APPROVED

Hill View Montessori

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday January 23, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Location
Hill View Montessori Charter Public School
75 Foundation Ave.
Haverhill, MA 01835

Trustees Present
J. Hood, J. Landry, K. Laureano, P. Carelis, R. Turner, S. Brush, V. Guzman

Trustees Absent
A. Roth, J. Edokpolor

Guests Present
G. Whitson, H. Herklotz, N. Dolan, P. Arnold, dennis

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Hood called a meeting of the board of trustees of Hill View Montessori to order on Thursday Jan 23, 2025 at 6:30 PM.

C.

Public Comment

D. Approve Minutes

J. Hood made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 11-21-24.
S. Brush seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Updates

A. Surveillance Camera Policy

Ginger spoke regarding the new surveillance camera policy. Goal is to increase school safety, deter bad behavior and have more evidence in the case of incidents. Policy was derived from policies at 2 other MA charter schools.

Cameras are visible, signage to declare presence to anyone entering the building, and not placed in any private places such as bathrooms.

They do not record sound to stay compliant with wire tapping laws

Hallways, entryways and exits. Perhaps secondary areas such as great room. Will not be monitored live.

Video would be stored for 30 days by server of company the school is using. Accessible to authorized individuals only.

Currently evaluating vendors. One has been in today, 2 more coming. Expecting quotes this month.

Question: how many incidents/year? 15-20

Budget? Still being determined. There are options at many price points. There would be a monthly monitoring cost

Timeframe? A: Depends on cost, but may be an item for next school year's budget

Q: Would there be grant money available for this? A: Definitely a possibility. Look into recent school safety grant that was discussed.

Questions via email. Will be distributed to board.

Questions on policy language in terms of who is authorized to view video.

Will review revisions at next BoT meeting

B. Staff Complaint Procedure

Phil spoke with HR Knowledge regarding requested changes to policy. Changed pronouns to specific such as "Employee"

Also cleaned up language in process regarding skipping steps as appropriate

Also added specific contact information for Jeff Hood within the policy. Question: Should we make this more general to avoid having to revamp the policy following change?

Jeff Landry: Change mention of "must" to "should" in terms of resolving issue with ED.

C. Leadership Transition Update

D. PTO Update

PTO meeting yesterday.

Community event: Movie at the school this Sunday

Dance on March 2

E. New Business

F. Executive Director Report

Phil: Kindergarteners have been assessed twice, Grades 1-8 assessed once for reading, once for STAR math

Hannah doing classroom DERS evaluations and observations currently

Universal mental health screening was completed with 82% of student body over Q4 of 2024. Report shows graph of results. Q: What happens when a student scores low. A: this report doesn't look at individuals, unable to determine who may have scored low, but work with staff to determine if anyone is at risk.

Advertising for FT Math position as current math teacher is moving to special ed in Fall. Q: What if we do not get applicants? A: Keep asking within network for referrals. This is a good time to be searching but might be limited pool

One student withdrawal since last meeting. Transferred to special learning environment. YTD: 2 withdrawals, one death

Info session last Wednesday for lottery applicants. About 75 attendees. Currently 342 applicants, same as last year. 115 k applicants. Q: How many open spots for K? A: currently 18 (14 siblings, save 4 seats for hold backs)

December: Elementary school concert was "delightful" and a great success. Thank you to all involved in helping out.

Ginger helped spearhead schoolwide day of service 1/20 in honor of MLK day. Food drive, pond cleanup (postponed due to weather). Service event at shelter. Food pantry event this upcoming Monday. Hoping to continue and expand in future years.

Coach C driving American Heart Association activity as a fundraiser and teaching hands-only CPR skills.

Phil also thanked everyone for his time here at HCM. Proud of what we have been able to accomplish. Feel comfortable moving on knowing that it will continue.

Question: Is wrestling group coming back? A: No, they found an alternate facility.

G. Accountability

Kristen wasn't able to attend recent meeting and Allysha is out sick.

Discussion on how to address technical issues and confident it won't be an issue going forward.

Calendar schedule was edited.

H. Development

May 17th 11-2 tentative date for anniversary event

Alumni event is being tabled for right now as costs were prohibitive along with scheduling difficulties.

Focus now on Rock n Roll Bingo, sponsors now on website.

Working with Art, music depts to create community gift & performance

I. Finance

Jeff Hood introduced discussion on capital improvement project. Large sum currently due to architecture and construction firms for planning work done to date (approx $221k)

Jeff's questions for them: We received 2 numbers for project cost: $1.4 million (napkin math), total project budget cost was double this amount. This was it includes the full costs including legal, planning, etc. Still just an estimate and actual cost could be even higher

Alternative bid strategy suggestion: We would put out a bid for several things we are interested in. HVAC is most important, electrical panel next. Under MA law, alternative bid strategy has specific details and requirements that can be restricting based on priority of projects. Clear decision needed in coming weeks.

Mad rush by school systems for summer work. May want to consider a start a bit later in the summer as it could reduce costs.

$13-$20k costs for getting bids to us. Bid process is required under MA law to due to size/cost of project

How do we afford this and stay within DESE financial metrics?

Question: what was building subcommittee thoughts? a: lower cost option (recoating roof vs replacement). They felt it was best to move forward with process rather than pause.

Question: What would delta now be between recoating and replacement given jump from original estimate to full project estimate?

R. Turner made a motion to Move forward with capital project to bid stage (format to be qualified).
J. Landry seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
Veronica: Tuition went up by $300 something per pupil, $99,000 more than budgeted

Personnel cost is biggest increase on budget sheet. 4 additional positions plus changes. This will be a focus on next year's budget

In admin Board on Track is largest non-budgeted expense. Accounting firm cost also increased and there were additional billable hours

ERTC funds release of $825k to be realized along with capital project estimate costs as noted above.

New budget development project begins next month. First draft released in March.

Question: Is Phil's departure factored into budget and will there be offset from new hire? A: No, but not planning to start new hire until 7/1 most likely.

Question: Are we in the black without including ERTC? Yes, slightly.

Question: Are there ways to reduce spend via adjustments this year? Jeff L and Veronica not in favor of making mid year changes that affect student experience.

III. Closing Items

A. Next Meeting

Next meeting 2/27

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Hood