

Approved Jan. 18, 2024

Fiddlehead BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Dec. 14, 2023, 6 pm Thursday at Fiddlehead School and via Zoom

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM by the chair. A quorum was present.
2. Board members present: Roger Preston, [Ben Kramer](#), Susan Doughty, Marie Reimensnyder, Bill Doughty.
3. Others present included [Jacinda Cotton-Castro](#), Executive Director, and Kristin Starzyk of the auditing firm Runyon Kersteen Ouellette which completed the Fiddlehead School audit for FY 23. We welcomed Jamie Dickson as Fiddlehead's about-to-be newest Board member. Bus driver Tracy Morton was also present.
4. **Election of new member: Ben moved and Susan seconded to elect Jamie Dickson to the Fiddlehead Board. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
5. Approval of minutes from Nov. 16, 2023: **Roger moved and Ben seconded to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion carried 6 to 0.**
6. Consider the Treasurer's Report for November 2023:
 - a. Ben explained that at the highest level we are where we expect to be with close to 50% of the school year done and the same portion of the budget expended.
 - b. He noted that the Finance Committee is fine tuning its monitoring and predicting where we will be at the end of the fiscal year. Accounts running over or under are being watched and adjusted.
 - c. He indicated that at the current rate of expenditures and revenues, we expect to have a positive balance in the range of \$60,000 at the end of the school year.
 - d. **Ben moved and Susan seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried 6 to 0.**
7. Auditor's Presentation:
 - a. Ms Starzyk presented a succinct and clear report that Fiddlehead's finances were in good order from the accounting point of view. She noted that their firm had no suggestions for improvements or concerns about our procedures. She

pointed out that we did spend more than we had revenue to cover in FY23, but we had substantial cash assets that allowed us to cover the over expenditure.

- b. She left the Board with copies of her presentation and a summary of their report.
 - c. The Board thanked her and her firm for their efforts.
8. Executive Director's Report: Jacinda highlighted the following in her report
- a. All positions are filled with the recommendations made this evening. A tough hiring season for us and other schools in Maine.
 - b. Working on re-visioning plans with Bill Doughty. More later in this meeting.
 - c. After school enrichment goes smoothly; sent out flyers for early bird rates for summer camp.
 - d. Fundraising: obtained 5 new monthly donors and will send another letter. soon.
 - e. Spoke with the neighbors about possible expansion to include their property.
 - f. Grants:
 - i. Submitted grant to Quimby Foundation for Outdoor Classroom programs.
 - ii. Working on a grant with the Maine Outdoor Learning Initiative for up to \$25,000.
 - g. Enrollment: 197 students overall and 61 special ed. Students (31% of our students)
 - h. Letter to MCSC needed: Jacinda explained that we lost two days of school due to the shootings in Lewiston and the follow-up. She recommended that we apply for a waiver of those two days from MCSC.
 - i. **Marie moved and Jamie seconded to authorize the Board Chair to submit a letter requesting such a waiver. Motion carried 6 to 0.**
9. Re-visioning plans: Jacinda and Bill explained the need to re-vision Fiddlehead School and re-establish our mutual direction given a number of changes that occurred over the last two years. They presented two possible consultants to work with the Board/staff/community on this project. The Board agreed that they can pursue the preferred consultant and bring details of a contact back to the Board for a decision.

10. Review of the Bus Policy: Bus driver Tracy Morton was present to explain that the new policy was working well. She offered some other features of bus operations that have been improvements. The Board expressed its thanks to Tracy for her dedicated work.

11. Wellness Committee Report:

- a. Susan present highlights of the Wellness report which include:
 - i. No added survey is needed since Jason and members have updated information on staff desires.
 - ii. Providings a day-long retreat on wellness topics for staff is in the works.
 - iii. The Wellness Committee will provide a pot-luck for faculty, likely on Jan. 5.
 - iv. Susan thanked the committee members for their work and attendance.

12. Facilities Committee Report: Bill highlighted the following items in the report:

- a. CIP Balance today: \$82,000 (reserve fund)
- b. Fencing: Need to replace fencing on/around playground One quote at c \$30,000 to \$34,000
- c. Siding: Needed on west wall driveway side. 18 month old estimate of \$50,000
- d. Yurt: Need \$20,000 to \$30,000 to assemble and erect; holding on location.
- e. HVAC: Can replace ventilation only for \$109,000.
 - i. Add heat pumps for Heat/Cooling. Very rough estimate: \$180,000
 - ii. Will seek funding/support from Efficiency Maine
 - iii. Initial inquiry with USDA about funding as an addition to our existing mortgage.

13. Executive session: The Board entered executive session at about 7:45 PM upon a motion by Susan and second by Marie. Motion carried 6 to 0.

- a. The Board returned to open session about 8:15.
- b. **Ben moved and Roger seconded to approve the slate of hires as recommended by the Executive Director and presented below:**

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- i. **Resource Room Teacher Assistant 2023 - 2024** Candidate: Kaleigh Kennedy - Start Date: January 29, 2024 Salary Recommended: \$29,192 annual - PRORATED (January 29th – end of school year).
 - ii. **1st Grade Lead Teacher 2023 - 2024** Candidate: Lori Tierney: Salary Recommended: \$47,960

- iii. **1st Grade 1:1 2023 - 2024:** Candidate: Morgan Buckholder: Salary Recommended: \$25,331 annual PRORATED (January 2nd – end of school year.) **Board Approval OUTSIDE of Budget 11.16.2023**
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c. Motion carried 6 to 0.

14. Adjournment: Jamie moved and Ben seconded to adjourn at about 8:26 PM.