

Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT)
Wednesday, July 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 called the meeting to order, read the recording consent, and started the recording at 7:03pm.

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

Attendance:

Voting Members: Tara Dunsmore, Elizabeth Landru, Kelli McIntosh, Meggan Sombat, Michael Beth Edwards, Jessica Lawrence Wujek, Nichole Dowlearn, Julie Clark, Paul Gouge, Elizabeth Landru, Jennifer Mayo (11)

Other: Marilyn Horan, Bob Weiland

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

There were no community comments this month.

4. Consent Agenda Items and Evote Report 7:10-7:12 p.m.

Meggan Sombat read the Evote Report

- **EVOTE - [MMCI Insurance Renewal](#). MOTION made by Kelli McIntosh; Seconded by Meggan Sombat; MOTION PASSED on 6/12 with 12 Aye.**
- **EVOTE - [Revision to MMCI Tuition Policy](#). MOTION made by Kelli McIntosh; Seconded by Tara Dunsmore; MOTION PASSED on 6/26 with 9 Aye and 3 did not vote.**
- **EVOTE - [June 2023 Consent Agenda](#). MOTION made by Tara Dunsmore; Seconded by Elizabeth Landru. MOTION PASSED on 7/8/23 with 8 Aye, 1 Abstain, and 2 did not vote.**
 - Appoint Meggan Sombat as interim Secretary for the BOT until a new volunteer can be appointed and trained, effective July 1, 2023, and;
 - Appoint CCM parent, Paul Gouge to fill the vacant CCM Parent Trustee position for

the remainder of the term ending December 31, 2024. [Bio & Statement of Interest](#), and;

- Approve an annual Cost of Living Increase for MMCI employees Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) based on the current rate posted annually by the Social Security Administration listed at: <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/colaseries.html>. The rate will be implemented the first week of July each calendar year and will be retroactive to July 1, 2023, and;
- Approve up to \$1000 for the purchase of a new MMCI laptop and necessary accessories for use by the MMCI Bookkeeper, and;
- Approve annual membership to the Maryland Alliance for Public Charter Schools for the 2023-2024 school year in the amount of \$3766. This amount includes a credit for an overpayment for the 2022-2023 school year and 299 students for MVM, rather than the 297 students listed. [Invoice](#)

5. Member & Committee Advance Reports and Updates

7:12-7:46 p.m.

- MMCI President Report - 5 minutes (Tara Dunsmore)
 - **MMCI SPECIAL VOTING MEETING Resolution**

Tara thanked everyone who helped setup and participated in the Special Voting Meeting and Election. We had quorum in every category. Tara said that in July, MMCI bought a building! MVM is moving! Shoutout to Elizabeth Landru, Jen Shemer, and Dani Hawkins and families who have been leading the moving team. Thank you to the CCM Admin who has provided a space at Corporate Court for MVM Admin to work in the interim.

- BOT Treasurer Report / Assistant Treasurer Report - 5 minutes (Diego Alvarez/ Kelli McIntosh)
 - PPA Distribution and Financial Policies plan
 - MMCI Financial Report 05/2023 (access restricted)
 - [MMCI Finance Summary 05/2023](#)
 - MMCI Financial Report 06/2023 (access restricted)
 - [MMCI Finance Summary 06/2023](#)

Kelli McIntosh said that there are Financials in the Prep Folder, and she has been busy paying invoices. Tara said that we received PPA numbers last week, and our Budget Chairs are working to finish the budget. Dr. Lippy agreed to an extension to August 30, rather than August 15, so the GC's and BOT both have time to vote, and then we will submit to FCPS.

Michael Beth Edwards said that we may shift our August meeting date to vote on budgets.

Tara said that in May we discussed PPA distribution, and she has an update. We did receive the updated procedures from FCPS, and Tara worked with Amy O'Connor, and they came up with some questions and a list of things MMCI would need to do to prepare for the change. The Finance Committee made the decision to hold the change of PPA distribution to FY25, and there is a plan in place and going forward to make this change.

Tara added for clarification that MMCI chose to opt in to the system we currently use years ago, and is now choosing to move to the quarterly distribution.

- MMCI Facilities Committee Reports - 10 minutes
 - MMCI Overview (Tara Dunsmore)

Tara said that there is a meeting tomorrow where they will learn about the remainder of the financial process. MMCI will submit the details of the CCM purchase to MSDE, and will begin the process earlier. Our membership will also need to vote to approve the CCM purchase. Attorney Rick Daniels will make some recommendations for updating our bylaws regarding facilities purchases.

- MVM Move Update (Elizabeth Landru)

Elizabeth Landru reported that the moving team started on July 12, one day after we closed on the new building for MVM. As of today, all of the furniture has been moved out of Dill Avenue, and she hopes they will be completely finished by Friday. Elizabeth offered special thanks to Donnie and Ricki Putnam, who were there every day and are grandparents. Tara and Elizabeth offered a special thankyou to CCM families, a handful of new incoming families, and staff members who all helped.

The team is attending biweekly construction meetings. This week they discussed fencing, design, rug cleaning, and the demo process. The progress is satisfying!

Elizabeth said that research on before and aftercare is ongoing, and they have another lead on potential auxiliary space for the beginning of the school year.

Tara said that FCPS has been working hard to find an alternate space for MVM. She recognized that the MVM community is anxious. We don't anticipate being fully virtual for more than a couple of weeks, and then the goal is to be in person or hybrid until we can be in the new building.

- CCM Facility Purchase Update (Molly Carlson/Michael Beth Edwards)

Molly Carlson said that they are going through the zoning process, and they expect approval on August 8th. The team is working with our Attorney and political connections, and they anticipate a good result. They are also working behind the scenes to shore up finances for building purchase; soliciting feedback from the community and weighing options. Patience and grace and courtesy are primary in moving through this process. Molly said that they anticipate funding for blueprint and additional opportunities for funding.

Michael Beth Edwards added that they are looking at all the pieces to substantiate any decisions. They are investigating and considering blueprint funding options for future years.

Michael Beth gave a shoutout to our financial advisor who has been working on projections for CCM based on PPA.

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

Elizabeth said that for the High School grant, assets need to be tracked. Elizabeth decided to go with a 30 day free trial of an asset management program, which has a building management function which would be helpful for maintenance and facilities management when MMCI owns two buildings.

Meggan added that Tori McCarthy, HS Grant Manager, reached out to her and said that they are working on year end and FY24 budget and will have a report on that in August.

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

Tara said that we are looking to have an update on the DEI Committee for the start of school next month.

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

Meggan said that she and Julie Clark recently spoke about recruiting. Meggan also sent an email to Nominating Committee members to start the 2023 election process, and included all Parent Trustees until we can fill the spots with other volunteers. Next month the committee will be looking at the date for the Annual Meeting and election timelines.

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

Tara said that the 2023-24 Lottery process is moving along and Chad and Sudha have been answering a lot of inquiries.

- MMCI Grants and Fundraising Committee Update - 5 minutes (Meggan Sombat/Tara Dunsmore)

Meggan said that she is creating a presentation for anyone interested in searching for grants for both schools.

Tara said that in this new Fiscal year, the fundraising committees should be thinking about their annual funds and planning and raising significant sums of money alongside community fundraisers.

Tara said that MVM's 2020 Vision campaign included commemorative bricks and leaves, and she recommended that MVM build on this and sell more bricks.

MMCI should also look into sponsorships from corporations, etc. for plaques.

ACTION ITEM - Reach out to Kristian Collins re fundraising calendar and Lynn Dutrow (Meggan)

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

Julie Clark said that there is no club meeting planned at this time, and there will be more updates next month.

School Updates:

7:46-7:56 p.m.

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

Marilyn reported that the American Montessori Society is doing their accreditation differently, and instead of a pathway, there will be three levels going forward.

Michael Beth gave a shoutout to the CCM community for showing up, asking questions, and analyzing the options at their recent Budget Work Sessions. Volunteers and involvement make charter schools work!

CCM reported that they have multiple teachers in Montessori training this summer.

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

Elizabeth said that besides the move updates, she wanted to say thanks to CCM for their patience while the team moved in the MVM Admin team.

Elizabeth shared that the new staff for HS have completed Professional Development and Amy Dorman reported that their energy and dynamic is amazing. Brandon Sowers is working on his Montessori training.

Bob Weiland thanked Elizabeth for all the time she has put in throughout the purchase and move. Parent volunteers have saved MMCI an estimated 70K.

Bob said that we will have a Cross Country team for HS students, and FCPS is designing a new meerkat logo for sports.

Bob said that it's budget season, and Rachel and Maggie are working on the budget for this year. Three MVM teachers are in Montessori training this summer.

Elizabeth added that at the new building, we are responsible for maintaining the retention pond, however our neighbors are financially responsible. This will be an action for the board.

ACTION ITEM - Connect with direct neighbors at 64 TJ Drive to coordinate traffic flow and parking strategies, and retention pond responsibilities. (Elizabeth Landru)

Tara recommended that we hire a property manager, especially once the CCM purchase is done.

Elizabeth added that at Hood College there is a center for water studies, and they may be a cost effective option for pond maintenance, and educational opportunities for our students.

Kelli said because it's a water retention pond, there may be grant funds available.

6. Follow-ups/ Action Items

7:56 p.m - 8:00 p.m.

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

Action items discussion: Look at lottery policy to compensate for Sept. 30th PPA count - Elizabeth said that she and Michael Beth talked about our lottery policy and enrollment stability the week of September 30. This could be the advocacy effort.

Elizabeth said she hopes we could have some blackout dates. Tara agreed, if there isn't anything in the state policy.

Michael Beth said that we are often told that we can't do something because it's new, however we could write our own policy according to the state and what our needs are and be able to substantiate that. Tara agreed that being able to quote the COMAR requirements is effective. MB said that many times there is no one with the bandwidth to

Tara said that we figure it out together. Elizabeth said that we've received so much support

from FCPS, and Tara agreed and added that Dr. Lippy is always willing to work with us.
ACTION ITEM - Lottery Policy discussion on August agenda (Meggan Sombat)

Marilyn added that admins are expected to send records the same day.

How we communicate with families on those dates is something we can add to our policy.

7. New Business: Discussion and Votes

8:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Closed Session: To discuss personnel matters that affect one or more specific individuals.

MOTION: Tara moved to go into closed session to discuss personnel matters that affect one or more specific individuals.

Seconded by Elizabeth Landru.

MOTION PASSED with 8 Aye and 1 didn't vote.

Closed session started at 8:19pm

Ended at 8:22pm.

- **DISCUSSION/ VOTE: Review of Candidates/ Appointment of MMCI VP for CCM**
(Tara Dunsmore) [Amy Duvall - Bio](#)

Tara said that Michael Beth is leaving us, and we have one candidate for the position. Amy Duvall is a former BOT President, and this is her last year at CCM.

Amy Duvall introduced herself and said that her goal is to bridge the gap and recruit a long term replacement.

MOTION: Tara Dunsmore moved to appoint Amy Duvall as the VP for CCM effective August 15, 2023 through the remainder of the term that ends June 30, 2024.

Seconded by Michael Beth Edwards.

MOTION PASSED with 9 Aye.

- **DISCUSSION:** BOT Standard Operating Procedures and Annual Calendar

Tara said that at our July Work Session we discussed BOT SOP topics.

Tara and Meggan created a shared google calendar, but that some tasks have moving deadlines.

Tara asked everyone on the board to take a look at the calendar spreadsheet and add any recurring tasks you or your committee is responsible for doing each year.

Tara said that she also signed up for some trial memberships of task management software, most have non-profit discounts. and will let the board know what she thinks next month.

- [BOT Standard Operating Procedures](#) and [Annual Calendar](#)
- **DISCUSSION:** Policy Spotlight - COI and Ethics Policy Review (Tara Dunsmore) [COI](#) and [Ethics Policy](#)

Tara said that during our SOP discussion we identified some parts of these policies that could be modified, which would affect the SOP.

Paul Gouge asked if the BOT could be the Ethics Committee.

Amy Duvall said that it would have to be a committee of friends of education and community members.

Tara said that we've talked about changing the name of Friend of Ed.

Meggan suggested that all friends of ed be a part of the ethics committee.

ACTION ITEM - Send out a POLL about ethics committee membership (Tara Dunsmore)

We need to make the policy practical and something we can follow.

Tara said that any MMCI member can report an ethics violation confidentially. One question, is a dispute with the school a conflict of interest?

Meggan said that we spoke about all candidates completing the COI disclosure as part of the Nomination form. Then the group could use that info to make a decision if there was a suspected or potential conflict.

Meggan reminded the board that all of us have a responsibility to update our COI and disclose any potential conflicts.

Nichole Dowlearn asked in the chat if the COI Policy discourages us as parent members from advocacy for our own kids while serving on the board? What things do we include in that? How do we define that?

Tara said that we are parents first, but as members of the board, we have to draw the line, and the nature of a dispute can be evaluated by the ethics committee.

The Nominating Committee could appoint members to the Ethics committee.

ACTION ITEM - Figure out how that could work on the Nominating Committee side (Meggan Sombat)

Paul Gouge suggested that we need to beef up what an ethics dispute means, and we would need to define when the committee would need to meet.

ACTION ITEM - Everyone can make comments on the Ethics Policy and Identify any issues with the COI (ALL BOT)

- **DISCUSSION: Before and Aftercare Proposals (Jessica Lawrence Wujek)**

Jessica Lawrence Wujek reported that she has uploaded a spreadsheet detailing all of her research. YMCA, BarT

Jessica said that she explained that MVM may be virtual/ hybrid at the start. BarT has been most responsive.

Tara said that our bond financing is tax exempt bonds, which limits our ability to bring in for-profit companies. And doing before and aftercare with a for-profit doesn't leave us a lot of wiggle room for other programs.

Tara asked about transportation. BarT does not have transportation to Urbana.

Clubhouse Kids feels confident that their rates are competitive, we have a good relationship with Clubhouse Kids, and they are getting back on track after covid. Our goal is to provide a service to families, CHK provides all day care on snow days. And they operate in the schools on non-holiday days off. They did virtual learning and would be willing to work out something for MVM.

Tara said that she will create a spreadsheet comparing the contracts and will send out an Evote next week.

- **DISCUSSION: School PPA Budgets for FY24 (Tara Dunsmore)**

Tara covered this topic earlier in the meeting.

ACTION ITEM - Budgets voted on in August (GC Chairs, Meggan Sombat)

- **DISCUSSION: August Meeting Date (Tara Dunsmore)**

Tara said that she would like to move the meeting up by a week so that if revisions are needed, the GC's will have time to do those.

MOTION: Tara moved to change the August BOT Voting meeting from Wed Aug 30 to Thursday Aug 24.

Seconded by Julie Clark.

MOTION PASSED with 8 Aye 1 Abstain.

ACTION ITEM - Send a calendar revision. (Meggan Sombat)

- **DISCUSSION: MMCI Staffing Proposal (Tara Dunsmore)**

This topic will be moved to August.

- **DISCUSSION: MVM Annual Report (Tara Dunsmore/Elizabeth Landru)**

Tara said that the MVM annual report was submitted to FCPS by the deadline, however it was not voted on by the MVM GC and the BOT. Tara is bringing it up so that we can make sure that we don't miss this in the future. She said that Annual reports are a high priority.

ACTION ITEM - Review annual report (MVM GC) email to BOT (Bob Weiland)

The BOE meeting is on August 9th, and the BOT can do an Evote for the MVM annual report before then.

Tara said that Dr. Lippy let us know that next year we need to be on top of deadlines. We already have a date for the Annual Reports in April 2024, and the date will go on the calendar. The BOT should be giving principals support.

ACTION ITEM - Beginning in December check ins about the annual report (BOT, Parent Trustees)

Meggan added that she sent an email this afternoon with the July Consent Agenda, and asked members to review the minutes included and prepare for an Evote to begin on Monday. Tara clarified that the email will go out tomorrow.

MOTION - Tara Dunsmore moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Julie Clark.

PASSED With 10 Aye.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm

Announcements:

1. Upcoming MMCI Business Meetings (usually held at 7PM the FINAL Wednesday of each month): *meetings will be virtual unless otherwise noted.*
 - Wednesday, August 30, 2023
 - Wednesday, September 27, 2023
 - October - MMCI BOT Quarterly Work Session TBA
 - Wednesday, October 25, 2023
 - November - MMCI Annual Meeting TBA

2. Minutes and Agendas may be found online at <http://mmcimd.org/calendar/>