



**MISF Executive Committee Meeting**  
**December 2, 2015**  
**7:30 AM – 9:30 AM**  
**Annunciation School, Minneapolis**

## AGENDA ITEMS

[Click Here for Meeting Documents \(added as they are available\)](#)

- Review minutes from 9/9/15 meeting
- President's report
  - Updates
  - Development report
  - Membership report
  - Advocacy update
  - Program report
    - School Leadership Conference
- Revised employee manual
- Finance report: balance sheet, income statement, restricted funds tracking, cash flow, operating reserve funds
- Other business

## MINUTES

**Those present:** Greg Anklam, Tim Benz, Jennifer Cassidy, Greg Chamberlain, Doug Jaeger, Joel Landskroener, Greg Margarit

**Staff present:** Michele Skare

Meeting was called to order at 7:37 AM.

Motion was made by Joel Landskroener, seconded by Greg Margarit, to approve the minutes from the 9/9/15 meeting as written.

### **President's report**

Recent staff changes – Office morale is solid, and staff realizes that the decision was a solely business one. Staff is in regular communication, with formal meetings every other week, as well as informal meetings/talk every day in the course of business. We are vigilant, making sure that nothing important is being missed. There have been no difficult communications/questions for schools regarding the change. Debbie has been handling all the related issues: unemployment, outplacement, etc.

Minnesota Comeback (formerly ETI – Educational Transformation Initiative) – We are continuing to move forward in our involvement with the group. Tim Benz chairs the Independent Sector Team. Focus

is on an effort in the Minneapolis school district to move 2000 students to “rigorous and relevant” schools. (Relevance = how true to who you are – faith/character development.) The current estimate is that there is a 1000 seat capacity in high need areas right now, so the need is to increase that number by another 1000 seats. Another goal is to replicate this outside of just the Minneapolis district. The relationships within the groups comprising MN Comeback (private/independent/charters/funders) is cordial/collegial; all are welcome, and no sense of “what are they doing here?” Participation in this group also allows MISF to be in front of new/different people and groups, educating them about our mission. An additional goal of the group is to have the ability to direct free/reduced lunch kids to the rigorous/relevant school which will serve them best – perhaps some type of directory of schools. The policy piece associated with this model looks to be one of tax credits, vouchers, and even private equity money.

The bigger question is how to figure out the sustainability piece? An example: Hope Academy in South Minneapolis serves 75% FRL kids. Just \$0.10/dollar of their funding comes from tuition, and they must fund raise the rest. In essence - every kid you bring in “harms” your model. The need is for kids to bring donors/money in along with them. So serving more kids is great – but at \$0.10 per dollar of tuition-funded costs per child – the model isn’t sustainable without some additional type of funding tied to it. There are twenty-eight different funders that are part of Minnesota Comeback – all bringing money to the pot, trying to help with infrastructure/eco system of the schools. Some believe strongly in public schools, but there are also others there who don’t care where it goes, their main focus is to just get it done.

The Minneapolis School District may or may not stay along. They are in process of identifying a new superintendent, so things are in flux there. We continue to evaluate to make sure that participation makes sense for us.

Final point: choice programs actually integrate schools, and most nonpublics are far more integrated than their public counterparts.

Friedman Foundation – Tim will be attending the Legislative Summit in Chicago this weekend, hosted by the Friedman Foundation. Twenty-two legislators, and members of the OAK coalition will be in attendance. The Friedman Foundation watches, targets and hosts these summits when the school choice issue seems to be on the move in a state. This is a chance for us to listen to what is happening in school choice nationally, to get to know the legislators (all of them Republicans, and the House Speaker may or may not come). The Governor has an open ear and is curious about the Equity & Opportunity in Education Tax Credits. He has said that he might be willing to give up tax breaks to get something he wants (universal PK). This has been on Speaker Daudt’s radar as well, and he feels that there is some leverage there in terms of getting that legislation passed (which is included in the omnibus tax bill). Tax credit scholarships have a bigger impact and are much simpler: in essence, they can be seen as a grant to every kid.

WEM Foundation – Whitney and Elizabeth MacMillan’s foundation is involved in MN Comeback. We have a developing relationship with Jim Hield, President of the foundation. WEM is meeting with both MISF and CSCOE (Catholic Schools Center of Excellence). They are looking at us as a partner in a some type of scholarship program in the future (similar to the model MISF once had). For now, they really are looking to buy access to us – to use our time and expertise. We have received a \$25K grant to be “on retainer” to them. This is a positive development, showing that they trust in what we do and that we are a content expert.

Is there some possible scholarship model? We’re not there yet – however - if the Equity/Opportunity Tax Credit legislation passes – we could become the scholarship granting organization, and then partner with TADS/Smart Tuition, etc. to run the “back office” piece. We will continue to get closer to MacMillan

Foundation, and strategize as to what the next conversation is about. (STEM, SCOPE, etc.?) Jim Hield likes to keep things simple and uncomplicated. Knowing that they're in our schools already makes it easy.

STEM Seminar/School Leadership Conference/Networking Seminars – To date, we've engaged almost 480 people through our programs. We are adding value!

Tim had lunch with Rosa who is doing well and still fully supportive of MISF, and has kept in contact with Jim. She increased her gift this year, and remains positive about what we're doing. She reiterates that keeping her listed as an Emeritus on our board listing is a plus when it comes to 3M relationships.

### **Development report**

The last Development Seminar was about grant writing. An important point brought forth by the presenters was, even when you don't get funded, it's important to follow up and talk with them about what they'd want to see in a subsequent grant, that you don't want to waste their time, etc. It's important to keep an ongoing relationship with them, and you have their ear.

Grants • Submitted grants to 3M, General Mills and Hardenbergh Foundations. Submitted LOI to Schulze Foundation and are waiting for approval to submit a full grant. • Received notification from the WEM Foundation that we will be receiving a \$25,000 General Operations grant in December. • Katherine B. Andersen held their grant cycle meeting November 11th and we are waiting to hear if our grant request was approved. • We will be utilizing our newly purchased Foundation Search software to build a prospect list of new grant funders.

Honor Fund • Annual Appeal letter was mailed out to nearly 90 donors on October 29th . • The 2014-2015 Annual Report was mailed out to past donors, President's Cabinet Members and Board members on November 20th. A PDF of the Annual Report was also emailed out to all member school leaders. • Setting meetings to connect with major donors.

Sponsorships • Raised \$11,000 in STEM Education Sponsorships with a goal of \$7,000, a 64% increase. • Raised \$22,500 of the \$28,000 sponsorship goal for the School Leadership Conference. Secured 3 new sponsors but lost a couple from last year because of timing issues. • Secured 4 workshop sponsors at \$500 each with 2 more to cover before year end.

Board Giving • Goal of 100% participation in Board giving by fiscal year end June 30, 2016. • Work with Board to continue making new corporate, individual and foundation connections.

Discussion: In the short term, this may not be a good development model. We are now into December and only 5% of our target number has been raised. This is not a new issue, and it's understood that the cycle, etc. are part of the strategy. But – is it possible to raise 25% of donor money by December with the current model? We need to remember that this report is how we are looking at end of October. December, in terms of the grant cycle, is heavy, and the 3M grant doesn't usually come until January or February. General Mills' grant hits in January as well, and Xcel arrives in June. The 30K showing in STEM is the Schott grant, which arrived in July (a "checkbook foundation") so it is a double grant from last year. The donor numbers (Honor Fund) are holding up next to last year's level.

Grant software, Foundation Search, was purchased in September. We have used time the time since to get to know how it works, and staff is meeting to bring their findings together on Thursday. We'll discover which foundations are good matches, then bring that information on the top 5-7 matches to the board, to see what, if any, connections might be there. This software finds smaller family/community/private foundations, where it's easier to reach out and submit LOI. Important to have boots on the ground people (school heads) supporting us in this. Our school head board members are more than willing to reach out with staff when talking to potential foundations.

#### **Grant Pipeline**

Hardenbergh Foundation: Jon Theobald sits on their board, so we feel that we are well positioned there. Katherine B. Andersen: another scheduled payment of \$20K is coming, the third year of 3 year grant. Paul Verret said to submit a letter and the foundation just met a week ago. Ask is \$100K, for both SCOPE and unrestricted.

Nicholson Family Foundation: Todd Nicholson (family connection is to Ordway) is a member of the President's Cabinet. Todd made \$5K commitment 2 years ago. Will approach in the spring. (Note – might be a good idea to get both Nicholson brothers together to see an event. Also note - Mike Dickson of RBC, currently on President's Cabinet, is close to them.)

#### **Membership Report**

We are introducing a newer, simpler membership-at-a-glance dashboard.

There are just 3 schools we have yet to receive membership dues for: Risen Christ, Blessed Trinity, St. Rose of Lima.

We are making inroads with - Hope Academy, St Michael's – Prior Lake, St Francis - Brainerd, Nativity of Mary – Bloomington (previously in membership).

#### **Advocacy Report**

Most advocacy activity was reported on earlier, in the President's Report.

The OAK coalition is still moving forward. The focus now is positioning a somewhat strange, compressed legislative session.

#### **Program Report**

We received the results from the School Leadership Conference survey. Overall feedback was very positive, even though we had to make a quick, last minute change when the Monday afternoon presenter (2 sessions) canceled at the last minute. The leadership panel, with Mark Deinhart and 3 others, was very well received.

The planning committee met in November to review and process all results, and will meet again, after February 1<sup>st</sup>, to discuss content and topics (suggestions were collected as part of the survey) and to begin planning next year's conference.

Next year, the LCMS will be holding their annual retreat immediately after the SLC ends. Their leader met with Tim to discuss and plan this and his comment was - why reinvent the wheel, when MISF covers all that they need. We will proactively reach out to CSCOE (Helen Dahlman) to discuss a similar partnership with the Catholic schools.

Cost – while it wasn't a factor for most, it was for a few smaller schools. About 1/3 of survey respondents reported using Title Funding (under professional development) to pay for the conference. We have also talked with the Schulze Foundation (LOI has already been approved), thought is to apply for regular \$25K grant, and make an extra \$10K ask to scholarship people to conference.

The President's Reception was a big hit, and affirmed the need for leaders (and especially newcomers) to connect in an unstructured environment.

## **Employee Manual**

Katie Birthler re-wrote our employee manual, which had last been updated in 2002 and was in need of changes in wording, definitions, and compliance. We are providing a copy of the entire manual online, and will distribute a summary of the substantive changes at this meeting as well as the full board meeting in two weeks. Doug Jaeger moved, seconded by Joel Landskroener, to bring the revised manual before the full board, after this approval by the Executive Committee. Motion passed.

## **Finance Report**

Balance Sheet: \$8,914 balance in operating reserve (includes \$6,914 from Rosa and \$2,000 designated by budget). Currently \$5,000 in the reserve fund – part of loan agreement with NAF • Note Payable – Paid \$35K on bridge loan, remaining to be paid over next 3 months.

Income Statement: Major variances year to date:

- Revenue - Science House Membership - Variance offset by same amount on expense side. Grants - variance due to the loss of Bremer and timing for Xcel.
- Expenses - Personnel Expenses - Under budget - no increase for President and elimination of Director of Membership and Networking position. Consultants - Under budget - delaying strategic plan. Computer software and services - Budgeted for Raiser's Edge in June, went to a quarterly billing. Interest Expense - Over budget - Addition of bridge loan interest. Audit - Under budget – timing, have not been invoiced for 990. Venue and Food - Over budget – attendance higher than planned. Subscription, Dues, Memberships - Science House Membership offset by same amount on income side

## Cash flow

Showing that we remain in the black throughout the entire year. When 3M, General Mills and Schulze funding are embedded over the next few months, we will look even better.

## **Critical Dialogue**

The Executive Committee met in executive session for 15 minutes.

## **Adjournment**

There being no other business brought forth, Joel Landskroener moved to adjourn, seconded by Greg Chamberlain. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 AM.



12/4/15

Greg Anklam/Secretary