

Board Meeting – Northwest Passage High School #4049 December 15th, 2020

Board members in attendance: Jason Olson, Vashti Pearson, Andrea Raad, Jeff Schomer, Steven Rippe, Megan Fredrickson, Brandi Saba, Val Miller

Others in attendance: Peter Wieczorek, Heather Ross, Dona Fehr

Absent: Chiniqua James.

Call to order: 5:32pm

Mission Statement: Jeff read the mission statement.

Approval of November Board Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes made by Jeff seconded by Val. Roll call vote: Andrea-yes, Val-yes, Jeff-yes, Vashti-yes, Steven-yes, Megan-yes, Brandi-yes, Jason-yes

Public Comment: No public comment at this time.

Treasurer's Report: Total Revenue Budget for November was \$211,169.35 versus November Actual Revenue of \$242,179.65. Total Expense Budget for November was \$210,381.47 versus November Actual Expenses of \$227,443.19. Cash total for all accounts at the end of November was \$1,194,978.85. As of the end of November, our year to date actual expenses of \$834,823.68 and actual revenue of \$1,234,631.44, leave us with a year to date net gain of \$399,807.76. This amount is higher than normal due to the additional revenue from the PPP loan and the CRF grant (CARES Relief Fund). There were no voided checks in November.

A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report for November by Megan, seconded by Andrea. Roll call vote: Andrea-yes, Val-yes, Jeff-yes, Vashti-yes, Steven-yes, Megan-yes, Brandi-yes, Jason-yes

Program Highlights:

- Director's Report
 - Service Events
 - Bell Ringing (plus humming and kazoo playing of festive tunes) at the local Cub Foods over the course of several days by various students
 - Hand crafted holiday cards for local nursing home residents
 - The Headwaters program had a Turkey Pardon writing contest
 - Session 2 seminars are wrapping up, and Session 3 will start January 4th
 - Our advisory model is a strength during distance learning. Highlights include positive group check-ins, mindfulness with the Inner Explorer program
 - MACS is now showcasing Innovator of the Month schools; NWPHS will be featured in 2021 for new methods of staff PLP's using Headrush modules.
 - MACS's yearly innovator award opens in Jan and will submit for Headwaters program
 - Legislative Update:
Any future federal funds related to Covid-19 will replace state dollars over the next eighteen months (fiscal year 2022)

New Business:

- Clifton Larson Allen: Audit Summary
 - Dennis Hoogeveen from Clifton Larson Allen speaking regarding our audit. **CLA has issued a clean report regarding our financial statements, also referred to as an**

unmodified audit. (covered in pages 2-4)

- *unless otherwise indicated, page numbers listed in these minutes refer to the "Financial Statements and Supplementary Information" packet provided by CLA
- Board members should take the time to read the "Management's Discussion and Analysis" section on their own (pages 5-14)
- Dennis highlighted the balance sheet as of June 30, 2020 on page 17
 - Strong balance sheet, very strong cash position, almost same as June 2019
- Page 21: Dennis noted that we held expenses to about \$2.5 mil and were able to add \$16,000 to the Fund Balance
 - General recommendations are to have a fund balance of 20%-25% of yearly expenditures, but with our end of year (June 2020) fund balance of \$799,969 being a bit higher than these recommendations at 31.8% of our actual expenditures we are not considered to be an excessive amount
 - Note: up until a month ago, Denis would have been advising a much higher percentage than the 20-25 range when anticipating possible actions by the state to balance the budget. At this point he does not have that level of concern for immediate reduced fundings to schools.
- Also notable on page 21 is the budget-to-actual outcomes. There is very low variance between the final budgeted total expenditures and the actual total expenditures (which is good) and Dennis recommends that the board continue to adjust budgets as needed.
- Like many other schools NWPHS applied for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan and this is disclosed as a subsequent event (see page 43) since the funds did not come through until early July 2020 after the close of our 2019-2020 fiscal year.
- Page 48 -- we met the November 30th deadline
- Pages 49-50 is another letter required by state statute. He had nothing to report for NWPHS this year.
 - Dennis noted that this was partially because NWPHS contracts out with someone else to help review our financial statements as well.
- Page 61 "nothing to report once again"
- Dennis shares, " You have a clean sweep on your audit! Don't take this for granted; it doesn't just happen." Credit to due diligence of budgeting and adjusting and hard work of Dona & others.
- NWPHS has a clean opinion on the yellow letter and a clean opinion on the legal compliance. NWPHS has been issued a clean audit report.

- In response to a question about hypothetical (1) PPP loan is forgiven and (2) there's no government holdback and (3) enrollment numbers are consistent, are there recommendations of what [not] to spend funds on.
 - Dennis: don't buy things "with legs" or ongoing costs
 - Definitely invest in things that enhance the program, draw students to your program. Keep it student-focused

- **Contract Update**
 - Heather highlights that no there were no recommended changes between the red line version and the final clean version
 - The goal was to get the renewal contract in compliance with new requirements. This included clarifying and providing contract goals which clearly align with World's Best

"Rekindling our hope, exploring our world, seeking our path, while building our community"

- Work Force and clarifying the renewal term as three years (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023)
- The board has reviewed the redline copy and the black line copy of the renewal charter contract amendment.
- A motion to approve the contract updates and to give permission to the Director and School Board chair to sign off on the resolution amending charter school contract between Bethel University and Northwest Passage High School made by Vashti and seconded by Steven
Roll call vote: Vashti-yes, Steven-yes, Megan-yes, Jeff-yes, Val-yes, Andrea-yes, Brandi-yes, Jason-yes
- For the record: a big "THANK YOU!" to Heather
- Ninth Grade Recruitment – looking forward to next year (and beyond!)
 - All 40 leaders on the MACS call shared that recruitment has been different this year and they are probably behind where they were last year and where they "should" be now.
 - Strengthening and developing connections with K-8 schools
 - Davinci's mailing list
 - New connection: KIPP North Star Academy in Minneapolis - Has a staff member who does full-time placement of students in HS (and then follows up on them)
 - Events
 - Dec. 10 - 9th Grade specific (two of two attendees plan to attend NWPHS)
 - Dec. 17 - Peter "at" DaVinci's info night
 - Jan. 12 - 9th Grade specific
 - Jan. 14 - Peter "at" KIPP info event
 - Newspaper ads going out early January
 - Postcards (we have prints leftover from last year's mailing)
 - Options to invest more into recruiting than before - particularly if the PPP loan is forgiven
 - Valuable comment: Commit marketing to what is your vision and mission, and will get folks coming who are looking for what we offer (vs. "just" escaping something else)
 - Note: we are sitting almost at capacity right now with current staff level (with one less advisor midyear) and are not actively recruiting to build up another full advisory for this school year.
- Director Evaluation Timeline
 - At next month's meeting we will talk about Peter's goals
 - Jason will make surveys to share with students and staff and get those out in February
 - March: report back to the board based on surveys and other feedback
- PPP (Payroll Protection Program) Loan Update
 - Have fully withdrawn the funds
 - Have used 100% on payroll or health insurance employee benefits
 - While we would have been allowed to use for utilities we were able to keep to payroll-related, which hopefully will increase chances of being forgiven.
 - Dona spoke to a banker one week ago inquiring about starting the process for forgiveness, but learned that they (bank) are waiting to take applications until they have

received more guidance themselves.

- Distance Learning Timeline

- Covid Update

- December 10th report (10 day lag) Anoka Co. 155 (197 prior week); Hennepin Co. 117 (132 prior week).
- MDH guidelines - less than 50 cases/10,000
- More than 10 confirmed cases with students, plus families. Fewer than 5 confirmed cases with staff
- Recommendation to remain in DL until the end of session 3 (Feb 18)
- Continue to monitor, return to Hybrid when cases are below 50/10K or other MDH/MDE recommendations.

- Peter surveyed all staff about thoughts on when to return to offering hybrid learning, and he received responses from all but one member. Results:

- 32% of respondents: only if numbers are below 50 cases per 10,000 people
- 24% respondents: after Session 3 concludes (Feb 18) if numbers trend downward
- 24% of respondents: after Spring Break if numbers are trending down
- 20% respondents: prior to Feb 18 if numbers are trending down

- Peter's current recommendation based on current situation: Monday, February 22nd is our next potential transition to offering hybrid learning again.

- We have a regular board meeting on January 19th but will add a special board meeting on Tuesday, February 2nd to review the most updated numbers and make a decision of whether we will return to hybrid options starting on Monday, February 22nd.

- A message will be sent to families letting them know that the board continues to consider all information, will review and discuss data in January and will then make a decision next on February 2, 2021.

- A motion to approve Peter sending out such a communication to families made by Val and seconded by Andrea.

Roll call vote: Vashti-yes, Steven-yes, Megan-yes, Jeff-yes, Val-yes, Andrea-yes, Brandi-yes, Jason-yes

- Signage Bids

- Highway sign: Peter has a quote for \$8,183 to take the sign down, replace lettering language, bulbs, put back up

- Peter will confirm if this sign is a SignMark sign and therefore limited to service by them (or if we have the option to pursue other vendors)

- Marque out front along Robinson Drive

- Quote \$25,560 to leave the frame (fix some bricks), fix the lights but leave the name & logo on the top half, replace the middle letter slots with an editable digital area
- Peter will get second bids and also inquire what the pricing/options are for "less fancy" alternatives to price check and compare

- Board Retreat Discussion

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- Val will make polls about date preferences to send later
- ISN/WRCCS Payment
 - Northwest Passage has been involved in formal mentoring through WRCCS (Wisconsin Resource Center for Charter Schools) for several years now and the related duties have been performed by Director Peter Wieczorek.
 - This comes with a stipend, and for the previous two school years the funding has gone to NWPHS.
 - The stipend for the July 2020 - June 2021 contract is \$10,000. The duties have been performed exclusively by Peter Wieczorek and on his own time (outside of his contact hours for NWPHS responsibilities)
 - Note: this work helps to fill part of our goals to be a lab school
 - Another note: NWPHS benefits in non-financial ways because this work builds capacity in our staff (directly with Peter and indirectly other staff members grow as well)
 - One last note: this money had not been included in the budgeted income for our planned and approved budget
 - Clarifying questions were brought up regarding if payroll taxes and such would be covered by NWPHS or paid using the stipend funds.
 - We will table any decision on this topic until more info is provided in January

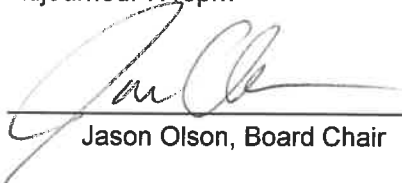
Future Items:

- 2021-2022 Calendar Review

A motion to adjourn made by Jeff, seconded by Megan.

Roll call vote: Vashti=yes, Jeff=yes, Megan=yes, Val=yes, Andrea=yes, Brandi=yes, Steven=yes, Jason=yes

Adjourned: 7:15pm



Jason Olson, Board Chair



Vashti Pearson, Secretary