

**Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees
(BOT) Wednesday, April 26, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.**

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

Regular Meeting Agenda

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

Tara Dunsmore called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and started the recording.

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

Voting members present - Elizabeth Landru, Tara Dunsmore, Meggan Sombat, Kelli McIntosh, Diego Alvarez, Elise Goodwin, Julie Clark, Jessica Lawrence Wujek, Michael Beth Edwards, Kathleen Lutrell (10/13)

Other members of leadership in attendance - Amy Dorman, Brandon Sowers, Nikki Burgee, Marilyn Horan, Bob Weiland

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.

There were no EVOTES this month.

5. Member & Committee Advance Reports and Updates 7:12-7:37 p.m.

- **MMCI President Report - 5 minutes (Tara Dunsmore)**

Tara said that she appreciates other board members stepping in while she recently took some time off. She said that she has realized that while our leadership has managed to balance volunteer commitments with their personal lives for the last 20 years, it is likely not sustainable. The BOT held a work session last week to discuss details related to potentially hiring someone to fill another administrative and/or leadership role. The board invites questions on the discussion, and will have updates and/or a proposal in the coming months.

- BOT Treasurer Report - 5 minutes (Diego Alvarez/ Kelli McIntosh)
 - [MMCI Financial Report 03/2023](#) (access restricted)
 - [MMCI Finance Summary 03/2023](#)

Diego Alvarez said that there is nothing out of the ordinary with finances this month. Kelli McIntosh and Amy O'Connor are working on insurance renewals, and the details will need to change with new facilities.

Kelli McIntosh said that she and Amy O'Connor have a lot of questions, and are making decisions about moving forward, and looking at being prepared for future changes.

Elizabeth Landru said that facilities maintenance contracts (for example snow removal, HVAC, plumbing) also need to be evaluated.

Kelli is looking into the possibility of obtaining a barcode scanner for inventory, and it may be helpful for the MVM High School grant.

Tara said that anything we buy with PPA is owned by FCPS and we need to inventory what belongs to FCPS so we aren't over insured.

Marilyn Horan asked about grant funded purchases vs. PPA. Tara said that grant funded purchases are MMCI property.

Tara said that ESSR grants were purchased by FCPS and should be FCPS property. Kelli is going to recruit volunteers to begin inventory.

ACTION ITEM - Recruit inventory volunteers (Kelli McIntosh)

Elizabeth said that Brandon Sowers has looked into barcode systems.

Brandon Sowers said that there are many options for barcode systems, but there is a yearly fee in addition to upfront costs, and this would need to be evaluated. He said at MVM they are currently inventorying classroom materials as they are packing for the move.

FOLLOW UP - Follow up with Brandon Sowers re: barcode reader systems (Kelli McIntosh/ Elizabeth Landru)

Brandon said that MVM asked FCPS if we could use their inventory system, and they declined. Tara said that we should ask Dr. Lippy for clarification.

FOLLOW UP - Follow up with Dr. Lippy re: using FCPS inventory system (Tara Dunsmore)

Diego said that we shouldn't limit ourselves to quickbooks, and that other systems will be able to extract the data.

Michael Beth Edwards asked for clarification regarding inventorying what MMCI owns vs. what FCPS owns. Diego said that all items should be inventoried and categorized.

Diego said that we should be able to end our insurance contract early when we change facilities, so that should not be an issue.

Diego added that he is working on analyzing the financial viability, and will soon propose a

strategy for increasing the human resources of MMCI to support our current and ongoing projects. He feels that the scope of our work justifies increasing our number of employees.

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

Molly Carlson said that zoning is ongoing. There is a daycare center nearby who is also currently applying for zoning, and they are waiting to see results.

CCM is on track with their timeline; construction estimates were out of price range and they are brokering a final architecture agreement; will probably not go with Studio MB, however they appreciate Studio MB's work during the Montessori design phase.

Elizabeth Landru said that she is excited that we will be voting on the contract tonight for the MVM facility. The blocking plan was received from the architect this week, and they have a meeting with the architect in the morning. MMCI is grateful to FCPS; Paul Lebo and Dr. Lippy have been instrumental in supporting our needs for the bond financing.

Elizabeth said that we are looking forward to a Town Hall meeting in May, and visits to the facility for the BOT, GC, and Staff.

Tara said that regarding financing, we submitted the application to MHHEFA. We are fast tracking the process and our goal is to close on the property by July 1 and start work immediately, to be in the facility by August. The board will vote to approve the purchase and sale agreement later in this meeting. Tara thanked Elizabeth for her work.

Michael Beth Edwards said that Elizabeth worked fast and thoroughly to get us to this point, making the right decisions for the school. Tara thanked Michael Beth for her support of this project for MVM, and Elizabeth also thanked Meggan Sombat and Molly Carlson for their support. Molly said that with this level of work, having volunteers is risky. Elizabeth said that we have the advantages of amazing communication and dynamic leadership.

Tara added a thank you to Marilyn Horan and Amy Dorman for providing support and data for financing and facilities purchases.

- MVM High School Grant and Planning Update - 5 minutes (Amy Dorman)

Amy Dorman said that four High School teachers and a guidance counselor have been hired for next year. She is in the process of gathering their bios and introducing them to our community. MVM has planned a Meet & Greet for students and their new HS teachers in mid-May. Amy said that she recently visited School of the Woods in TX, and it was a wonderful experience. She is looking forward to a summer intensive with teachers, and ordering tech equipment for the High School with Tori McCarthy and Regina.

Amy said that the FCPS supervisor of athletics contacted MVM about joining a league and getting involved in the athletic program at the high school level.

Tara said that when they met with the Banner School, they discussed partnerships for programming for things like athletics or camps or after school enrichment programs.

- MMCI Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee Update - 1 minute (Jennifer Mayo/ Vanessa Deugarte)

Jennifer Mayo reported that she is working on scheduling the next meeting of the DEI Committee, and will follow up.

ACTION ITEM - Schedule DEI Committee Meeting (Jennifer Mayo)

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

Meggan Sombat said that Bob Weiland sent a succession plan, and she is working on calling a meeting of the Nominating Committee to discuss and recruit for ongoing and new open positions on the BOT, MVM GC, and CCM GC.

- MMCI Lottery Committee Update - 1 minute (Jen Swafford)

Tara said that there was no official Lottery Committee report this month, however the team has been working through some software issues with sibling priority, and the next round of offers are currently on hold.

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

Meggan Sombat said that there is a MAPCS Grant Webinar on May 10 that she plans to attend, and encouraged others to sign up for it.

Tara said that she sent an email re: preK Expansion Grants, and MMCI can apply. MMCI may be eligible to join FCPS for these. We need an MMCI volunteer to attend the trainings. Marilyn said that she received the application from FCPS, and she is looking into the details.

FOLLOW UP - Follow up with Dr. Lippy to see if we are included with FCPS (Tara Dunsmore)

ACTION ITEM - Need a Rep from MMCI for the PreK Grant (ALL)

- BOT Book Club Update - 1 minute (Julie Clark)

Julie Clark said that she met with Jennifer and they are brainstorming DEI titles for the May Book Club meeting. Julie proposed asking board members and community members to take the Harvard implicit Bias Test on their own, prior to the meeting, and discussing themes from the book The Blind Spot. Julie will send a link to the free version, or we might consider spending money to do the full assessment as a group.

The next Book Club meeting will be held on 5/17/23, in person at the ERCC meeting room.

Tara asked if there is a resource that we could read ahead of time, the board could potentially purchase copies of books to share.

Elizabeth said that it is important to make sure our policies are free of institutional bias.

Jennifer said that we would likely get more interest with advertising, especially since this is activity based. She suggested putting posters up in the schools, and inviting students to help foster interest.

Amy Dorman offered to mention topics on morning announcements. Marilyn said that it would be good to have an application to join the group.

Jennifer said that moving toward next year, she would like to plan a picnic with both schools.

Molly Carlson agreed that student membership would be meaningful.

Member said that it is important to make sure that our policies are inclusive, and also to make sure that we are doing community building and education.

Elizabeth thanked Jennifer for picking up this topic and doing the work, and agreed that the board needs to do the work and learn to do better.

Tara said that anyone interested in supporting the DEI Committee should reach out to Jennifer Mayo.

ACTION ITEM - Send out volunteer call for DEI Committee, create a google group for members (Meggan Sombat)

School Updates:

7:37-7:47 p.m.

- CCMPCS - 5 minutes (Marilyn Horan/ Michael Beth Edwards/ Nikki Burgee)

Marilyn said that it is the end of the year, filled with their favorites and also, dreaded testing. CCM students are planning camping trips, a Middle School dance, and Move Up day. The 8th graders will visit FCC and Mt. St. Mary's on Move Up day. Between testing, field trips, and Outdoor School, there are only a few days of school left. Students have noticed that we haven't done some of the traditional CCM things, which is inspiring.

Marilyn said that CCM's Annual Report went well. The first question asked was how can the BOE help support CCM.

Tara said that Nikki Burgee and Marilyn did a great job, and the board was pleased with the report. Michael Beth said that we need to review our policies and spell out the things that need to happen for our charter schools, so there is no gray area for how we run and govern.

Tara agreed that spelling out our roles with FCPS is important. There was an issue with the format of the Annual Report this year. Dr. Lippy's perspective was that the report was coming from his office, however our Annual Reports are MMCI's Reports to the BOE. This was discussed and Dr. Lippy worked quickly to correct the problem.

Michael Beth said that the CCM GC thought about a transition plan ahead of time, because charter schools do not receive information in the same streams as other schools, so this is a big part of the reason for the transition as Marilyn is retiring. She said that FCPS policy has a limited amount of time for an AP position so CCM's plan goes against their norm. Therefore, we should articulate that need and advocate.

It is also important to advocate for our role as charter schools with regard to Financial policies, lottery count date, and etc.

Nikki thanked everyone for their support at the Annual Report.

- MVMPCS - 5 minutes (Amy Dorman/ Brandon Sowers/ Elizabeth Landru/ Bob Weiland)

Amy Dorman said that state testing is wrapping up and local testing is underway at MVM. Coming up are Outdoor School, the Middle School end of year trip to Williamsburg, and Move Up day. MS team is preparing for the 8th Grade promotion ceremony. Amy said that MVM's Science Olympiad Team medaled in 7/24 events and placed 9th overall at the State Competition.

Elizabeth said that the MVM Annual Report has been rescheduled until August for a meaningful facilities update.

Bob Weiland said that we are having a Town Hall Meeting the second week of May, on Monday evening. MVM is also having a Book Fair that week, and planning 4th Friday picnics in April and May at Staley Park in Frederick.

6. Follow-ups/ Action Items

7:47 p.m - 7:50 p.m.

- [BOT Action Items & Follow Ups - April 2023](#)

Regarding Action Items: Marilyn is interested in creating a dedicated aftercare room at CCM, including for 3 year olds.

Diego Alvarez asked about the viability of MMCI running our own before and aftercare program. Tara said that there are licensing and management issues.

7. New Business: Discussion and Votes

7:50 - 8:40 p.m.

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

MOTION: Tara moved that the BOT moves into closed session to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto.

Seconded by Julie Clark.

The MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye.

Closed session started at 8:38pm.

Closed session ended at 9:10pm

- **DISCUSSION/VOTE: Approval of Purchase Contract for MVMPCS Facility** (Tara Dunsmore/ Elizabeth Landru)

MOTION: Tara Dunsmore moved to Approve the purchase and sale agreement for the identified property, intended for the use of Monocacy Valley Montessori Valley Montessori.

Seconded by Elizabeth Landru.

Michael Beth said that this contract is a result of intentional due diligence on the other property

along with cooperative research on the new property. The new property is still within the City of Frederick, which is on MVM's wish list, and checks lots of other boxes. The process is going very smoothly, and she said that she feels very confident that this is the right property for MVM. Tara said that Legacy Impact Group feels very confident in this property, and that FCPS is also excited and supportive.

Michael Beth agreed that there was a different energy on the most recent finance call. She said that the finance professionals know what is good, and that everyone is positive about this. Elizabeth said that our finance team described MVM's purchase as their passion project; a project that is challenging but for which you are driven to succeed. She feels that is in part because we are a parent-run organization.

The MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye.

- **DISCUSSION/ VOTE: MOU with FCPS (Tara Dunsmore)**

MOTION: Tara Dunsmore moved to approve the MOU between MMCI and FCPS as presented.
Seconded by Julie Clark.

[MOU](#)

Tara said that this is an agreement between MMCI and FCPS where FCPS will send funds directly to the bond issuers. This agreement has been vetted by both FCPS and MMCI attorneys. It is required that MMCI approve the MOU to proceed with this process.

MOTION PASSED with 10 Aye and 1 did not vote.

- **DISCUSSION/VOTE: Facilities Use Request by Shannon Vendemmia**

MOTION: Tara Dunsmore moved to approve the application for use of school facility by Shannon Vendemmia, pending approval by the MVM Administration and Governing Council.

Seconded by Elizabeth Landru.

Shannon Vendemmia has requested to use the sanctuary at MVM for a keyboarding concert with students from multiple schools, on May 11th from 5-8pm.

MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye.

ACTION ITEM - Revise facilities use form to add a school admin approval (Tara Dunsmore/ Meggan Sombat)

- **DISCUSSION: PPA Distribution**

Tara said that one of two primary topics of the recent Finance Committee meeting. The bond financiers have expressed concern or confusion over the way we handle our PPA distribution from FCPS. We use the FCPS financial system and they pay our bills, and we are the only charter

operator in the state who does it this way. This means that our surplus money is sitting in FCPS accounts, and not our own. Tara said that one we have recently discovered issues where we do not receive copies of bills, and there are benefits to receiving and being able to review our own bills. We believe it would be manageable to change our distribution with our current staffing level. We asked FCPS for what a quarterly distribution of funds would look like. Tara added notes to the shared drive, and the Finance Committee plans to bring this topic back to the BOT next month for a further discussion and vote for the distribution procedure for next fiscal year. Tara said that there are remaining questions such as Field trips, admin secretaries making purchases, preferred vendors for county, school lunches, and other payments. Diego Alvarez added that most of the PPA will remain in FCPS for salaries and facilities payments. The remainder would come to us on a quarterly basis.

ACTION ITEM - Understand the PPA distribution discussion and submit questions or ideas for things we need to clarify (ALL BOT)

Tara said that our next BOT meeting will be held on May 24, and our Book Club meeting will be held on May 17.

MOTION: Tara Dunsmore moved to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Julie Clark.

The MOTION PASSED with 11 Aye.

[April 2023 MMCI Meeting Recording](#)

Announcements:

1. Upcoming MMCI Business Meetings (usually held at 7PM the FINAL Wednesday of each month): *meetings will be virtual unless otherwise noted.*
 - Wednesday, May 24, 2023
 - Wednesday, June 28, 2023
2. Minutes and Agendas may be found online at <http://mmcimd.org/calendar/>