



Minutes

Executive Committee Meeting

May 10, 2023 | 7:30 am – 9:00 am

AGENDA

- Review and approve agenda
- Review and approve minutes from February 8, 2023 meeting
- President's report
- Advocacy update
- Strategic planning update
- Membership report
 - Member dues for 2023/24
 - Leadership changes
- Development report
- Finance report
 - Employee Retention Credit process
 - Investment option discussion
- Governance
 - Board bylaws
 - Board position description and expectations
 - Board member terms, vacancies and prospects
- Program report
 - Private & Independent Education Awards recap
 - STEM Education Conference – August 1 at Heritage Christian Academy
 - School Leadership Conference – September 25-27 at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge
- Additional business

MINUTES

Those present: Tim Benz, Michael Lamb, Kate Wollan, Teri McCloughan, Wyayn Rasmussen, Joel Landskroener, Brian Lynch

Staff present: Michele Skare

Meeting called to order at 7:32 AM by Board Chair, Michael Lamb.

Chair called for a motion to accept the agenda as written. Motion made by Teri McCloughan, seconded by Wyayn Rasmussen. Motion passed.

Chair called for a motion to accept the minutes from the 2/8/2023 meeting as written. So moved by Joel Landskroener, seconded by Kate Wollan. Motion passed.

President's Report

The awards event was held on April 30. It was an inspiring evening enjoyed by all who attended. We have already locked down next year's date (last Sunday in April) and once again at the Mendakota Country Club. This is a recognition event, not a fundraiser or a gala, and as such the award winners drive the attendance. Community of Saints brought a very



large group in to support their principal who won the Leadership Award.

A few years ago, we commissioned a survey to learn more about what drives this event and ways to improve upon it. The key take-aways are items that we have already incorporated into our current event structure: 1. Build networking opportunities into the event – we host a one-hour social hour/cash bar before the dinner and awards presentations; 2. Hold the event on the weekend instead of a weekday evening. Previously, the event was held on a Thursday night, now it is held from 4pm-7pm on Sunday.

Chas Anderson, MINNDEPENDENT lobbyist, submitted a legislative update which has been posted on the website. The Omnibus Education Finance bills have passed both House and Senate and are currently in Conference committees. Leaders have given conference committees until 5pm today, Wednesday, May 10, to reach agreements, otherwise the Governor's office and legislative leaders will complete negotiations. The leaders announced that they plan to adjourn by Thursday, May 18.

Legislation extending school counseling service to grades K-6 for nonpublic students was not included in the Omnibus Education Finance bill.

The Alternative Transportation Arrangement, which allows for nonpublic and school districts to enter alternative transportation agreements when mutually agreed to, was included in the Omnibus Education Finance bill.

Other legislation we are watching that could affect some nonpublic schools is a proposal to bar colleges that require a statement of faith (such as Bethel and Crown College) from participating in Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO). The wording had been stripped from the Senate version of the bill but is back again in the Omnibus bill.

Outsourced Accounting – Naomi, who had been the primary accountant we worked with at AIOA, has left the firm. Lisa, the controller, is still there and we have now been assigned to James, who shadowed Naomi prior to taking us on. We have also fully transitioned from Sage to Quickbooks Online.

STEM Education Conference registration is now open. The conference will be held on August 1 at Heritage Christian Academy.

Membership renewal begins on July 1.

Question: regarding the Universal Hot Lunch Program – is it true that if a school participates in hot lunch, they must participate in breakfast as well? Answer: yes, schools must participate in both. The reimbursement numbers will be available to schools in July.

Advocacy Update

Information was covered in President's report. Chas will attend the June Board meeting.

Strategic Plan Update

The Strategic Planning committee session was held on March 8 after the board meeting. It was a productive, wide-ranging discussion covering many topics: organizational priorities, Advocacy, STEM, Partnerships, Professional Development, and Board expectations and onboarding. This coming Tuesday the staff will meet with Brandi to discuss our priorities and first steps in the plan, and Tim will bring that information to the full board in June.

Board members' understanding of expectations, explanation of the hybrid board model we use, and the onboarding process needs improvement – we have not done a good job with this in the past. The committee was challenged to write a "headline" about what MINNDEPENDENT should be best known for 10 years from now. This was a very worthwhile exercise.



The real challenge we face is that it is difficult for our small staff to be all things for all people. Suggestion: It would be good for current board members to be involved in the onboarding process; identifying and acknowledging the hybrid nature of our board, providing past agendas and minutes for new members to review to get a better understanding of how the board operates and what is expected of them. Committees in existence today: Executive Committee, Governance Committee, STEM Advisory Committee (which is an ad hoc committee.) Discussion about the possibility of forming an Education Committee, comprised of board members who are school leaders.

Membership Report

We added a new school in February: Immanuel Lutheran in Mankato. They were able to purchase their nearly 18-month membership (rest of this year, all of 23-24) using Title Funds. This brings our total membership to 168.

Member dues: Tim suggests not changing our rate for the next fiscal year (\$5/student, \$275 for schools with 55 or fewer students). Next year, we should establish a committee to review the dues structure. Chair called for a motion to keep the dues structure the same for the 2023-24 school year. So moved by Teri McCloughan, seconded by Wyayn Rasmussen. Motion passed.

We are tracking leadership changes for both member and nonmember schools. So far this year, we know of about 25 changes.

Development Report

We recently received the Schott Foundation grant for \$100K, to be used for any expenses within STEM – grants, partnerships, conference, etc.

We requested \$45K from the Schulze Foundation and received \$40K. The fund's assets were down this year, but they were still committed to funding their grantees.

Our year-end appeal will begin soon.

We are awaiting news about the 3M and Xcel Energy grants. We usually hear from them in June.

Finance Report

We are in a strong cash position, with no real liabilities on the balance sheet. We continue to put \$3K into reserve each month, the total reserve account is now \$214K. Our income statement also paints a strong picture, and we should be in a positive end-of-year position.

ERC report – We worked with Leininger CPA on our application which was submitted on April 15. We project that we will receive approximately \$69K, and we should receive this within the next 6 months.

Discussion: Should we consider some short-term investment options for the \$214K in the reserve account? Brian Lynch, Treasurer, presented a review and analysis (screencaps and video of full report on website) discussing investment options, liquidity, risk tolerance, cash needs and managing our banking relationship. He also presented an analysis of our bank (Premier Banks) rate sheet, CDs and interest-bearing savings accounts.

After discussion, Teri McCloughan moved that the Executive Committee recommends that the full board approves the creation of an investment plan for the upcoming year that primarily uses CDs as a vehicle. Motion was seconded by Wyayn Rasmussen.



Governance

Tim and Teri presented the Amended and Restated Bylaws of MINNDEPENDENT, which will be effective June 14, 2023. The full document is available on the website.

Highlights include:

- Changing the organization name and mission statement.
- Changing "forum" members to "Associate" members.
- Changing all instances of "Board of Trustees" to "Board of Directors".
- Changing make-up of the board to at least six school or associate members, and at least ten persons who represent constituencies which support or are impacted by the work of the corporation.
- Elimination of the Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer positions.

Since a quorum was no longer present, the Chair will send an email to the entire Executive Committee moving that the Executive Committee makes a recommendation to the full board to approve the amended and restated bylaws.

Discussion: with the implementation of a new strategic plan, and the amount of time that has lapsed since the last Governance Committee meeting, the Chair will request that all board members serve an additional year in 2023-24, regardless of the expiration date of their current term. The Governance Committee will reconvene to discuss current terms and potential board candidates.

Program Report

The awards event was well-attended and well received.

The STEM Education Conference is set for August 1 at Heritage Christian Academy.

The School Leadership Conference is set for September 25-27 at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge.

Adjournment

There being no further business brought forth, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn So moved by Teri McCloughan and seconded by Wyayn Rasmussen. Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 AM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Wyayn Rasmussen'.

May 10, 2023