Meeting Minutes

MeANS Board of Directors Meeting

**Thursday, 1/20/22** **from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm**

**At the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences School building**

**13 Easler Drive**

**Hinckley, Maine**

Board members present: **Cheryl Bulmer (Zoom)**, **Scott Byrd (Zoom)**, **Mike Muir (Zoom)**, **Anna Perkins (Zoom)**, **Whitney King (Zoom)**, **Kim Patnode (Zoom)**, **Martha Harris (Zoom)**, **Jesse Wechsler (Zoom),** **Sally Beaulieu (Zoom), Cheryl Mercier (Zoom), Dana Doran (Joined late by Zoom)**

Staff Members Present: Matt Newberg (Zoom), Abigail Skrabak (Zoom), Christine Sullivan (Zoom), Danni Best (Zoom), Becky Dennison (Zoom), Angela Hesketh (Zoom)

Guest: Dave Chase, Strategic Planning, (Zoom)

Not Present: Shannon Webber

1. Board Chair Call the meeting to order (Cheryl Bulmer): 4:32pm
2. Additions/Adjustment to the Agenda
   1. Postpone personnel discussion
   2. Address Whitney’s questions about COVID protocols
   3. Update on out placement
3. Public Comment: None
4. Student/Staff presentation: None
5. Consent Agenda: (***Action requested*** by Approval of Consent Agenda)
   1. Board Meeting Minutes from 11/18/21
   2. HR Committee Minutes 12/2/21
   3. Academic Affairs committee Minutes 12/6/21
   4. Finance Committee Minutes 11/16/21
   5. Head of School report

Motion to accept Consent Agenda, Cheryl M. Martha seconds.

Sally Beaulieu, aye

Anna Perkins, aye

Kim Patanode, aye

Scott Byrd, aye

Martha Harris aye

Cheryl Mercier., aye

Jesse Wechsler, aye

Mike Muir aye

Whitney King, aye

Cheryl Bulmer., aye

1. Strategic Planning – (Dave Chase, Non profit organizational consultant): The Academy reached out about creating the next strategic plan. We created a preliminary plan, and implemented it less than a year ago. Scott introduced the board to Airtable to share and track the plan. The goal is to look at what we said we were going to do, where we are now, and where we want to go. This board has some stipulations because of charter status which have to be addressed in May and June. Those stipulations are urgent. We should establish which goals are going to need to be worked on and who is going to work on them. After that is determined, we should see if there is board capacity to dive into the other sections. Some sections are for Matt and the staff to accomplish. For some goals the board should be engaged.
   1. The list of goals are as follows:
      1. Training and mentoring
      2. Staff development and teamwork
      3. Hiring policies practices
      4. Performance evaluations
      5. Student leadership
      6. Norms and agreements
      7. Student aspirations and work ethic
      8. Format and structure and curriculum
      9. Project based learning
      10. Remote learning
   2. Board focused goals include: recruitment, training, self evaluation, committee meetings, fundraising, capital campaign, marketing, recruitment and relationships, communication and connections (i.e. strategic partnerships).
   3. It is very necessary to relook at goals every year and ask these questions:
      1. What has been done?
      2. What has been assigned?
      3. What roles and responsibilities have changed?
      4. What would make sense to do first based on those charter stipulations.
   4. **Cheryl:** The Charter stipulations are priority, the board groups are working on assigning them and then determining what is left. We don't want to get carried away with a huge list.
   5. **Dave Chase:** Looking at the Stipulations that need to get done:
      1. **Cheryl:** We are in the process of reaching 92% participation on NWEA. In regards to the Finance committee, we need to look at who from the board is taking care of that stipulation, and what assistance they need from the rest of the board.
   6. **Anna:** What is the time frame?
   7. **Dave:** The Charter stipulations are due in April or May. The other goals will be addressed in the 3 to 5 year plan. We just rolled out the first year plan, and are heading into year 2.
   8. **Matt:** The Charter Stipulations have to be “substantially executed by May 1st We did reach 92% participation for NWEA which was the goal in the 1st stipulation. The 2nd stipulation is the Accuplacer goal of 92% participation. Accuplacer is coming up Feb. 2nd and 3rd. It will be a full effort by the staff with Christine spearheading. It was suggested that we might need to separate Campus results from Threshold results and set a separate goal for Threshold. It is a difficult task for Threshold. The 3rd stipulation is around curriculmn and we have a curriculum coordinator and are looking at both a social and an emotional curriculum. We are working on student achievement. This is something we have been working on for 2 years. Absenteeism is a concern according to the dashboard data it was 78 percent. However, this is not one of the stipulations.
   9. **Scott:** What have we done in the past for student data?
   10. **Matt:** That has been the goal of the HOS report that I have been putting together. The format that I came up with is to keep you involved and interested. But I will defer to you if that is what you want on that report. I could do a quarterly statement on absenteeism and graduation rate. Those numbers are not a good metric for us as a school. Graduation rate is a tough one. What would you want me to report on over the course of the year?
   11. **Cheryl B**: What the Charter is looking for is for existing committees to sit down and look at what we think we can measure. There are different ways to measure our population. The Commission is looking for a formal report on whatever we feel is a good reflection of the school. Currently there’s no good evidence to the Commission that the board is on top of it, so we should maybe reflect this in the HOS report.
   12. **Kim:** Would it make sense as we get closer to graduation to do an analysis about what’s getting in the way of graduation?
   13. **Anna:** Does the Charter Commission have an example of what they want to see reported out?
   14. **Cheryl B:** The Commission does not have specific metrics that Matt has to follow. They want to see that the board is active.
   15. **Scott:** I would be willing to sit down to discuss a range of metric options. We can come back to the March meeting and look at big trends this year and in what direction the year is going. We do have an academic committee, should we add them to that discussion?
   16. **Cheryl:** Scott, would you lead the charge? Anna, Scott and the academic committee will meet with Matt and Evan.
   17. **Matt:** I think we will stumble on some things, such as chronic absenteeism. Student Performance is a little trickier to report out on. Evan’s got some ideas for tracking student performance.
   18. **Mike:** Matt, are you able to report on certain measures, relative to who we are as school? What is meaningful to our school and what makes sense to us?
   19. **Matt:** It can be a combination. Assessment is a challenge for the school, so if we can form a way to report on qualitative data.
   20. **Mike:** Something that will help the commission to get an idea of who we are. There are some things you need to know about our school culture
   21. **Scott:** Maybe we can get the student leadership team involved with some of the faculty to figure out some metrics.
   22. **Mike:** There was a Minnesota Hope Study that looked more closely at supports and the correlation with attitudes. The study showed that there was a strong correlation between students with high hopes doing well in school. Schools focused on hope indicators and student scores went up. Sometimes assessment isn’t the only factor.
   23. **Scott:** We can look at social and emotional connections. But we need to make sure that we are capturing if a program is working or not.
   24. **Mike:** Finance Committee looked at stipulations, to determine the gap that the commission mentioned, and look at their recommendations to try and meet their parameters. Our current reporting has a great deal of detail.
   25. **Cheryl B.:** I have asked several times for more examples and have not received an answer. I told Mike to look at this, so we can have something to give them in May. Finance has the budget, coming up, so if people can work together to put together a report based on the dashboard points.
   26. **Mike:** Some people steer away from finance, but we want to know what would be helpful and meaningful for those who don’t deal with finance often. What is most helpful to you as a board?
   27. **Matt:** Don’t we do that on the finance report?
   28. **Mike:** Some reports look like blanket recommendations without looking in depth at what we do.
   29. **Angela:** I am required to report exactly what you see. I have had to break down things into categories, i.e special ed, Threshold. There are several ways we could pull out the information for a report.
   30. **Mike:** We send out the Finance Report. One thing I worry about is putting effort into this without examples.
   31. **Angela:** We send it out quarterly with payroll and it's online. We could break some things out, but we don’t know what they want. Cheryl has reached out.
   32. **Cheryl:** We need to understand what Angela submits and what we see. If we don’t start now, May will be here too soon.
   33. **Mike:** We will tackle this in the upcoming meeting.
   34. **Whitney**: Why do we need to have this financial component? Isn’t that what the committee is for?
   35. **Mike:** There is room for us to come forward and show what we do and if that’s not enough they need to let us know.
   36. **Dave:** Matt, Scott, and Cheryl should connect and go through pieces of the strategic plan. What is important and urgent to do this year? Keeping in mind the board’s capacity. Let’s have each board member see which bullet point speaks to them. Then at the March meeting, we can match goals with those that are interested. You have given yourself a lot to do and we don’t want to get lost in the weeds, but this may help focus your efforts.
   37. **Matt:** Dave and I talked about starting a different airtable. Dave went through this at the leadership team, and a lot of things have already been completed or close to completed.
   38. **Dave:** I was really impressed with the leadership and how much was accomplished in year one in the midst of COVID. I was amazed by how much the staff said we have done. Same with the board.
   39. **Scott:** We should simplify the table in a way so we can look at what we have accomplished. The Capital campaign was helped along by stimulus.
   40. **Cheryl:** So to wrap up, we do have a weekly call on Mondays, and could connect on that, but please send your interests to me.
   41. **Kim Patnode:** HR Committee did third reading of personnel Policies Section 100, 300, and 400
2. Information sharing
   1. Review of 2nd qtr Board President’s Summit (Cheryl Bulmer)
      1. **Cheryl**: The chairs meet quarterly. The highlights include providing board training, both required and elective. They are working with the National Charter Institute, however Maine has to be in a contract with them to finalize, which won’t be ready until the spring. Our other goal was to get help with recruiting board members. That is still in the works and not available. They did go over what the role of a charter member is, and what the role of the committees are, how an agenda should look, fundamentals, and what positions a board should have. At the end of the training, I asked if they have any examples, and they said they would get some. I went to each Charter Board to see which committees they have. Several combined the finance and facilities committee together. We might want to have a committee to make a facilities plan. The school is not our building but we may be able to come up with some things. For a quick summary, they went over what a charter is and what the governing role should be. They posted some questions to see how much people know about their Charter.
         1. What is the name of the organization that governs school? Maine Charter Commission
         2. What date does your charter end? Current Charter, when does that expire? August 31,2022.
         3. How many student level outcomes are there, and how are they measured? Only 2, overall achievement and rate of growth.
         4. Is the charter posted on the website and where? All Charters are on the Charter website.
         5. Does the Charter list specific grounds for termination? Charter can be revoked.
   2. Joint Council meeting (Scott, Matt, Cheryl M. and Cheryl B.)
   3. Annual monitoring report from the Charter Commission (Matt and Cheryl B.)
      1. The report goes to the Commissioner of the DOE. There are no questions.
   4. **“By All MeANS '' campaign (Scott B. and Matt):**
      1. **Matt**: This is the second year we have done the annual campaign. We were a little late getting it started. We started it close to the holiday season so we are thinking of refreshing it and putting it in front of people again. We are looking for a different appeal, we could improve our materials, and look at some incentive gifts.
      2. The grand total is $2,046.66 16 out 34 staff has given, which is 44 %. We articulated a goal of $5,000. Last year we raised $3500.
      3. We want to look at a marketing consultant for a different approach. There was an anonymous matching donation which will get us closer to our goal. We need to start working on development. We might be looking at events that we can fundraise around.
   5. Head of School update
      1. **Questions about covid**: (Matt) The DOE published an SOP, which is really dialing back requirements of contact tracing. Unfortunately our nurse is gone, so Christine has been taking on the testing responsibilities. We have continued to contact trace and have encouraged close contacts to quarantine. We are following the CDC guidelines. We are looking at cases individually and making a recommendation. Generally, we have had a great response to the recommendations. Attendance is poor which we can attribute to covid. We have 12 people out right now, most of those cases were exposed outside of school. The state has recommended that if 15% of the school population is out, then we would shut down. That is about 20 students. We have been discussing when/if we would go fully remote. We do not want to do that because the students learn less and aren’t as engaged. For a lot of the students keeping the doors open to the school is helpful. Teachers will not be teaching synchronous because that was not helpful. To answer the questions:
         1. 87% of the staff are vaccinated.
         2. We have not asked our students who are vaccinated as we have no requirement of vaccination.
         3. About 10 students are pool testing. We try to encourage it and emphasize that if they are tested they won’t need to quarantine if they are a close contact.
         4. **Whitney:** What is the official mask rule and what is the mask compliance? A lot of schools are not allowing the cloth masks and going to kn95. What is the current requirement?
         5. **Matt:** Tracking data is time consuming. Our masking policy from day 1 has everyone has to be masked when inside. We supply 2 ply masks. If you popped in on a class it can’t be guaranteed that everyone is following the mask compliance, it’s a daily battle. We have kids who don’t believe in masking. Moving to surgical masks makes sense.
      2. Outplacement
         1. To date we have spent $3,000 on outplacement
      3. ESSERF
         1. Replace Chrome books
         2. Purchase Social-Emotional curriculum
         3. $18,000 School Psychologist
         4. Purchase new Hotspots
         5. Custodial support(cleaning contract)
         6. Fund the 7th Threshold teacher
      4. Budget Considerations
         1. $32,000 for an interpreter
      5. Other
         1. Update on the student who was violent on campus. The student has the opportunity to attend Threshold.
         2. Rob Moody wanted the board to know that they have been approved to take on a lock-down facility through DOC on the other side of campus. The deal is not sealed at this time.
         3. **Joint Council (Cheryl Bulmer):** Discussion of the old GWH reform school. The committee consists of Scott B., Cheryl B., Cheryl M., and Matt. We met with the GWH board members. It was a very open discussion between the two groups. Follow-up meeting on Jan. 31st.
         4. They have removed MeANS from their website.
         5. Future discussion of campus life
   6. Report out of committee goals
      1. Finance Committee (Mike Muir)
         1. Matt requested that the budget be pushed to May. We are in the negotiation of the Charter contract and may reduce the enrollment with obvious funding changes.
         2. Cheryl would like these budget items to be brought to the March meeting.
         3. Mike Muir is working with Bath Savings on an investment policy and our plans for the use and investment of the Ramsay Fifield donation . Matt said that there was another $50,000 received from that gift.
      2. Academic Affairs Committee (Sally Beaulieu)
         1. Referring to the notes in the packets, Sally reported that there were 2 observations, Threshold and a regular school day. The goals and progress is in the packets.
      3. HR Committee (Kim Patnode): Updates in the minutes.
      4. Development Committee (Scott Byrd): By all Means Funds. We need to come up with strategies.
3. Other –
   1. **Jesse:** Matt can you discuss more on the DOC on campus? Can the board take a stance on this decision?
   2. **Matt:** Randy Liberty is head of DOC. This has been something that GWH has been working on. April 14th is when Day One left. Angel reported that the biggest concern is the type of students that will be recruited but GWH will have the opportunity to accept/not accept students. Randy Liberty said that they do not want it to look like a correctional facility. The students would not be at the high severity level.
   3. **Martha:** I would be involved if I could. The board is concerned with safety. I would be happy to talk with Matt about drafting a letter.
   4. Matt will reach out to Martha to work on the letter. There is a joint council meeting on the 31st.
   5. **Whitney:** What are the terms of the current lease? **Matt:**  It is year to year.
   6. Next meeting will be discussing quarterly financials and report on ideas around statistics. Reach out to Cheryl B. Scott will report on the matrix. There is no Feb meeting.
4. Prep for the next meeting **– Thursday, March 17 at 4:30pm.**

**Martha motions to adjourn, Mike seconds it.**

Sally Beaulieu, aye

Anna Perkins, aye

Kim Patanode, aye

Scott Byrd, aye

Martha Harris aye

Cheryl Mercier., aye

Jesse Wechsler aye

Mike Muir aye

Whitney King, aye

Cheryl Bulmer., aye

Dana Doran, aye

1. Adjourn