

MEETING NOTES

Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, January 24, 2018

6:00 pm, Room 124

Members Present: Nina Cohen, Joshua Biber, David Pabich, Christine Wynn, Steve Palmer, Bill Henning, Richard Jones, Alfonso Perillo, Daniel McCaughey

Members Absent: Michelle Aroko, Janine Matho

Staff: Kathy Egmont, Diego Fellows, Sean Gass, Jennifer Lebzelter

SFC Representatives: Pam Rochna, Fawaz Abusharkh

Guests: Madeline Wynne

I. Call to Order:

Nina Cohen called the meeting at 6:09PM

II. Nomination of Daniel McCaughey for Board Membership

Josh Biber made a motion to elect Daniel McCaughey for a first term on the Board of Trustees. With the motion seconded by Steve Palmer, the motion carried unanimously.

III. Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2017(Vote)

Attachment A

Rick Jones

The minutes of the December 13, 2017 Meeting were approved with corrections. The corrections appeared in the finance motion, and the original slate. Rick Jones entertained a motion to approve as amended. The motion was made by David Pabich, and seconded by Steve Palmer. The Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes with corrections.

IV. Public Comment

Fawaz by explained that the Seal of Bi-literacy has been created. He explained the process by which it will be rolled out. He says it will start at Salem High School but he expects that it could include Salem Academy shortly after. Nina Cohen commented that the school will be open to considering this initiative.

Nina Cohen asks that the minutes reflect guests. Currently our guests include student Madeline Wynne and Dan McCaughey

V. New Business

Update on Strategic Plan Initiative

Attachment C

Steve Palmer

Steve Palmer began by explaining that we have hired a firm called Strategy Matters to be our facilitator as we begin the Strategic Plan. He announced that this firm stood out for its understanding of the process, the constituencies that we will be working with, and the overall quality of references that were provided. Their principal is Liz O'Connor who will be assisted by Josh Moulton and Brittany Nichols. Steve announced that the next meeting will be on the 30th and the next order of business will be to define a steering committee. Kathy added that it is our goal to be done by June over a six month process. Nina noted that the last strategic plan was completed in 2010 and an update was created in 2013. Nina notes that this work is key financially and structurally. We no longer have a green line for expansion. Limited students will affect us financially. Salem Academy needs to look down the road 3-5 years. The understanding is that communication on all levels will be key. We need to build a community and this strategic plan will be a great first step in ensuring a flexible and sustainable community.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Finance

Alfonso Perillo

Attachment D

Kathy Egmont explained that the most important element from the finance report is that our revenue from tuitions dropped by \$250,000. Kathy explained the tuition projection process, and how it will affect Salem Academy. She noted that if we stay within our budget we should break even by the end of the year. We are fortunate to be in such a state that we can take a loss and not be forced to make drastic cuts. Kathy explains that we have a new staff accountant who will be generating a forecast but is still in the process of onboarding and will continue to learn more about us as time goes on. Steve explains that we budget using projected numbers for the next year. Once we enter September and October and have final numbers for the year, the state begins to take back money it gave using their projections of Salem's spending. Steve also notes that we have been hit like this before six years ago and we have learned our lessons from that experience to be better prepared this time around.

Alfonso share a few Highlights:

- We have 2+ months' cash on hand.
- We have reserves to protect us. Overall balance sheet is strong.
- Liquidity is decent but we will continue to watch this.
- Biggest line on the budget currently is salaries.
- Tuition is our main revenue source.

B. Facilities

David Pabich

David Pabich reported that we are still working on the punch list for a few items in the Albright Center and Read Gymnasium. The issues are minor but some have been held over since the fall. Since it is winter season we are looking to move quickly to address some of the heating/AC issues. David also discussed challenges in the Read Gym that include, flooring, storage, the crack between the gym and the locker rooms, and the awning that should be above the main gym entrance. He explained that Shetland is in charge of these things and we are staying on top of them. David moved on to discuss the concept of using the gymnasium as a canvas as part of the Urban Art building murals. Shetland was very open to painting the building. Nina followed the discussion with a question about sidewalk safety, and who will pay for its upkeep.

C. Governance

Rick Jones

Rick Jones reported that the Governance Committee met last week. At present, we are at 11 members with the addition of Dan McCaughey. The Governance committee believes that the board will need to add up to 5 more people by the end of this term. Rick mentions that we have identified a few people but will welcome any suggestions that board members have. He mentions that we would love to get candidates

with experience in education. We do have volunteers that are serving on committees. A discussion followed regarding recruiting new board members.

D. Development Christine Wynne

Christine Wynne reported for the Development Committee. She announced that we have chosen April 4, 2018 to host our Arts Alive! Showcase. We are in the process of putting together a small committee to work on the logistics of the event. The first meeting will be February 5. Ideally, she is looking for ways to bring the community together, raise money, and celebrate all the good things happening here at Salem Academy. She explains that this event will be similar to last year's event and will not use the gym but will include more performances since there will not be a dedication. The discussion moves on to talk about ways in which we can increase philanthropic support and how it fits in with the strategic plan. Kathy explains the status of our support from the Read Foundation. Christine cautions that we need to be strategic in how we approach the Foundation for more money and that as part of the last donation; it was expected that we focus our efforts on acquiring new funding sources. Josh mentions that it was his understanding that there may be opportunities for more funding.

VI. HR Report

Kathy brought apologies from Michelle for her absence. The committee is looking into starting a 403B and working on initiatives from last year.

VII. SFC report Pam Rochna

Pam Rochna introduced herself as moderator of the SFC. She reports that February 5 is the next meeting and that the SFC meets every other month. She announces that the calendar raffle raised \$9,000. She also noted that the SEF spelling bee is happening and that we have a team. She explains that we as an SFC donate to the event by way of a scratch ticket basket. The SFC is looking for scratch tickets. Please send them in an envelope by Tuesday in an envelope marked SFC. Lastly, she announces that the Yankee Candle fundraiser is coming up. This fundraiser supports the SFC and supports the teacher luncheon, picnic, graduation etc. She notes that the SFC gets 20% and students get 20%. The Yankee Candle fundraiser will begin the week following vacation.

VII. Head of School Report Sean Gass Attachment E

Stephanie Callahan & Sean Gass provided a written report.

Stephanie Callahan was not present but Sean Gass delivered a report on the Lower and Upper School happenings. Sean announced that Quarter II has ended and he will be sharing the data for Upper School at the February meeting. Early results from Lower School have shown that the math scores have gone up but still are not as good as ELA scores. The 8th graders are looking strong and showing higher levels of proficiency. Lower School is using the ANET scores to evaluate who is showing growth and where we need interventions.

Sean continued to explain that Upper School got their PSAT results back. He acknowledges that we have not spent as much time in the past analyzing the scores as we have this year. A discussion ensued that recaps the data presented. Sean explained that the 11th grade college class would focus a large portion of the time on SAT prep. In addition, since everyone took the exam this year, we can begin to look at questions types, alignment to standards, and figure out student strengths and challenges on the test. Sean continued the discussion to inform the board that we lost and hired a new ELA teacher over the break. He reports that SACS administered a mid-year staff survey to get a temperature check on staff morale, which results indicate we are doing well. Lastly, Sean provides an update on college acceptance & application process. Of note:

- We have 40 kids eligible for college.
- 384 applications out right now among the 40.
- 133 Applied Early Action. 118 acceptances.

- 38/40 students have been accepted to college.
- 1 Early Decision Acceptance to BU.
- 2 Students will likely not participate in a traditional college program but have applied nonetheless.
- Some students are in the ROOT Certificate Program.

Sean concluded by stating that Melissa will come in to give a presentation to the board in March or April.

Executive Director Report

Kathy Egmont has provided a written report.

A. Enrollment/Planning

Applications received are on track for last year. We are sending out our mailing to Grade 5 and Grade 8 students this week. We anticipate being at the same level as last year. However, the census of students attending school in Salem is shrinking. We will be doing some advertising in neighboring towns.

B. Staffing/HR

We have had several transitions in staff. Our new staff accountant is Deborah Campbell; she works full time and has hit the ground running.

Our new nurse, Kristen Massero started on Jan 2, she has great experience and is quickly getting to know students and their needs. She will work with the Student Support Services team, to help ensure students are getting the care they need.

Erica Klag has started as our Food Service Director and is working to continue the growth of our school lunch and breakfast program.

C. Updates from the State

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reports that it will chose a new Commissioner this month. Three finalists were chosen to interview for the position of commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, a preliminary screening committee charged with selecting candidates announced today.

VIII. Vote to Adjourn entertained by Nina Cohen.

So moved by Bill Henning and seconded by Alfonso Perillo. Voted unanimously.

Meeting Concluded at 7:58PM.