



MISF Executive Committee Meeting
September 6, 2017
7:30 AM – 9:30 AM
Patterson Companies, Mendota Heights

AGENDA ITEMS

- Review minutes from 6/7/17 meeting
- President's report
 - *Updates
 - * Development report
 - * Membership report
 - * Advocacy report
 - * Program report
 - * STEM Education Conference
 - * School Leadership Conference
- Strategic Planning
- Audit
- Finance report: balance sheet, income statement, restricted funds tracking, cash flow, operating reserve funds
- Other business

MINUTES

Those present: Tim Benz, Jennifer Cassidy, Josh Killian, Randy Kroll, Joel Landskroener, Teri McCloughan

Staff present: Michele Skare

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 AM.

Motion was made by Joel Landskroener, seconded by Teri McCloughan, to approve the agenda as written.

Motion was made by Randy Kroll, seconded by Jennifer Cassidy, to approve the minutes from the 6/7/17 meeting as written.

President's report

Over the summer, most of our priorities revolved around member renewal and/or prospecting, strategic planning, and working on the STEM Education Conference. Now we are planning for the School Leadership Conference.

The explosion at member school Minnehaha Academy was tragic, but it was amazing and inspiring to see the outpouring of support to them through our organization. Member and nonmember schools alike contacted us to find out how Donna Harris and the school were doing, requested contact information so they could send a note or, in one instance, how to make a gift to help them. It solidified the relationship that we have with Minnehaha, and also the sense that people know that they are part of who we are, and that they are a Legacy member. There was a feeling of a shared

connection to this school, through membership in MISF. This event has also shown that independent schools are different than what people's concept of them may be. They are communities that are remarkable and resilient. No doubt that some of this comes through their faith traditions, but it also comes from having a strong leader like Donna. Minnehaha went through emergency preparedness training two years ago, and Donna, as then-chair of the School Leadership Conference, suggested that as a future conference topic. (Should definitely be a topic at SLC in 2018.) Clearly the faculty and staff worked hard on the building that they are currently using, to make it a welcoming space for the students. Tim delivered a plant to the school yesterday (the first day of school) on behalf of the MISF Community. Donna has been a model leader: strength, resilience, and grace under fire. After the dust settles, we may want to use these deeper concepts to get the word out about who we are/who our schools are. We should consider some kind of video tribute at the awards event in May.

We are tracking several leadership changes in our member schools, and want to make contact with new leaders.

Our office lease expires at end of September. We have renewed for 3 years, and received some tenant improvement dollars for painting, carpet, etc. Rent goes up a minimal amount each year (\$0.25/ft). Most importantly, we won't have the out-of-pocket expenses of moving right now, which would not be the best use of our resources and reserves.

Michelle Ponsolle is retiring at the end of June 2018. Her main duties including fundraising, managing the STEM program, and membership. She is 100% committed to making sure that there is a smooth transition. It's a good opportunity to figure out what this role can/should be. Each year, as part of the review process, we look at job descriptions, to make sure that the full scope of duties is captured. At this year's School Leadership Conference, we will have the opportunity to talk about this transition, and ask attendees if they know of anyone who would be a good fit. Position will be posted after January 1, and then go to sources/resources. Target onboard date is June 1, so there could be a month's transition time. This is not built into the budget, and this is a top end salary/benefit position; we do not want to use up all reserves on salaries through this transition. Question – does Beth Murphy have any interest in a more expanded role? She wants more of a STEM side role, not to be on the administrative side. She has many good contacts in the STEM community and is more into the strategic theory of what our STEM program could be. She's very good at talking STEM content in front of our funders. Currently this job runs about 20-30 hours per month. Anyone new in this position needs to be a "Woo" person – a culture builder. We will absolutely have an event/recognition celebrating Michelle's work.

Development report

Hard copies of this report were distributed, June 30 and July 31 included. The big "miss" of the year was not receiving the KBA (Katherine B. Andersen) grant. We will resubmit again for this fall. Other than that, our numbers came in mostly strong and on budget. Only other miss was in our sponsorship number, and those have been recalibrated in this year's budget; we will also be more thoughtful on how we can develop more year-long partnerships with sponsors. Honor Fund gap – 2 gifts that ended up at a variance of around \$10K – one donor gave a reduced gift at the beginning of the year and will make it up at the end of the year. 3M has another change in their program, and we have the 3rd program officer in 3 years. Jackie Barry is our main contact, however, and has been connected with us for a long time and is "all in". She says that she has no concerns about this change in leadership, and Veena Lakkundi will do outreach internally as well. Also changes at General Mills, where we now have our 4th program officer in 4 years. Michelle has reached out to the new person hoping to schedule a meeting. We have been invited to apply giving us a quick 3 week turnaround time. A concern is their move into the food area, but they still have a "bucket" of engaging local communities, where we can fit. One of our STEM Advisory Committee members works for General Mills, so that is an important connection. We missed our sponsorship number on the STEM Education Conference by \$750, but have gone over on our sponsorship number for the School Leadership Conference by \$1500, so in terms of sponsorship numbers we are still where we want to be in this fiscal year. We still have a few potential sponsors out there (Thrivent, with whom we have had a very encouraging conversation).

Board giving for last year was 18 out of 20 members. A new board appeal will go out this fall.

Membership Report

Hard copies of the membership report were distributed. We ended last year at 154 schools, and 33,600 students. Since July 1, we have had 9 new schools join, including the Rochester Catholic Schools. We are confident that St. Hubert's in

Chanhassen and Immaculate Conception in Columbia Heights will be coming onboard soon. 2 other schools joined at the very end of the last fiscal year, in May and June: Iqra Islamic School and St. Paul's Lutheran in Prior Lake. Although not all schools have "officially" renewed – we keep them on the list until they tell us that they are not renewing, or if we have not heard from them by the end of September. We are still in the renewal period, and there are about 28 schools that have yet to renew. Of these, there are approximately 12 that have to renew because they either received a STEM grant or the Schulze incentive; leaving approximately 12-16 schools that are "at risk."

We might want to consider doing some kind of "MISF 101" for new members.

Advocacy Report

OAK will meet in two weeks to assess next steps. 2018 is not a budget year, so not much will happen – the focus will be on 2019 and beyond.

Idea: In the next year, which is not a budget year for the legislature – what if families, others simply inundated legislators with videos/testimonials from our schools and kids refuting the arguments of the opponents/unions, and dispelling the myths that our schools *won't* take kids?

Program Update

STEM Conference was held on August 10 at New Life Academy. The staff at NLA was amazing in their level of support and assistance. Overall ratings of the conference remain very positive. There was a drop in attendance to 210 attendees. Some causes we have heard is schools send a large contingent one year and then skip the following. Also, with the new ESSA, Title fund allocations have been in flux, thus causing some uncertainty in what professional development funds schools have to use for the year. There was no indication from previous attendees of lack of interest or quality of program. Assessment of the conference will also take place at the fall meeting of the STEM Advisory Committee.

Planning for the School Leadership Conference is on pace. Thanks to our planning committee, there is a good diversity of topics for school leaders. Sponsorship is over goal. Thanks to Schulze Foundation support, first time attendees are provided a reduced rate – we have 13 new attendees coming this year. Due to several leadership changes at schools, we anticipate a slightly lower attendance. New school leaders have indicated it is hard to leave that early in their first month of school. However, several of them have heard very positive comments about the conference, and hope to attend in future years.

Strategic Plan

The committee, consisting of Jennifer Cassidy, Josh Killian, Greg Chamberlain, Veena Lakkundi, Teri McCloughan, Michelle Ponsolle and Tim Benz have met 5 times and the plan is near completion. We wanted to have the Executive Committee review the current draft so final adjustments can be made for the board of directors meeting next week.

The committee felt it was imperative to have the entire background and playbook as part of the presentation to understand how the priorities were determined. It also will provide context to our new mission statement, theory of change and the outcome maps. Tim and Brandi will coordinate to make sure all the prework is captured in a final presentation to the board. It was recommended to have Brandi attend the board meeting in case certain questions on process and theory behind agile planning come up. Tim will contact Brandi for her schedule.

Once approved, we plan to introduce and roll out the plan at our School Leadership Conference.

MISF staff meets next week (with Brandi) to begin to understand how the plan informs our everyday work and priorities for 2017-18 and beyond. There are 6 additional meetings on the MISF schedule with Brandi (part of the initial agreement) to assist in reporting and tracking our progress toward the priorities.

Finance Report

Randy reported that the audit is nearly complete. We are awaiting the final draft of the audit and scheduling the exit

meeting. In short, there have been no issues found and appears to be a clean audit. There was a new audit lead and team this year, but the process went very smoothly. Our three year contract with Redpath expires at the end of 2017. We have requested a new proposal for services.

The narrative included captures the fiscal year end, June 30. Balance sheet continues to get stronger. We added \$17K in cash to our operating cash balance and also added \$12K to our reserve funds. Our note payable is now below \$40,000 (paid more than \$20,000 during the fiscal year).

July finance report shows most activity around membership renewal. Some schools have asked to be invoiced, which shows up on the account receivables. A majority of the schools receive a "membership statement" and we realize the income when they pay their membership dues.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Joel Landskroener, with a second by Jennifer Cassidy. Approved unanimously and adjourned at 8:40.



9/6/2017

Therese McCloughan/Secretary