11000 in the black.

Tara commented that there is very little program and enrichment income, and asked the school principals to confirm that clubhouse kids operated out of the MMCI buildings. Amy and Marilyn confirmed that they did. However, MMCI did not receive any payments from them in FY2022. In FY2021, MMCI voted to waive payments for one year. Amy O didn't have a basis to include this income in the FY2023 budget, however that may change.

FOLLOW UP - Follow up with Clubhouse kids (Tara Dunsmore)

Molly asked if MMCI has voting access to the operating reserve. Tara said yes.

Ellie asked about training. There is \$250 in the budget for Roberts Rules training in the budget.

Diego said that he left it in in the event that training repeats this year.

MOTION by Tara Dunsmore: I move to approve the MMCI FY 23 Operating Budget as presented.

Ellie Landru Seconded.

MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye , 1 Abstain

Tara reminded the board that the MMCI budget does not get sent to FCPS. MMCI is a private corporation.

Tara recommended a break. We took a break at 8:57pm, and the meeting resumed at 9:05pm.

Tara amended the agenda to strike the closed session and some agenda items (noted below).

Closed Session: To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto.

- ~~DISCUSSION/ VOTE: Financial Services Provider (Tara Dunsmore/ Michael Beth Edwards)~~

*We are not ready for this vote yet, but Michael Beth will share her research with BOT asap and we will do an EVOTE.

- **DISCUSSION: Funding Sources for Facilities Projects (Molly Carlson)**

Molly said that Amy O requested a breakdown of facilities funding, and she is going to set up a document and share with the facilities committee.

ACTION ITEM - Create a Facilities Funding breakdown (Molly Carlson, MMCI Facilities Committee)

- **DISCUSSION: Back to School Communication (Tara Dunsmore)**

Tara said that last year MMCI approved an Ethics policy and as part of that, intended to establish an Ethics Committee. Membership would include random members of the community.

Tara would like to combine a call for Ethics and DEI Committee volunteers with a general back to school communication from MMCI, introducing MMCI and explaining the role of MMCI. Nichole volunteered to compile a communication. Tara would like it to go out within the next couple of weeks.

ACTION ITEM - Create a Back to School communication (Tara Dunsmore/ Nichole Dowlearn)

- **VOTE: Selection of Resident Agent (Meggan Sombat)**

Meggan explained that in July we voted to change the address of the Resident Agent selected by the BOT, and a vote is needed to select the Resident Agent Company. Amy O recommended the least expensive option.

MOTION by Meggan Sombat: I move to select Maryland Resident Agent Inc. (<https://www.marylandresidentagent.com/>) to serve as Resident Agent for MMCI.

Ellie Landru Seconded.

MOTION Passed with 10 Aye, 1 did not vote.

ACTION ITEM - Forward Resident Agent vote information to Amy O'Connor. (Meggan Sombat)

- **DISCUSSION/ VOTE: Nominating Committee and MMCI Annual Meeting (Meggan Sombat)**

Meggan said that the BOT is reactivating our [Nominating Committee](#). The Committee is made up of the BOT Secretary and VP's from both schools, as well as other parent volunteers. We are looking for volunteers from both schools, and would be great to have a committed team.

Meggan mentioned that there are multiple open positions at the MMCI and school level, as well as potential bylaw changes. Volunteer tasks include: recruiting, creating communication, and administering online voting.

Meggan asked if everyone was in agreement that the MMCI Annual Meeting be held in person this year. There were no objections.

Tara said that her preference would be to have it in person, and also Livestream the meeting. Ellie agreed, and encouraged BOT members to attend in person. Meggan offered some suggested dates for holding the Annual Meeting in the sanctuary at MVM. The date that was best for everyone was Monday November 28.

MOTION by Tara Dunsmore: I move to schedule the MMCI annual meeting to Monday Nov 28, 2022.

Ellie seconded.

MOTION PASSED with 11 aye.

ACTION ITEM - Send notification of MMCI Annual Meeting date and add to calendars (Meggan Sombat)

ACTION ITEM - Recruit volunteers from CCM and MVM for the Nominating Committee (Meggan Sombat/ Jen Kuhn/ Nikki Burgee)

ACTION ITEM - Notify Amy O re: purchase of Online Voting software (Meggan Sombat)

~~● DISCUSSION/VOTE: Schedule September Work Session (Meggan Sombat)~~

ACTION ITEM - Send Doodle Poll for a work session to discuss the Draft BOT SOP (Meggan Sombat).

~~● DISCUSSION: Schedule BOT Book Club (Tara Dunsmore/ Julie Clark)~~

ACTION ITEM - Bring details to the next BOT Meeting/ Schedule first BOT Book Club meeting (Julie Clark)

MOTION by Tara Dunsmore: I move to adjourn the meeting.

Ellie seconded.

MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye, 1 did not vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:32pm.

Announcements:

1. Upcoming MMCI Business Meetings (usually held at 7PM the FINAL Wednesday of each month): *meetings will be virtual until further notice*
 - September 28, 2022
 - October 26, 2022
 - MONDAY November 28, 2022 - MMCI Annual Meeting
2. Minutes and Agendas may be found online at <http://mmcimd.org/calendar/>