

PVPA Board Meeting Minutes February 2015

02.10.2015

Present: Robert Brainin, Deborah Jacobson, Scott Goldman, Donovan Arthen, Gary Smith, Kim Hicks, Will Dechard, Jeanne Powers, Mary Cantler, Asha Strazzero-Wild, Rachel Dionne, Geoff Sumi, Sean Moore, James Barnhill

Guests: Paul Weinberg, John Kulis, Mark Sullivan

Start: 6:02 pm

PVPA Mission Statement (read by Will Dechard)

Public Comment

Approval of Minutes (Kim Hicks)

- Motion to table until next meeting since minutes went out late- passed. Voted to move to next meeting.

President's Business (Kim Hicks)

- Motion to reuse the HOS evaluation. Voted to reuse the evaluation.
- State Ethic Commission: Kim will send the link again to ensure everyone completes.

Finance (Robert Brainin, Deb Jacobson)

- Hoping to be able to approve the budget at the May meeting of the board; at April meeting will be presenting the budget

Development (Mary Canter)

- Handout that compared 2013, 2014, and 2015; over 38K in actual donations, pledged amount of 43K from 82 donors (compared to \$23,614 in 2014 and \$24,700 in 2013).
- Will be doing a phone a thon in April and beginning Facebook posting in March.
- Donors tend to give at the same time every year
- One major donor did 10K, 10 families have increased donations this year (doubled) from previous years
- Also a number of new donors
- Optimistic that we will meet our new goal
- Today will be passing out capital campaign packets- tools to use for the capital campaign
- Request: If people become connected to PVPA, who do you want in your circle of influence to see what the school is- student-led tour, etc.

Governance (Geoff Sumi)

- Reviewing grievance procedures- invited folks from the Personnel Advisory Board to visit the next meeting
- Strategic planning committee met for the first time today; reviewing the "current" plan and have a timeline to have a preliminary rough draft to the board before end of year

Head of School Report (Scott Goldman)

- Finished Padeia – changes implemented this year were successful: students would feel they took away something unique and they voted with their feet and through daily participation. This year it ended with a demonstration of learning- fair- where different groups could do a building walk and see what folks did.
- Overall students and staff seemed to feel better; all filled out a survey to gather feedback.
- Jean is working with the committee. Will spend another year gathering data. Figuring out how to build in prep for teachers.
- Senior dance thesis was fantastic; seniors did a great job and the younger dancers / choreography involved a lot of team work- impressive in short time! New dance teacher (PVPA alum) did a spectacular job!
- PVPA participate in the Berkeley high school jazz festival/ contest on Jan 31 and Spectrum took second place in the state. Lots of folks there from across the country. Missed first place by 3 pts! Trophies in the main office.
- Mock trial is getting off the ground- one match (lots of cancellations due to snow)

Staff (Jean Powers, Will Dechard)

- Padeia great success; going through feedback and will report back
- Long break with snow!

Open Session (Scott Goldman)

- Last Thursday was the deadline for project bid; couple hundred thousand dollars above the project bid; overall cost for work is \$2,130,000. There is a timeline for us to accept because it's a state system.
- The building committee met prior to this board meeting and Robert/Scott/Mark/John have had many conversations – here tonight to discuss whether we go forward or not.
- Had been approved for a lower amount, cannot negotiate until we accept the bid- believe there will be some savings. Need to make a decision to stick to timeline. Board will need to vote to know how to proceed.
- If we reject the bid, we start over. Go back and advertise and redesign etc—not sure how long but it will take time. Challenge: Project set up to be done by the fall so if we push back to get a design and rebid it's hard (can keep the same architect and ask them to come back to help make budget) – would miss the deadline of construction being done in August and probably push back do Dec/Jan.
- Rise of price in project had to do with changes South Hadley wanted us to make. By state law we didn't have to make changes from SH but if they chose to require them, then we had to do them. They wanted us to move the water service and hydrants and put a road around the south side of the school that can bear X weight- there were some changes and not sure what the difference was in that work. Fire dept required it to happen. Also trying to make sure that in going ahead with this that we could put in electrical infrastructure- if successful with fundraising, we could plug in and be ready to go. That strategy bumped bid for electrical work. All of the other sub-bids came pretty close on estimate except these two factors. \$2.13 million bid was the most aggressive bid- Alegrino. The other bids that we received were \$2.3-2.4 million. This is probably the best bid we are going to get at this time in this economy.
- Design is straightforward and clean; when you see the bids you can see they are within 20K of each other, not a lot of ambiguity. Not well lent to changes.

- Robert: In the past reimbursed on quarterly basis - \$1 million to get us through each quarter. Now reimbursed at the end of each month. We have the money in the capital portion of our budget; those projects have been funded out of surplus. One option to designate that this would be a capital budget item and take it out of surplus.
- Deb: Last year we refinanced the mortgage and were able to increase the amount we borrowed and decreased monthly payments by stretching out repayment term. Still remains available – \$1.847 million- FSB knows and they expect us to draw down \$ to help finance construction. Once we draw down that full amount, loan repayments still lower so the effect on the operating budget and expense of school is less. Also 300K sitting with The Friends-land sold for a previous iteration that was not needed so funds sitting there and The Friends are willing and able to put that towards the cost of this project. That pays for the contract bid for the actual structure of the building. What remains is soft costs like architect fees, consulting etc. Those cost cannot be definite but are in the ballpark of 300K and would come out of savings. Think we can afford to take that out. Funds available from FSB refinance is \$1.8. Never know exact state reimbursement but savings have added up.
- Robert: How much in savings? Want a quarter's worth – think of \$1.2 million as safety net. Anything above is excess—so 800K here.
- Deb: The bid covers the basic structure of the building; it is usable for quite a few of the purposes that we want to use it for. The fundraising/ capital campaign is for the more specific theater and performance related enhancements that will eventually make it a full theater. And that was the design.
- Scott: We have been very clear about how we refer to this space. Multipurpose space- no fixed seating. The idea for this project was to build a space that would allow us to do performances at PVPA but also allow the whole school to be together for open mics and meetings, speakers- something that has been long wished for by alums and strengthen the community. Fundraising for things that would take us from a standalone building we could go in and do any performance that we'd like. We'd love to fundraise to have more state of the art lighting/ sound etc. One piece of fundraising that needs to be in place when the theater opens; light rigging piece. A lot of time spent spec-ing out the lighting bars (have to come up and down safely)- motorizing them- clear cost of what that is (47K). That is non-negotiable.
- Kim: If we delay, do we lose some of the \$ we've spent? Scott: Have to go back to FSB. If we were to delay, then FSB goes back to her board and get reapproved. They might not be able to guarantee the same interest rate.
- Sean: What is the date? Scott: This week- or next week make quorum.
- Scott: Presenting initial draft of budget; no substantial capital cost for next year. May want to add another set of chrome books- 6K. Nothing major. As we are moving towards next year's budget, looking to present a level budget and going ahead with proposed raises that we discussed and actual first pass at it has us at slightly above 3% distributed along the matrix (a little higher than what we thought).
- Will: Is there a downside?
- Gary: Can we vote today?
- Kim: Would like to hold since it's a big decision.
- Donovan: How long to recoup savings if we spend 300K? Deb: No real way to know. Might never recoup it but that would be ok if we don't whittle away more.
- Scott: New laws around how much surplus a school can have; if you don't spent the \$ then you have to return it. Grandfathered in now but no new charter school will be in this situation- can't accumulate funds. Paul: Moving slowing to The Friends to keep that money safe.
- Robert: Current mortgage- 30 year, 3.49, locked in for 10 yrs
- Kim: Need to determine when we can meet to vote:

- VOTE TO TAKE PLACE: Tuesday, February 17th at 6 pm
- Asha to set up a conference line

Motion to adjourn: 7:23 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Asha Strazzero-Wild, Clerk