

Fiddlehead Board Minutes Approved 6/6/24

May 6, 2024 Special Meeting to consider a Grade 8 trip proposal
Meeting via Zoom

1. Meeting was called to order via Zoom by Bill Doughty at 12:02
2. A quorum was present including Susan Doughty, Ben Kramer, Jamie Dickson, Maria Reimensnyder, Roger Preston, and Bill Doughty
3. Jacinda and Jason were present as staff members.
4. Jacinda updated the Board on Grade 8 graduation while the Board waited 10 minutes for the teacher to arrive
5. Update on the Grade 8 trip proposal from Mandy:
 - a. Mandy responded to the questions that were sent earlier
 - b. All primary chaperones are committed
 - i. Jacely Harlow
 - ii. Jennie Rabie
 - iii. Jane Farish (spelling)
 - iv. Ellen Okeledi
 - v. Teacher Mandy Matrino
 - vi. Alternate chaperone is Gary Lewis
 - vii. She stated she thinks Carrie Larson is coming
 - viii. She says all the parent chaperones have completed background checks.
 - c. She indicated the current itinerary is essentially the same as presented in February.
 - i. Have a plan to meet with Senator King.
 - ii. There's plenty to do according to her.
 - d. Cost of the trip was \$14,000 to \$17,000.
 - i. Problems with rate from Amtrak and could not get a group rate.
 - ii. Consequently the trip was booked from South station at a \$6000 savings
 - iii. Plan now to eat out only once a day, then picnic
 - iv. She says the class has raised \$8,000
 - e. How will the students get to train station in Boston?

- i. She said she is “spitballing this” Non-chaperone parents are willing to drive.
 - ii. She is not sure about background checks for volunteer drivers. Has not followed up on that yet.
 - f. Choose your own adventure
 - i. She says students know what this means—select a museum. Could hang out on the Mall.
 - ii. Some will need to return to the hotel to rest
 - iii. She indicated that absolutely a 4 to 1 ratio will be maintained at all times.
 - g. How will medications be handled?
 - i. She assumed the Board would let her know about next steps.
 - ii. Mandy as the teacher will be responsible for doing the medications. There are forms to sign.
 - iii. When there is an issue Mandy says she does lots of creative problem solving.
 - h. How special education needs will be met
 - i. She said she assumed the question was due to her asking for more help in January. She said she was talking about the 7th grade. She would not take the 7th grade on this trip.
 - ii. She noted that students have developed skills in this process.
 - i. She asked that the Board tell what we need and they will respond.
- 6. Questions/comments from Board members
 - a. The trip has educational value yet seems like a one time only that could not be replicated.
 - b. There is definitely some parent concern with some saying they want their kids to go so they will go along on the trip too. Some have expressed continuing concerns
 - c. The passion behind the trip was noted and concerns about safety, especially with medications. Enough parents have expressed concern and there are cracks in communication.

- d. Some aspects, like transportation, seem solvable. Unclear about adult/student groupings for Choose Your Own Adventure.
 - e. Parent question: How will I be supported if dealing with a special education student? The response in Chat was that a staff member would be with them.
 - f. Are all the students included in one train car? Mandy said that was her impression.
 - g. How close to Union Station is the hotel? Mandy said a Metro Station was at the train station.
 - h. Comments from Jacinda: proud of what has been done; has reached out to legal and the forms are ready if needed.
7. The Chair asked if there any Board member wants to make a motion.
- a. No one responded.
 - b. Ben made a motion to approve the trip proposal so the Board could have a discussion and resolve the issue. Marie seconded.
 - c. There was no further discussion.
 - d. Motion failed with 2 yes votes and 4 no votes.
8. Bill commented that the Board has to use prudence and make the judgment that a reasonable person would make.
9. Guidelines on how fund raised money can be used
- a. Suggestions from Bill and Jacinda
 - i. Return to donors where possible
 - ii. Use for day long field trips in Maine
 - iii. Make another contribution to victims of the Lewiston shootings
 - iv. Money may not be used for overnight trips involving hotels.
 - b. There was a question to Mandy if there was a plan B if the trip was not approved.
 - i. She said a plan B has been discussed with the students
 - ii. Mandy's questions were referred to Jacinda and Jason.
 - c. Ben and Jamie had to return to work at this point
 - d. Marie would like a written statement about why the trip was not approved to use as we go forward.

- e. Susan moved and Roger seconded to approve the guidelines as proposed. Susan noted this was a difficult decision
 - f. Jacinda emphasized her pride in the work of the grade 8 class.
 - i. She also noted we need a field trip policy
 - g. Motion on the guidelines passed 4 to 0.
10. It was clarified that the 4th guideline allows overnights that don't involve hotels.
11. Susan moved and Roger seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:15.
Motion passed 4 to 0.

Minutes prepared by Bill Doughty