



Marine Area Community School • MN District #4254  
Board of Directors Regular Meeting  
14189 Ostlund Trail North, Marine on St. Croix, MN 55047  
**September 16, 2017, 9:30AM**

## Board Meeting Minutes – Draft

### Mission

Marine Area Community School will utilize the natural resources, history, arts, and civic stewardship of the community as a foundation for the study of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, art, and other curriculum subjects. The place-based learning environment will be student-centered, designed by teachers, and reinforced and supported by the local community.

#### 1.0 Call to Order 9:30 a.m.

Roll Call: Lisa White, Kristina Smitten, Jon Dettmann (arrived at 10:00 AM), Lisa Dochniak. Absent: Glen Mills

#### 2.0 Approve Agenda

#### 3.0 Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Director White moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of September 16, 2017. The board meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

#### 4.0 Community Comment

David Cauley (5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher) spoke to the proposed Wellness Policy in favor of not removing popcorn (popcorn party) as an incentive for classrooms achieving goals. Encouraged use of reasonable healthy food as an incentive or reward.

#### 5.0 Financial Report

Scott Brown (TAG) said the financials may look odd as they are not truly representative due to the timing of payments received and staff pay. However, from a financials view River Grove is looking really good. Our ADM is consistent with our approved budget which is critical. We have two weeks (September 30) to spend the rest of the start-up CSP funding. MDE does have discretion that if we do not spend it we can roll it into the next period. Scott Brown feels we have expenditures to utilize the startup funds. Scott Brown reminded the Board to review the check register to be confident that expenditures are aligned. As we hire special ed staff, funding is going to lag from the state, likewise food service lags in payments. A healthy fund balance, which the school has, will help us navigate lag times more successfully.

Member Smitten discussed that we need to be attentive towards the end of the year. Scott Brown described that the June 15<sup>th</sup> payment is shifted to June 20<sup>th</sup>, which can be a pinch-point. The school needs to plan for this time, or the line of credit may be needed to help during this low point of cash. Member Smitten asked if need to revise our budget. Scott Brown suggested later in the fall would be a good time to do a formal revision to take into account fundraising, expenditures and other activities. Scott Brown encouraged flexibility as the reimbursements, especially the first year, will cause volatility in our budget.

Member Dettmann asked about discrepancy in adoption budget of our ADM of 153 and current ADM. Administrator Goodson will submit our roster to amend our ADM. Recognizing volatility, if we maintain our enrollment as budgeted, we will even out.



### **5.1 Audit exception request to MDE**

Member Smitten introduced the request to roll the expenditures (less than \$3000) prior to June 30 2016 into this fiscal year for audit purposes. TAG representative Scott Brown suggested that if an audit is required it will cost about \$9000. Board Members considered a resolution requesting the exception. The Authorizer has approved this request. The Resolution will be a request to MDE for approval. Member White made a motion to accept Resolution 2017-01 with a change of River Grove to Marine Area Community School. The motion was seconded by Member Dochniak. Discussion to change all references of River Grove to Marine Area Community School. The motion passed unanimously.

### **6.0 Administrator's Report via telephone**

Average Daily Membership is 164. Right where we need to be as it relates to our budget.

Lunch service has been OK, some fine tuning.

Parent support has been wonderful and very appreciated in helping at the school.

Staffing update: Still looking for a PE Specialist and Art Specialist. Music Specialist as well as additional Special Education staffing has been hired.

### **6.1 Board Member Reports**

Member White – Donations report just over \$72,000 deposited to date. This does not include the \$10,000 stock donation. The stock donation has been sold and Drew Goodson confirmed receipt. Enrollment is ADM is 164. We currently have 165 enrolled.

Member Dochniak – Regarding curriculum, slowly handing off the curriculum and working to create a contact person within the staff to work with curriculum representatives. Interested to learn how we move forward with expenditures.

Member Dochniak reviewed the new physical education standards currently out for review by MDE. Member Dochniak feels that we can meet the standards without having a formal gym. Member White shared that as it relates to curriculum purchases, last week the continuation of the CSP grant was requested as Implementation I. This is an additional \$175,000 request, possibly up to \$200,000. Should know by October 1 if we have been approved.

Member Smitten shared that the Manitou Fund has cancelled the purchase agreement with the Wilder Foundation to acquire the property. Member Smitten and Member White along with Administrator Goodson met with the Wilder Foundation to discuss their position. The lease needs to be negotiated by January 2018. Member Smitten asked the Board to think about our long-term vision and the interest occupying the former Marine Elementary. Over the next couple months.

Member Smitten asked teachers to share successes. Bug Club has started, Geology Club will be starting soon. Curriculum nights are underway. The school had its first PRIDE Assembly last Friday. A school-wide photo was taken of the students in their green shirts. Students are challenged to create a mascot. Classroom websites are starting. Sixth grade has had mentoring opportunities. Positive feedback on extra time for recess and lunch. Member Smitten is hoping Committees can come together for more efficient decision-making.



Member Dettmann turned the discussion to Scott Brown of the TAG for financials overview. Member Dettmann said he will send out a request for a regular meeting schedule to the Finance Committee to review monthly financials ahead of Board meetings.

## **7.0 Playground status**

The School was able to request assistance in 1:1 match to a Foundation to purchase structural playground equipment. Ideally, a structure in both the pine bowl area and up near Clearing would be available. The school was outbid in seeking the Withrow equipment. The PTO is looking at buying a shed for phyed and playground equipment.

## **8.0 PTO report**

Kris Capra gave report. PTO has met and main focus is fundraiser on October 10. Art Fair has people staffing it this weekend. October 3 is Culver's Night. Next meeting is October 2 and at that meeting officers will be voted in which will lead to more structure and direction forward.

Member Smitten asked if the PTO has minutes. Ms. Capra suggested that after officers are voted-in then maybe minutes will be available. Member Smitten suggested it'd be nice to share the work of the PTO through the minutes to the broader parent community.

## **9.0 New Business**

### **9.1 Nepotism Policy**

Member Smitten introduced the Policy. Generally stating that we are not going to give favoritism to people and will avoid conflicts of interest. Member Dochniak moved to accept the Nepotism Policy as written. The motion was seconded by Member White. The motion passed unanimously.

### **9.3 Wellness Policy**

Member Smitten said in drafting the proposed Wellness Policy Seneca, Great River, Stillwater Schools, and Avalon were all reviewed and modified for our needs. Regrettably, there hasn't been significant time to create the Policy with the teaching team. However, for compliance the School needs a policy in place by October 25<sup>th</sup>. Member Smitten commented that this is not ideal, but that the Policy can be amended anytime in the future.

Smitten said when formulating the policy top concern is safety, but there is interest in the ability to have food in the classroom that contain allergens during snack time and to allow food as classroom rewards.

Member Dochniak reviewed the policy and shared concern about food and beverages not being used as rewards or held as punishment. And offered language that schools will not use food or beverages as reward to individual students, but allow for an entire class participation. The Board agreed this initial language was too strong.

Member Smitten said that if food is used as a reward that all students contributing to this goal should be able to participate in the food that is used as a reward. Everybody has access to it. For example, if an award is 100% on a test that every student able to participate in achieving 100% should be able to enjoy the same reward. Member Smitten commented that philosophically she is not certain about food as a reward and if that contradicts modeling healthy lifestyles and relationship to food, but that the conversation can wait until we have a small group focused on reviewing the Wellness Policy to ensure it is accomplishing our School's desires.

Member Dochniak commented that teachers (in general) have moved away from food as individual rewards. However, if the class is working towards a goal, or the school has (IE) a reading goal and the celebration includes a pizza party, that it should be viewed differently than as an individual reward.



Smitten commented on a “popcorn party” and that the reward isn’t the popcorn, the reward is the party and popcorn is part of the party but that she would want all students to be able to participate. All need to be provided something equivalent.

Member Dochniak mentioned consideration of not only allergens but other kinds of cultural or religious food intolerances, and those should be considered as well in the future policy.

Mr. Cauley commented that, for example a popcorn party, that an appropriate and similar substitute would be available for students unable to eat popcorn.

Discussion also included policy language to ensure that professional development is provided for all personnel and for those administering food. Mr. Cauley, suggested to add lunchroom volunteers. The modifications were supported.

Member Smitten said she doesn’t feel comfortable moving forward with items 3 and 4 in the policy, as we do not have resolution with staff. Item 4 specifically was added by our nurse.

The Board tabled a vote. The staff are to discuss the language and Administrator Goodman will forward the revised language which is supported by staff for a Board email vote.

**10.0 Consideration to add a Board Member (teacher representative) at next meeting**

The teachers were asked at a staff meeting for interest in joining the Board as a founding member. Mr. Cauley expressed interest, but due to our bylaws (married to staff person) he cannot currently be considered.

The Board discussed this opportunity and recognize that Member Dochniak is our current teacher representative but that having a teacher from the school will be advantageous to decision making. The Board will consider adding a Board member as school teacher representative at its next meeting.

**11.0 Authorizer Comments** *No representation at meeting*

**12.0 Next Board of Directors Meeting: October 14, 2017 at 9:30AM**

Member Dettmann brought up interest in changing the Grove signs to River Grove. Member White suggested that we strive to have signage completed by the time of the upcoming donor event.

**13.0 Adjournment**

Member Dettmann made a motion to adjourn (11:15 AM). Member White 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

