#### Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT) Wednesday, September 28, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.

#### Virtual Meeting: <u>meet.google.com/fcv-mjvy-utv</u> 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
- Jessica Lawrence Wujek, MVM Parent Trustee
- ☑ Kathleen Lutrell, Friend of Ed
- Jennifer Mayo, CCM Parent Trustee
- Meggan Sombat, 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. <u>Call To Order</u>

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 all members in attendance, as above.

#### 3. Community Comments

There were no community comments this month.

#### 7:00 p.m.

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7:05-7:10 p.m.

#### 4. <u>Consent Agenda Items</u>

- <u>EVOTE for Approval of MAPCS Membership Fees</u>, closed on 9/2/22 MOTION PASSED with 8 Aye and 3 did not vote.
- <u>EVOTE for Approval of Financial Services Company</u>, closed on 9/5/22 MOTION PASSED with 6 Aye and 5 did not vote.
- <u>EVOTE for Appointment of BOT Parent Trustee for MVM</u>, Jessica Lawrence Wujek, closed on 9/9/22 - **MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye and 1 did not vote.**
- EVOTE for Approval of August 2022 MMCI BOT Meeting Minutes, closed on 9/16/22 MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye and 1 did not vote.
- <u>EVOTE for Approval of Attorney's Fees with John Garza</u>, closed on 9/23/22 MOTION PASSED unanimously with 12 Aye.
- EVOTE for Approval of CCM Contract with Legacy Impact Capital, closed on 9/24/22 MOTION PASSED unanimously with 12 Aye.
- <u>EVOTE for Approval of MVM\* Contract with Legacy Impact Capital</u>, closed on 9/24/22 - **MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye and 1 did not vote**.

Meggan Sombat read the consent agenda items. \*Note: Typo from the agenda has been corrected.

#### 5. <u>Member & Committee Advance Reports and Updates</u> 7:12-7:34 p.m.

## • MMCI President Report - 5 minutes (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara reported that she had leadership meetings with Dr. Lippy and received updates on PreK funding and Covid-19. FCPS is shifting focus to an endemic response, which means no contact tracing. There is plenty of PPE and hand sanitizer available for our schools from FCPS.

Our Back to School Welcome letter went out this week explaining the role of the BOT, our Annual Meeting and Election, and a reminder that we are accepting applications to join our DEI, Ethics, and Advocacy Committees.

We are looking for an Assistant Treasurer to complete the current term through June 30, 2023. The position is also up for election this November. This is a critical role on our executive committee, signing checks, approving payroll, and overseeing financial policies and project management. Please email president@mmcimd.org or secretary@mmcimd.org with interest.

## • BOT Treasurer Report - 5 minutes (Diego Alvarez)

Tara said that Diego Alvarez was not able to attend this meeting, but the financial reports are attached to the agenda. Tara thanked our Bookeeper, Amy O'Connor, for handling the audit, and mentioned that the Audit Report is attached to the agenda.

At the October meeting, Diego will propose/recommend switching to a different bank, based on his research of available business checking account options. Additionally, Diego has also been doing research into grants and fundraising, and will propose hiring a grant manager, which is something MMCI has discussed previously. Facilities improvement grants will be very important in the coming months and years. We will schedule a work session in October to discuss details.

- MMCI Financial Report 8/2022 (access restricted)
- MMCI Finance Summary 8/2022
- FY22 Audit Report
- <u>MMCI Facilities Committee Update</u> 5 minutes (Tara Dunsmore/ Molly Carlson/ Elizabeth Landru)

Tara reported that our Facilities Committees have been very busy in the last month. Molly Carlson submitted a report summarizing updates for both schools.

Molly said that we've formed a great partnership with Campanile, our financial management company, as well as with Legacy Impact Capital for project management. They are helping to determine the feasibility of financial and real estate/development options for both projects. We are grateful to have a team of professionals on our side. And it has been encouraging to confirm that our numbers have been mostly accurate over the years.

Molly reported that CCM has a final draft of the contract to purchase. It is mostly the same as the LOI, and will be reviewed in closed session tonight. An Evote will happen within the next week. The Facilities Committee intends to go into more detail about our facilities projects at the November MMCI Annual Meeting.

Ellie Landru said that she has been working with Amy O'Connor and Tara on refining budget and affordability projections. Campanile is assisting in reviewing renovation costs for the project.

The MVM school level facilities team is meeting weekly, and having received the first draft of the architectural drawings, the Facilities team will meet on site to solidify plans for the space. Ellie said that they also recently received the MEP evaluations, and will go over them this week.

MVM met the contractual requirements for the first vote. The next vote will occur at the timing of the second deposit, which depends on zoning approval. Zoning work is ongoing, and the Planning Commission Hearing has been pushed to November.

Tara added that there was a community vote at the 2020 MMCI Annual Meeting to approve MMCI purchasing a facility, provided that facilities costs do not exceed 17% of annual PPA. Each school is working on financing options, and has different budgets and calculations. The 17% may or may not be sufficient for both schools. Another vote may be needed to take into account variable facilities payments over the first few years, especially with MVM. We do not have the final numbers yet, and unfortunately may not have them by our 2022 Annual Meeting this November. We may need to hold a community vote in January or February. CCM appears to be on track to stay under the 17% cap, however we will know for sure once financing options are finalized for both projects. • MVM High School Grant and Planning Update - 5 minutes (MVM HS Committee) Held for MVM HS Committee Co-Chair, Tori McCarthy, expected to join the meeting later.

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

Tara said that we sent out the request for committee members, and will be accepting interest through the beginning of October.

Jennifer Mayo said that she has spoken to some parents and will ask them to fill out the form. ACTION ITEM: Confirm DEI Committee Membership and schedule the first meeting. (Tara Dunsmore/ Jennifer Mayo)

## • MMCI Nominating Committee Update - 1 minute (Meggan Sombat)

Meggan said that the attached report has been updated, and that the Nominating Committee is looking for volunteers from both schools to recruit for open leadership positions, assist with setting up the election software, and provide support for online voting. Ideally we would love to have volunteers commit to returning annually, however our immediate need is for volunteers willing to help this year. The committee will meet next week, and interested volunteers are encouraged to attend. The Annual Meeting Guide will come out the week of October 7th.

Tara added that in past years we had a group of volunteers who made an annual commitment, however the core group has all aged out in the last few years. The position lasts from August through November, and is great for someone who is comfortable approaching people to recruit, and also for those who prefer to work behind the scenes with the meeting prep and election work.

## <u>MMCI Lottery Committee Update</u>

Tara said that we are still looking for additional volunteers for the Lottery Committee. The position is busiest from Spring through Summer, and the beginning of the school year. Over the Winter, there is some activity setting up the lottery software. The tasks are not highly technical, and knowledge of spreadsheets is sufficient.

Tara also reported that Jen Stafford, our Lottery Committee Admin from CCM, has been doing outreach with various Lottery software vendors. Our Contract for School Mint is ending, and we are reviewing options. One option is Power School, which is the software used by FCPS. It may be to our advantage to switch to Power School for ease of sharing student data. A decision will be made within the next few weeks.

#### <u>MMCI Grants and Fundraising Committee Update</u>

Tara reported that Diego will soon present options for hiring a grants manager. Revising the Grants Policy is on hold until the BOT reviews and decides on volunteer roles, and a potential staff position, going forward.

## School Updates:

#### 7:34-7:44 p.m.

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

Amy Dorman reported that Peace Day was celebrated both last week and this week with ribbons and songs and poetry. Students also stood in the shape of a peace sign in the parking lot. The School Improvement Plan is in progress with extra help from FCPS this year. MVM just wrapped up testing and will soon be sending invitations for Meerkat Camp and Power Hour. Last week was Safety Week. Fire fighters brought a fire truck to the school, and they accomplished safety drills. Our School Resource Officer also did a swearing in ceremony for the student safety patrol. MVM had a Staff Equity Training module during the last professional development opportunity, and Amy said that they had excellent engagement and that this is a priority at MVM.

This week Middle School classrooms needed to be evacuated due to a strange odor, and the fire department came to clear with no issues noted.

Dr. Lebo and Dr. Aliveto of FCPS both visited MVM in September, and the outreach and conversations were very much appreciated.

MVM is not fully staffed yet, with an Upper El position and Special Education position open, and our Montessori Teacher Specialist still covering the Upper El classroom.

Jen Kuhn reported that Peace Day was inspiring. Jen sent a report to the BOT. MVM has had a lot of energy around volunteering. Jen said that the High School Committee welcomes CCM volunteers to join the committee and provide input.

MVM currently has an open position on the GC that will be voted on at the next Meeting. MVM is planning a picnic, retirement party, Book Fair, and recently held a Budget Work Session for Facilities.

Ellie Landru asked if she could post a request for High School Committee volunteers in the CCM Facebook group. Marilyn Horan said that it is difficult to get people to volunteer at all, and that the High School committee should be realistic about finding CCM volunteers willing to work on this committee when their children are not guaranteed a spot in the High School.

Ellie requested of the BOT that we begin to start looking at the Lottery Software for High School. Tara and Kathleen Lutrell confirmed that that work is already complete.

There is currently an issue with the thermostat at Dill Avenue that is being addressed, and Ellie is in the process of finalizing the lead testing reporting process.

Ellie also said that discussions are ongoing with Attorney John Garza regarding the unusually high water bill received last month at MVM.

They have an Eagle Scout working on a painting project in the parking lot.

Ellie and Tara and Amy O'Connor are working on the Budget projections for future facilities.

## • <u>CCM Report</u> - 5 minutes (Marilyn Horan/ Michael Beth Edwards/ Nikki Burgee)

Marilyn Horan reported that Dr. Lebo and Dr. Aliveto visited CCM as well, and were given a full tour. It was a helpful and beneficial visit. FCPS spent a lot of time at CCM, and asked specific questions about what support is needed, and Marilyn was pleased with the experience. CCM also celebrated International Day of Peace with a variety of songs and poems and activities.

Light a Candle For Peace was sung in both English and Spanish.

CCM also had Safety Week. The kids know exactly what to do during the active shooter drills, which is disheartening, but is good to see how well they follow directions.

CCM also had two Equity Trainings; FCPS has done an amazing job putting together the trainings. Chorus, chess club, athletic clubs, field trips, camping, and etc. are all ongoing. CCM's Middle School will soon be going to the Mexican Cultural Institute in DC.

CCM has just finished up testing, and has been selected to do a tobacco survey with Middle School. There is one open seat for the Lottery. Marilyn said that she spoke with Dan Lippy to make sure that we do get credit for full enrollment for PPA, if we continue to offer spots in both schools. CCM has a new school counselor, and is now fully staffed. Marilyn reminded us that they don't celebrate Halloween or wear costumes to school. She also offered thanks to parents for making a smooth transition to their new carline traffic pattern.

Tara thanked Marilyn for confirming with Dr. Lippy that both MMCI schools receive credit for full enrollment, despite our ongoing Lottery activity throughout September and changing numbers. Michael Beth Edwards added that most meetings have been facilities related. She said that she has fielded many questions lately from community members looking for clarification on how the vote works for facilities purchases. She said that it has become apparent that going digital has affected record keeping for the Annual Meeting.

Tara clarified that the records the committee had been searching for were found in the file for the correct year. Tara said that the files should be reorganized in the public file.

Michael Beth agreed and said that files should be accessible so that volunteers can find information and jump in.

# ACTION ITEM - Make a Nominating Committee/ Annual Meeting file in the public file. (Meggan Sombat)

Michael Beth said that CCM is looking at the reimbursement policy for Montessori Training, and how the GC can support overcoming the hurdles to completing the training. Amy Dorman added that she would like to be involved in the conversation.

## ACTION ITEM - Put Reimbursement policy on the October Agenda for DISCUSSION. (Meggan Sombat - for Michael Beth)

Tara asked to clarify that Teacher Training Reimbursement is a MMCI Policy. Michael Beth confirmed that it is, and said that CCM is looking to update it to address supplemental costs.

#### 6. Follow-ups/ Action Items

#### 7:44 p.m - 7:50 p.m.

## • BOT Action Items - September 2022

Meggan asked BOT members to go over tagged action items from the list and provide updates. Ellie and Jen Kuhn offered an update on the MVM Fundraising Calendar item, which will be submitted shortly.

Ellie said that scheduling a Staffing Plan meeting for the High School should be shifted to committee Co-chairs Tori McCarthy and Amy Dorman.

Tara provided an update for the PreK Amendment, and shifted the income data action item to herself. The review of the Bookkeeper job description item needs to stay until completed. Tara added that Carrie Jean submitted a Draft of the SOP, and the Work Session for that has been pushed due to scheduling conflicts and other priorities.

Meggan said that the Action Items list is a living document for everyone, and reminded BOT members to check and update the list throughout the month to keep business moving forward, and so that tasks do not slip through the cracks.

#### 7. <u>New Business: Discussion and Votes</u> 7:50 - 8:40 p.m.

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

Tara said that CCM is proceeding to the contract stage on their facility purchase, and because negotiations are ongoing, until the seller has agreed to a contract, this will be a closed session discussion.

MOTION: Tara moved to go into closed session to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto. Second by Ellie.

MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye.

Closed session started at 8:26pm. Closed session ended at 8:37pm.

## • DISCUSSION: PreK Charter Amendments (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara gave an overview. Last month FCPS sent proposed charter amendments for both schools that provided PreK funding for full day 4's who meet the income requirement for the Federal poverty level.

Tara said that we knew that the MD Blueprint would offer more funding for preK 4's, but we were pleased that FCPS reached out to us. Tara shared the proposed amendments with the GC's, who asked questions and provided feedback. Tara was able to get clarification from Dr. Lippy, and FCPS is currently revising the amendments.

The MD Blueprint provides funding for both 3 and 4 year olds. However, FCPS has no plans to go to a full day 3 program anywhere in the county, and it is also not recommended for MMCI schools. Tara has asked FCPS to include the language for 3 year olds anyway, so the option will already be approved in our charter, and they agreed.

Tara said that for this year, we have already received all of our PPA funding for 3 and 4 year olds.

Next year, we will only receive funding for full day 4's who meet income requirements.

Additionally, we will also soon receive back funding for last year's students. Tara thanked Marilyn for pressing FCPS for this back funding. This money can be used if we submit revised budgets, otherwise it will roll into surplus for next year.

Marilyn asked Dr. Aliveto about the timing for last year's money, and Tara said that the money will come after we sign the charter.

Marilyn and Tara agreed, however, that we should get last year's money even if we didn't agree to the charter amendments.

The main impact that this has on both schools is that the GC's need to decide if they want to move forward with full day 4's. Tara recommends implementing the program due to funding considerations. However it is up to each school's GC. Dr. Lippy wanted this to go to the BOE in September, then October. But, the Charter Amendment has to be approved by the GC's and the BOT before going back to the BOE.

Marilyn added that income verification is required from all FCPS schools, and she would like the board to consider how to implement this in the same way that FCPS does, because funding is going to be reliant on this.

Tara said that it is on the list of action items to follow up, and that it should become part of the lottery application process. We may need to take a vote to adjust the lottery process prior to the 2023-24 Lottery.

#### ACTION ITEM- Determine process for collecting income info and <u>have it voted and approved by</u> <u>December</u>, along with any other lottery changes that we have discussed. (Tara Dunsmore)

Ellie added that if an applicant's income changes between March and September, we may need to verify that documentation is still valid. Tara said we need to see what the FCPS documentation requirements are.

Marilyn agreed that our requirements will have to be the same as FCPS.

Tara added for reference that MVM is having a discussion about adding lottery preference for income eligible 4 year olds, as a financial consideration.

Ashley Lynn, MVM Hiring Committee Chair, pointed out that if we are hiring for new primary staff, variable income would not be ideal, and also it will be difficult to verify for lottery preference.

Tara said that we are not looking to add classrooms or hire additional staff, but agreed that we do need to look into the lottery implications closely.

Marilyn commented in the chat that CCM would not be considering including an income-based lottery preference, and Tara clarified that this was a discussion that happened at the MVM level only, and any changes would be a decision of each individual school's GC.

Tara said that once we have the revised charter amendments, we will bring them for approval to the GC's and BOT.

## • DISCUSSION: MMCI Facilities Savings Guidelines (Molly Carlson)

Molly shared her screen with notes. She reported that the Facilities committee determined that an SOP for how to spend facilities and capital asset reserve funds was needed. The guidelines cover the amount of funds transferred, and how funds become facilities and assets reserves. The guidelines also propose a spending procedure: funds can be used following a vote for legal

services, legal or professional services for zoning, and fees for financial services entities. It does not include project management expenses for individual schools.

Molly said that the guidelines should attempt to equitably support both schools within a reasonable margin.

As long as expenses align with the procurement policy, other facilities related expenditures may be allowable with this account with a vote.

Tara asked if the last line should be left more open to include expenditures recommended by GC's or the Facilities Committee, and Molly agreed.

## MOTION: Tara moved to approve the MMCI Facility and Capital Reserve Spending Parameters Standard Operating Procedure as presented.

Second by Molly Carlson.

MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye.

## • DISCUSSION/ VOTE: MVM Bylaw Change (Elizabeth Landru)

Ellie said that the MVM GC voted and is looking to change the wording of the MVM Bylaws to increase the GC membership to 6 parent reps, 3 staff and 3 friends of ed. Current bylaw wording is on page 8 of the bylaws here:

<u>https://mmcimd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/MMCI-Bylaws-Final-adopted-11\_2018.pdf</u> Ellie said that the changes are being requested due to the High School expansion, to provide additional members, and potentially allow for parent and staff representation from the High School.

Proposed change to wording: section 4 of the MVM Bylaws, Number 8, A. composition and election:

The Monocacy Valley Montessori Public Charter School Governing

Council shall consist of  $\underline{six}$  parent representatives and  $\underline{three}$  Friends of

Education (non-parents/guardians of students at the charter school if they

can be found to serve) elected by the Corporation members who work at

or have children attending a given school; three staff representatives elected

only by staff; and the Administrator of the school by virtue of office.

Tara said that any changes to the bylaws have to be approved by a majority of the membership, and this change would be voted on at the Annual Meeting in November.

MOTION: Tara moved to amend the MMCI Bylaws Section IV. Committees, 8. School Governing Councils. a. Composition and election as proposed by the MVM Governing Council. Seconded by Ellie MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye.

ACTION ITEM: Add MVM Bylaw Change to 2022 Annual Meeting ballot. (Meggan Sombat)

DISCUSSION: BOT Book Club (Julie Clark/ Amy Dorman)

Julie Clark suggested that the BOT do a 6pm Happy Hour for our first Book Club Meeting on Wednesday, December 21, with appetizers and an ice breaker. The location will be TBA. Tara suggested a Google Group for supplemental discussion. Julie will bring details of the event to the next meeting.

https://www.amazon.com/s?k=craig+weber+conversational+capacity&hvadid=78409116190639 &hvbmt=be&hvdev=c&hvqmt=e&tag=mh0b-20&ref=pd\_sl\_3w2u3bsj7w\_e

• DISCUSSION: Schedule Grant Manager/MMCI Staffing Work Session for October (Tara Dunsmore/ Diego Alvarez)

Tara asked to schedule a Work Session to discuss MMCI Staffing/ Grant Management. Continued below.

# • DISCUSSION: Regular BOT Work Sessions (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara suggested that the BOT implement regularly scheduled work sessions for topics that require more in depth discussion, perhaps every other month or quarterly.

Michael Beth agreed that quarterly would work best.

Jessica Lawrence Wujek asked about work sessions, and Tara said they are open to the public and do not include votes, but provide an opportunity for deeper discussion.

Tara proposed October 19, and going forward, to schedule Work Sessions for January, April, and July.

ACTION ITEM - Schedule work session for October 19. (Meggan Sombat)

## • DISCUSSION: Clubhouse Kids Contract & Status (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara said that recently it was brought to our attention that there were some issues with the 2021-22 Clubhouse Kids contract. The history is that in March 2020, Clubhouse Kids shut down because of the pandemic. In August 2020, Clubhouse Kids proposed a reduced payment schedule, to be able to open in the 2020-21 school year, and meet covid restrictions. The BOT voted to agree to their proposal and reduce the fee for use of our buildings to \$1 per day for each child enrolled. The Board agreed at the time that Clubhouse Kids provides a good service for MMCI schools and has been a good partner over the years, and sought to maintain that relationship.

In November 2020, Clubhouse Kids opened a stand alone center, and they did not operate in our buildings at all during the 2020-21 school year. No payments were received that school year.

At the start of the 2021-22 school year, Clubhouse Kids resumed operations in our buildings, with no request for any additional considerations or amended contract terms.

During this year's audit, it was brought to our attention that we didn't receive any payments for the 2021-22 school year.

Tara reached out to Clubhouse Kids, and received a response from the owner. They said that they thought the discounted rate was still in place. They confirmed that enrollment in the 2021-22 school year was approximately half of what it was prior to the pandemic.

Tara said that we understand the challenges posed by the pandemic, and are supportive of Clubhouse Kids as a small business, however MMCI is also a business. Last year we discussed reinvesting funds into additional enrichment activities, which we haven't been able to do, because we haven't had any income.

Michael Beth said that because no payments were received, their statement doesn't ring true. Tara said that the Board also had not reached out to them during the year to arrange payments. We do not have anyone on the Board officially managing contracts, because we haven't had the need to until this point.

Ellie said that Clubhouse Kids also has not been sending reports or marketing materials. Tara said that she feels that the onus was on them to either reach out to us to request an amendment, or honor their contract. She asked the board to weigh in on where to go from here. Michael Beth suggested asking for feedback from Clubhouse Kids. What do they recommend to make it right?

Ellie agreed and said that puts the onus on Clubhouse Kids to provide an ethical response. Tara said that we do have a good relationship with them, and we do not want to harm their business. But we have a responsibility to our organization.

Michael Beth stated that writing off a loss is not a good precedent to set for the organization. Tara said that she appreciates the feedback, and will reply to Clubhouse Kids and ask how they propose to move forward.

Also, both schools are due to renegotiate their contracts with Clubhouse Kids. MVM is due this year, and CCM next year. If we want to explore other options, we could do that now, or we could come back to that discussion if we do not have a favorable response and resolution to the contract issue.

Tara said that the last item on the agenda is the MVM High school report. Tori McCarthy was not able to attend the meeting, but did send a report. Tara asked Board members to review the report and reach out to Tori and Amy Dorman with any questions.

# MOTION: Tara moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Ellie. MOTION PASSED with 9 Aye.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:38pm.

## Announcements:

- 1. Upcoming MMCI Business Meetings (usually held at 7PM the FINAL Wednesday of each month): *meetings will be virtual unless otherwise noted*.
  - Wednesday, October 26, 2022
  - Monday, November 28, 2022 MMCI Annual Meeting (Location: MVMPCS, 217 Dill Avenue, Frederick)
  - Wednesday, December 28, 2022
- 2. Minutes and Agendas may be found online at http://mmcimd.org/calendar/