APPROVED

Hill View Montessori

Minutes

Development Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday May 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Location
Remote
Meeting ID: 305 974 6197
Passcode: 181313

Committee Members Present
A. Fergus (remote), H. Herklotz (remote), J. Gibbons (remote), J. Landry (remote), S. Stecher (remote)

Committee Members Absent
H. Pearson, J. Greene, M. Borden

Guests Present
Star Snead (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Landry called a meeting of the Development Committee of Hill View Montessori to order on Tuesday May 12, 2026 at 6:32 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

S. Stecher made a motion to approve the minutes from Development Committee Meeting on 04-14-26.
J. Landry seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Development

A. Update on Bingo/Merch

- Jeff stated Rock & Roll Bingo raised approximately $13,000, about $5,000 more than last year
    - He credited:
        - Strong sponsorships
        - Better auction items
        - Higher engagement
- Star stated that event growth comes primarily from sponsorships, not ticket sales
    - Emphasized events should build relationships, not just raise money
- Group discussion raised concern that families may feel over-asked for money
    - Focus on avoiding “nickel and diming” the community

- Jeff reported on Hill View merchandise campaign:
    - 77 items sold
    - $730 raised
    - Below expectations
- Jeff stated he believed performance was impacted by:
    - Timing of campaign
    - Families already purchasing Lion King shirts
    - Limited publicity/marketing
- Group discussion agreed improvements needed:
    - Structured merch calendar:

-Start of year
-Holiday season
-Spring

- Stronger promotion so items actually reach families effectively

B. Discussion w/ Starr Snead

- Hannah introduced Starr Snead
    - Met at Montessori conference in January
    - Described Starr as highly experienced in school development strategy
- Hannah stated goal of the session:

    - Build a cohesive long-term development plan for the school

- Star stated core principle:
    - “Most funding comes from individuals, not events.”
    - “People give to people.”
- Jeff asked:
    - “How long does something like this take?”
- Star responded:
    - “A long time.”
    - Explained that development work is multi-year and relationship-driven

- Star explained funding structure should include:
    - Events (Bingo, merch) → supplemental income
    - Sponsorships → key growth area
    - Annual Fund → foundational giving stream
    - Individual major donors → primary long-term funding source

- Hannah asked:
    - “Can you give us a concise focus of what we should prioritize?”
- Star responded:
    - Build balance across funding types
    - Do not rely too heavily on events
    - Prioritize individual relationships and annual giving

- Scott asked about donor sources:
    - Whether giving comes from individuals or organizations
- Star responded:
    - Majority is individuals
    - Some corporate/foundation support, but smaller portion overall

- Andy stated need to structure donor outreach:
    - Categories should include:
        - Businesses
        - Parents
        - Grandparents
        - Alumni families
        - Community leaders / high-net-worth individuals
- Group agreed to begin organizing donor prospects into structured categories

- Scott asked about targeting larger businesses in Haverhill
- Star responded:

- Yes, but success comes from relationships, not size of organization
- Recommended starting with existing school connections first

- Star emphasized need for a donor database system
  - Must track relationships between people, not just names
- Scott asked if templates exist
- Star responded she will provide examples and suggested investing in a proper system

- Jeff stated current systems used for events are not sufficient long-term for development tracking
- Hannah asked about grants and whether they should be a focus
- Group discussion concluded:
  - Grants are helpful but secondary
  - Individual giving remains the primary strategy

- Star suggested improving events strategy rather than replacing them:
  - Add sponsorship tiers
  - Improve auction planning
  - Make fundraising purpose clearer
- Star introduced idea of a “Day of Giving”:
  - Example: $5 per family
  - Focus on participation rate, not total dollars

- Jeff stated concern about overburdening families with fundraising asks
  - Supported idea of simpler, participation-based campaigns
- Hannah agreed and emphasized need for balance in outreach

- Star concluded:
  - Start small, build systems, and prioritize relationships already connected to the school
  - “No is never no” — relationships can develop over time

III. Closing Items

A. Agenda for Next Meeting

Andy requested that we focus conversation in the next Dev Com. meeting to discuss messaging., so that we can developed a tight pitch deck that we can bring to potential donors. All members concurred.

- Finalize messaging strategy for donor outreach (clear, consistent language)

- Define structure and launch plan for an Annual Fund
- Decide on donor database system to track relationships
- Build categorized donor list:
    - Families
    - Local businesses
    - Alumni families
    - Community leaders / high-net-worth individuals
- Define scope for summer intern (donor research + data gathering)
- Refine fundraising events strategy:
    - Rock & Roll Bingo improvements
    - Merch rollout schedule
    - Sponsorship development

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Gibbons