

# City Garden Montessori School

## Minutes

### Board of Directors Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Wednesday December 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM

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**This is an in-person meeting at 4209 Folsom Ave, St . Louis, MO 63110.**

**We will be live streaming the meeting via Zoom webinar at this link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88115198576?pwd=RnI0cWNYaDZsdkdES3o2VE9hQnNMdz09>

The meeting will also be recorded and posted on the City Garden website  
([citygardenschool.org/board](https://citygardenschool.org/board))

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#### Directors Present

B. Huebner, D. Smith, L. Vowell, M. Howard, S. Deuanepenh, S. Shelton-Dodge (remote)

#### Directors Absent

J. Dixon, S. Haigler

#### Guests Present

A. Boyd, C. Huck, C. Isom, D. Blank, K. Lohrum, K. Young, M. Flohr, M. Marshall, S. Miner

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### I. Opening Items

#### A. Call the Meeting to Order

S. Deuanepenh called a meeting of the board of directors of City Garden Montessori School to order on Wednesday Dec 4, 2024 at 6:08 PM.

#### B. Record Attendance and Guests

#### C. Recess General Meeting to Convene Closed Session

B. Huebner made a motion to Recess General Meeting to Convene Closed Session.

D. Smith seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**D. 7:00pm - Resume the General Meeting**

General meeting resumed at 7:15pm

**E. Mission Statement**

**F. Introductions and Public Comment**

No Public Comment

**II. Action Items**

**A. Approve Minutes from November 2024 Board Meeting**

D. Smith made a motion to Approve the November 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

L. Vowell seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**B. Approve October 2024 Financials**

D. Smith made a motion to Approve the October 2024 Financials.

M. Howard seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

- Currently under budget due to staffing changes
- As the bills for substitute teachers come in this will offset the difference
- The timing of the cash spending and philanthropy will impact the accountability plan
- Mia had a question about the Weighted Average Daily Attendance numbers
  - These were updated in September due to the under enrollment in PS/PK

**C. Approval of 2023-24 Audit**

B. Huebner made a motion to Approve the 2023 - 24 Audit.

L. Vowell seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

- No issues were found in the Audit
- The internal controls that have been established are working correctly
- Selected statistics go to DESE due to the financial threshold
- Follow an annual process that the Board approves the Audit and corresponding minutes
  - This information is later posted in the newspaper (St Louis American)

### III. Information Items

#### A. Whole Child Success Committee Report

- Attendance is slightly below the target of 95%, but not so much that it is problematic
- ECEC Notes
  - Preschool students tend to have more absences/tardies due to the more relaxed nature of the schooling
  - Kindergarten tends to be more inline with the EAEC data
- EAEC Notes
  - A process has been implemented to follow that outlines tracking absences (excused vs unexcused) and tardies
  - Fidelity is being given to the Guides to get accurate information and tracking each day
  - Reorienting the staff to the process and making sure they understand the importance of the data
  - Certain groups tend to have more absences/tardies due to medical issues, transportation, housing
  - Mike Flohr will look for ways to track the trends based on catchment
- Family Surveys for Fall 2024 were reviewed
  - ECEC Notes - Family-School Relationship Survey
    - Parents are surprised that we administer assessments at this young age and often struggle with the results, especially if interventions are recommended
    - Parents want more resources for ways to help their children learn at home
  - EAEC Notes - Family-School Relationship Survey
    - School Climate is impacted by how the families engage with the school (reading newsletter, attending activities, talking to their children about their learning), and the transitions from one level to another
    - School Fit can be influenced by the activities, clubs, and extracurriculars offered to the students
      - Teacher satisfaction and retention can greatly influence the student perceptions
    - School Safety results are related to a feeling of belonging, school incidents in the national news, and adjustments happening in the discipline policies
  - The next survey will come out in March/April 2025

#### B. Governance Committee Report

- Governance will pilot structures in January 2025 that focus on strategic planning, policy, and organizational structure
- Board Recruitment is a main priority due to board members being in their last year
  - The main areas of focus are
    - Diversity that represents the school community
    - having a Montessorian on the board
    - current board members playing a bigger role in recruitment and selection
- Kitty Lohrum spoke about relationship mapping in regards to fundraising
  - ways to engage people in our mission, especially if they know more than one person on the board
  - helping people to understand why we are so passionate about City Garden
  - using research to find and engage new board members

### **C. CEO Report**

- So far in December, City Garden has raised \$30,000 towards our fundraising goal
  - There is also a board contribution of \$35,000
- Review of the Annual Performance Report from DESE showed that City Garden earned 125.5 points out of a possible 154.0, which is an increase over the last two years
  - The Report focuses on Academic Achievement (Performance), Continuous Improvement, and Assessment Participation Rates
  - If above 85% for three years, we can ask for another 10 year renewal
  - If below 85%, some additional work is needed for the 10 year renewal
- Annual Goals Progress Update was shared
  - Baseline academic data is higher than anticipated
  - Budget is on track with a Budget Task Force starting in January
  - Staff morale is low, but we are working to improve this and finding areas that need the most focus
  - Hiring for 2025-26 school year is starting now
  - First draft of the 2025-26 calendar has been created
  - There is a large focus on communications (internal and external), as well as social media

### **D. Board Chair Report**

- There is no January Board Meeting
- The Board Retreat is January 11, 2025

## **IV. Final Items**

### **A. Questions and Comments**

- Susie Shelton-Dodge inquired about the TEP for Summer 2025
  - There are several staff currently enrolled with the expectation that their will be more once hiring for 2025-26 is completed
  - Professional Development plan with SLPS is in process
  - Satellite training with other school districts begins in February 2025
  - MACTE accreditation for Upper Elementary will take place in Summer 2025

## **B. Reading Materials and Links**

## **V. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

M. Howard made a motion to Adjourn the December 2024 Board Meeting.

D. Smith 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 9:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
S. Miner