

Fiddlehead Board Minutes
Apr 11, 2024

Approved May 16, 2024

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:03 by the chair
2. Members present were [Ben Kramer](#), Jamie Dickson, Marie Reimensnyder, Susan Doughty, and Bill Doughty
3. Staff and guests included [Jacinda Cotton-Castro](#), [Jason Manjourides](#), and Tracey Morton, bus driver.
4. Ben read the mission statement of Fiddlehead School
5. Public comment was called for and there was none.
6. Minutes: Ben moved and Susan seconded to approve the minutes from the Mar 21, 2024 regular meeting and the March 22, 2024 special meeting. Motion passed 5 to 0.
7. Consider the budget proposal for FY25
 - a. Bill explained that preliminary approval is sought and that some adjustments may be made at the next meeting.
 - b. Ben offered the background to the budget.
 - i. Lion's share of the budget is the cost of people and their benefits.
 - ii. Positions and pay scales were reviewed and adjusted carefully
 - iii. Re-visioning showed strong support for increased pay and benefits.
 - iv. Most revenue comes from the state with the balance from enrichment programs.
 - v. Bottom line is currently about \$13,000.
 - vi. Budget should reflect our priorities and this one does.
 - c. Jacinda noted that support for health insurance for staff has increased also.
 - d. Bill went through some details about our revenue from the state, grants, and enrichment programs.
 - e. Jacinda explained how she established how she established the pay grid for teachers and teacher assistants.

- i. Baseline for teachers was raised to \$42,500.
 - ii. Cost of living at 3% was applied to other positions.
 - iii. Health insurance support was raised by \$50 per month. Looking for an insurer who does not require increases in January.
 - iv. Teachers and TAs will receive between a 5 and 10% pay increase.
 - f. The number of positions in the budget was explained in some detail.
 - i. 13 teaching positions and 13 TA positions. Planning on one TA per grade level, either a special ed. TA or a regular ed. TA. Budget provides for special education training for all TAs
 - ii. Marie asked about the training for TAs. Jacinda noted summer training as behavior specialists. Jason added that our BC/BA will do continual training on Fridays.
 - g. In regard to facilities, we plan to replace one rooftop HVAC unit and have the yurt installed in the back yard.
 - h. Ben moved and Jamie seconded preliminary approval of the FY 25 budget.
 - i. Ben clarified that we are doing this now so Jacinda can communicate the positive news about pay and benefits to our staff.
 - ii. Motion to approve the FY25 budget passed by a vote of 5 to 0.
- 8. Executive Director's Report
 - a. Jacinda reported:
 - i. Thanks to the Finance Committee
 - ii. Hiring for grades 6 and 8 and any TA positions we need. Hiring is difficult right now.
 - iii. Working on session 5 for enrichment
 - iv. Most of staff is ready for summer programs.
 - v. Will open enrichment after school to Russell School students

- vi. Finalized the Maine Outdoor Learning grant.
- vii. Save Oct. 19th for fundraiser in the fall.
- viii. Re-visioning continues well. Would like to send Board results to staff.
- ix. Enrollment is looking good for next year. Karen has been awesome in helping out. At 188 at this point.
- x. Questions for Jacinda
 - 1. What does the MOLI grant cover?
 - a. Curriculum mapping in grades 6-7-8 for outdoor ed.
 - b. Garden to table after school
 - c. Two-week summer camp for grades 6-7-8 for free.
 - d. Build outdoor shelter and bathroom at Norumbega. Students helping with the design.
 - e. Outdoor Ed. classroom and other supplies.
 - 2. Is this a typical year for teacher/staff changes?
 - a. Seems the new normal for the post-COVID era. She hopes our training and new pay scale will help.
 - 3. What's the status of pre-K? Looking at grants and trying to develop more space.

9. Principal's report.

- a. Jason reported that:
 - i. Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment
 - 1. Continuing to work on teacher handbook; depending on summer work for faster progress
 - 2. Jolly Phonics was adopted and grant funded. K-2 teachers have been trained.
 - 3. Spring NWEA starts soon. RTI staff handle this.

4. He will attend ALICE training in July
 - a. Have done shelter-in-place drill for staff.
5. Attendance: currently 38% chronic absence. 16.6% for sure will be chronically absent. He will get training from MCSC.
6. MS structure for next year could be one math teacher for 6-8; likewise the other two teachers.
7. Calendar: Draft was presented
 - a. 175 student days; 181 staff days
 - b. Friday half days; fall and spring conferences.
 - c. Kindergarten screening on the first day of school.
 - d. August 26-29: All staff training and start of school.
 - e. March 21 is Anytime, Anywhere learning for students and full day staff retreat.
 - f. Last day: June 10 with no snow days.
8. Questions: there were questions and answers on MS curriculum development.
10. Re-visioning—moved to the May agenda
 - a. Stakeholder meeting will be May 23, 2024.
11. Grade 8 DC trip proposal
 - a. Update from Jason: based on email from Mandy
 - i. Money can be refunded if trip does not happen
 - ii. A special educator will work with 8th graders who stay behind.
 - b. Board questions:
 - i. How is this different from trip to Boston
 1. Overnight, out of state, farther from help
 - ii. What happens next year: No plan since the Grade 8 teacher is leaving the end of this year.
 - iii. How many chaperones and have they had background checks?

1. 5 chaperones according to Jason
 2. Unknown if background checks have been passed.
 - iv. How many students are going? 20.
 - v. How much money has been raised? Unknown.
 - vi. How will medical needs including medication be handled?
 - c. Some Board members expressed concern with the overall planning and quality of the information.
 - i. Highlights of the itinerary were shared.
 - d. Our lawyers can put together a release/permission form.
 - e. Ben moved and Jamie seconded to table this item until the next time the Board meets. Motion passed 5-0.
12. Wellness Report:
- a. Staff retreat date has been moved and will flow as planned other than that.
13. Facilities:
- a. Recommended to spend \$25,000 from the CIP reserve to replace roof top unit #8.
 - b. Working with Thayer Corp.
 - c. Moved by Susan and seconded by Marie to approve the recommendation. Motion carried 5 to 0.
14. Executive Session to discuss personnel matters
- a. Susan moved and Marie seconded to enter executive session. Motion carried 5 to 0.
 - b. The Board returned from executive session about 8:20
15. Jamie moved and Ben seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5 to 0.

