APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday January 28, 2019 at 6:30 PM

Location
Scholars Academy

Directors Present
A. Gozycki, J. Wagler, M. Dixon, M. Mittal, M. Ramasamy, M. Scruggs, R. Watson, S. Korrapati, S. Liner, S. Scott

Directors Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
A. Pieper

Guests Present
N. Trogdon, P. Ellington, T. Hemming

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

R. Watson called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Jan 28, 2019 at 6:30 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

S. Scott read the mission statement.

D. Approval of Prior Minutes

M. Scruggs made a motion to approve minutes from the Monthly Board Meeting on 11-26-18 Monthly Board Meeting on 11-26-18.
J. Wagler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Adoption of the Agenda

R. Watson announced that the expansion discussion would be moved up in the agenda, to occur after the first round of community comments.
**The agenda has been adjusted so that the minutes reflect the correct order of the meeting.
M. Scruggs made a motion to adopt the agenda.
J. Wagler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Community Comments (First Opportunity) - subject to guidelines

A. Community Comments - guidelines

First Round of Community Comments:
No comments in room or on phone.

Second Round of Community Comments:

- An additional comment opportunity was provided after the expansion and foundation discussion seeking any feedback from the community.
  - N. Trogdon, parent and member of the Development Committee, shared that expansion gives an opportunity for the middle school to become even stronger. Feels there's a lot of opportunity in the land swap from a design perspective as well as access points.
  - P. Ellington, staff member, added that the possibility of securing green space with leasing would be a great benefit for the middle school at recess.
  - No comments on the phone.

Third Round of Community Comments:
No comments in room or on phone.

III. Expansion Committee

A. Expansion consideration

R. Watson began with some background on the expansion discussion:

- Over the years the board has frequently discussed options with the owners of the complex, which have changed over time
- In Sept 2017 we held a town hall expansion meeting, discussed reasons for potential expansion
    - Community Survey last school year was mixed, Expansion Committee decided to pursue land if it became available
        - April 2018 sale of the complex to Dilweg stalled discussions for a bit
- Dilweg, the current owner, has a desire to update/modernize development
    - There is now an opportunity to lease one to two buildings right next to us, and timing for the 2019-2020 school year pushes the necessary start date for work to April, with potential implications for the upcoming lottery (end of February)

S. Korrapati presented school expansion opportunities:

Leasing Options

- Lease for discussion is 5301 77 Center Drive
    - This is the building across from SA, closest to the street. 5311 is the building behind 5301 and currently has a tenant.
        - One option addresses our need for classroom space and green space
            - Entire building is 24,000 square ft., we can start by leasing half of this
                - 7th and 8th grade classrooms would be moved to this new building, opening up space in our current building to add an additional section each of K-2 classrooms
            - Also discussing development of land near parking lot below for some green space (i.e. soccer field)
                - Would be ideal for SA to use during the day, tenants could use the space at night
                - Dilweg is interested in this green space idea as it's beneficial for the complex too - they are open to negotiation, but not ready to commit to this piece yet
            - Drawing of half of building illustrates room for music, art, FL, classrooms, cafeteria space, collaborative space

- A second phase would be moving into the entire building of 5301, where we would gain space for 6th grade, with more classrooms, flex space and an open area

Land Swap Ideas

- Leasing all of 5301 would be our short term goal. A land swap is the long term goal.
  - Initial plans would allow the school in reconvene in one building once more, with access from 77 Center and Roundtree Rd.
    - Plans were based on a pro-bono mock-up provided by Little Diversified Architectural Consulting
      - There are approximately eleven undeveloped acres (with some additional buildable acres beyond this) that backs up to Roundtree (around/behind the lower parking lot)
        - 80,000-100,000 sq ft. new construction
          - 2 floors of one building, middle school upstairs
          - Space for a full size gym, auditorium, several parking and playground spaces
          - Dilweg was interested in this plan, has visited our school to get potential ideas for how they could use our current space
        - R. Watson added that Dilweg is also looking for another entrance to the development off of Roundtree
        - Committee has talked to Dilweg about importance of the green space and the land swap in these discussions over the short term lease, but it's possible that they may ask us to enter into the lease without a complete commitment

- A. Pieper discussed her thoughts around expansion
  - The need has been identified by faculty and families over the years
    - Primarily this will help to serve our middle school students, to improve their experience
      - Having two classes per grade limits the options they have
        - Adding an additional class allows for greater learning opportunities that are more appropriate to their age group
  - Goal for year one would be to add one additional classroom K-2 (we consistently have full classes on the waiting list for these grades)
    - We could also consider adding an additional 6th grade if the numbers supported it
  - Middle School Elective offerings that we are working on for 2019-2020 are a small example of what is possible for the middle school, establishes the program as we start to expand in the lower grades

- Land swap build time would take 18-24 months, leasing allows us to build out at least one full set of grades as we work on this

Additional Discussion:

- Lease would outline the first and second timelines for 5301
- Green space is TBD at this point, but very much a part of the talks that are happening
- Some of the current tenants are interested in academic and training space (which could be our current school)
- If we hear back that this land swap can't be guaranteed, we will need to decide whether to lease without this guarantee
    - General consensus is that we would eventually need to find another space to expand if this land swap doesn't work out.
- When we receive the lease information back, the board will have a special meeting to discuss further and flush out details.

B. Foundation Update

R. Watson explained the foundation as it relates to expansion

- Many of our peer schools have a foundation that owns all assets
- Creating a legal foundation is the first step, then we would build the mission, bylaws in a way that supports the school
- Long term, the foundation would be a better way to fundraise with organizations and philanthropy groups, allows us to give back to the gifted community as outlined in our charter
- Volunteer database is intellectual property and could be licensed through the foundation to help peer schools and bring funds in
- The foundation mission will always begin with aiding and supporting the school, first and foremost the funds will go to ensure the school has what it needs
- Initial estimate is about $3000 to create the foundation, annual tax returns, audits could bring this up to $10,000 a year
    - Revenue sources can ultimately help cover this.
- Another item to figure out would be the establishment of the foundation board - who is this board, as separate entity.

M. Ramasamy shared that the paperwork is ready to be filed in step with the expansion needs.

J. Wagler restated the need for the foundation for the potential sale of our database to other schools.

- R. Watson explained that the sale of the database to the foundation would require a vote
    - Board would need to be comfortable with the foundation before doing so

- Committee will move forward with the establishment of the foundation
    - By laws of foundation will need to include clauses to support the school and the board

IV. Director's Report

A. General Items

A. Pieper presented the Director's Report:

Student Performance

- Group test was the biggest turnout we've ever had - saw more older children, around 150 total kids vs. our usual 100
    - This test did cost more as a result of more children attending
- Admissions deadline was this past Friday, no final count yet but getting ready for the lottery at the end of February
- Mid-year iReady testing has been completed
- SEL buddy classes are working on service projects

Teachers and Staff

- Mid year evaluations for non teaching staff, second round observations for teachers complete
- Four staff members have been selected to present at the state gifted conference in March
- Staff is giving mid year feedback on procedures

Governance & Financial

- Shared Decision making committee is collecting information for procedural improvements
- One student withdrawal, seat may not be filled this year as the waitlist for the grade is exhausted

Other

- Gifted Conference March 29th
- ELA Committee is making great progress
- Middle School Enrichment surveys going out Friday for parent feedback on what their middle school age children would like to study
    - Students will fill out a similar survey afterward
- Ms Phelps is leading an International Fair on February 19th: parents, students will share items from their cultures
- Night of the Notables will be March 13 (moved for teachers who are presenting at the state gifted conference)

- All grades will be participating this year, 8th grade might be involved in a different way

V. Finance Committee

A. Quarterly Financial Snapshot

M. Mittal presented Quarterly Financial Snapshot:

- Initially the YTD Actuals look a bit low
  - Historically, local funding comes in slower, should catch up later in the year
  - Actuals for capital campaign are a bit lower than usual at this time of year (usually $250K, now $188K)
    - T. Hemming shared that donations are $242K currently, Facebook campaign just came in and may account for this difference (Campaign was at the end of November but the money from the campaign just arrived this week)
- No change in balance sheet or cash flow

B. CD Investments

M. Mittal reviewed CD Investments:

- Current Projected income is $2708.33 (two 3-month terms and one 1-month term)
  - Based on this, we can estimate earning $10-$12K for this year.

C. Budget amendments

M. Mittal presented Budget Amendments:

Revenue Changes

- State has given additional funding (already added by Acadia)
- Local revenue has reshuffled a bit based on students
- Added the interest income from the BB&T
- Made adjustments for stock contributions
- One time CMS income was received
- Sale of bus = $1500
- Selembo Foundation has been added

Expense Changes

- Adjustments for restricted contributions (Social Dues and Selembo Foundation)
- Adjustments to the projected amounts for debt service, capital equipment and purchaes

- Transfer of funds to B&A Care
- Adjustment for tax on bus purchase, adjustment to actual bus cost

All in all, we currently have a surplus of $100K, which is the same place we are at every year

J. Wagler made a motion to approve the budget amendments as proposed.
M. Scruggs seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Policy Committee

A. Readopt Facilities Rental Contracts Policy

S. Liner explained that policy needs to be re-adopted to incorporate the contract with the amended language.
M. Scruggs made a motion to approve the re-adoption of the Facilities Rental Contracts Policy.
J. Wagler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Restricted Contributions Policy

S. Liner explained that this policy includes a small amendment regarding "school sponsored extra-curricular activities."
J. Wagler made a motion to approve the amended Restricted Contributions Policy.
M. Scruggs seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Governance Committee

A. Board Recruitment

S. Liner gave the Governance Committee update:

- Board Succession: board members to begin thinking about potential new members to contact
- Board Nominations: S. Liner and A. Gozycki are updating the call for board nominations
- J. Wagler mentioned need for additional succession discussion and planning, especially within committees for those moving off the board at the end of the year

B. Executive Director Evaluation

- CEO Evaluation: All board members should have finished their CEO Evaluation

- A. Gozycki to talk with staff at next week's staff meeting, send out CEO Evaluation
  - Will also include Katie Ridnouer from LBL
- Discussed timeline for CEO Review, board will review results in March and share with Ms. Pieper in April

VIII. New section

A. Volunteer Database

S. Scott reported on the completed database:

- Next step is to create the IP address to connect to server.
- Planning a soft roll out so that a group can test out the beta version, iron out any issues
  - Committee would like as much feedback as possible during this time
- Goal is to roll out to everyone at the beginning of next school year (though ideally teachers and parents start using the program now)

IX. Closed Session (if necessary)

A. Closed Session

Closed Session
M. Scruggs made a motion to convene in Closed Session pursuant to "Permitted Purposes" under N.C.G.S. §143-318.11: (a) priviledged/confidential.
J. Wagler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

J. Wagler made motion to move back into Open Session.
M. Scruggs seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

X. Closing Items

A. Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

No vote needed.

B. Adjourn Meeting

J. Wagler made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
M. Scruggs seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Gozycki