



Board of Directors Special Session
October 5, 2014, 4pm
at Mountain Song Community School
2904 W. Kiowa St., Colorado Springs, CO 80904

MINUTES - APPROVED

1. Call to Order – 4:10pm
 - a. Roll Call – Blair Cano, Laurie Ristig, Rita Issaghlian, Sandra Johnson-Benning, Scott Levy, Eva Manz-Jackson, Terry Croy Lewis, Evelyn Cortez-Ford, Prairie Adams, Ben Miller, Barak Ben-Amots, Tracy Gonzalez, Kalysta McClaughry, James McDonald, Mary Ann Corey, Jennie Furman, Cheryl Ray, Debie Bennett, Brandy Robinson, Jeremy Tackett, Julie Doray.
 - b. Motion to skip the one-word check-in and reading of the vision statement. Motion: Scott Levy, 2nd: Melanie Chadwick, motion passes.
 - c. Read the Mission Statement

2. Executive Session -

Prairie Adams chose to have her personnel issue open to the public. Prairie spoke about her concern that the school is not moving in a direction following the Waldorf philosophy. She does not feel that lines of communication are clear with her co-workers. She sees it affecting teachers in that there is a duplication of efforts, and it is difficult to know who to go to about decisions. Prairie's job title and duty change made an impression on teachers as well because Prairie was not consulted before the change. Prairie made it officially known to the board that she is resigning her position. When asked if there were changes that could be made internally that would satisfy her to a point that she would stay, she said there was not. Prairie offered to stay until Christmas break, and offered the board a handout consisting of a long list of contacts the Hiring Committee could use in finding her replacement. She also informed us that she is happy to assist in transition.

Motion to enter into closed session to discuss personnel actions [per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f)] [particular matter: personnel issue] and invite Evelyn Cortez-Ford, Prairie Adams, and Terry Croy Lewis of the Colorado League of Charter Schools as a consultant,. Motion: Sandra Johnson-Benning, 2nd : Scott Levy. Motion Passes.

The board exited closed session at 5:50pm.

3. Board Business

- a. Rita Issaghlian informed the board that she will resign from the board effective today. She gave a brief comment to let us know how grateful she is to all the founding board members, founding families, volunteers, and everyone who has taken us through the transition we have

gone through. She is excited to enjoy the community we have all. The board accepted her resignation, and offered it's heartfelt thanks for all the many hours Rita has poured in to Mountain Song Community School. She has been devoted, heart and soul, for the past four years, and has played a major role in shaping the school into what it has become today. The board and all present gave Rita a standing ovation. Thank you, Rita!!

- b. Board President's Resignation and Transition Process
 - i. Our Vice-President, Blair Cano, agreed to move up as Board President should the board choose to vote her into office at the next regular board meeting.
4. Employee Relations
- a. Employee Discipline Process - The employee discipline process as it stands is unclear in the Employee Handbook. It was proposed that a committee is formed consisting of board members, teachers, and the Director with the purpose of re-visiting the Employee Handbook and writing an Employee Relations policy that is fair and effective. Laurie Ristig volunteered to organize the committee and act as the board representative.
 - b. Employee Relations Training - Our HR Consultant, Peter Ristig, SPHR, has agreed to offer Employee Relations Training to all members of the Board, Staff, and anyone else interested in attending. Evelyn Cortez-Ford will reach out to him to set up a date for that training.
5. Public Comment - As this meeting was a special session, there were no Public Comments included in the agenda. The board recognized that there were several guests at tonight's meeting, and felt it important to hear from them as it seemed many came with concerns.

Motion to accept comments and questions from the public. Motion: Grian McFadden, 2nd: Scott Levy. Motion Passes.

Public Comments -

Brandy Robinson- Brandy wanted to ensure that when creating our Employee Relations Policy, that we consider our school vision and include Waldorf views regarding how employees interact with each other. The board responded positively, and invited Brady to consider joining the committee in the capacity of a teacher representative.

Ben Miller - Ben wanted to own his part in fostering conflict in that he had taken a complaint about Prairie Adams to Dr. Cortez-Ford.

Grian McFadden (board member) - Grian thanked Prairie for everything she has contributed to the school. She acknowledged that children grow up slowly, and schools grow up slowly, too. We are a community, and we are here for the kids. As long as we keep their welfare at the top of the list of priorities, we will succeed! We are people of good faith, intelligence and loving hearts. As long as we keep that at the forefront, we will get through.

Jeremy Tackett- Jeremy expressed gratitude to Prairie, Evelyn, and the Board. "I grow soil. I know what it means to grow slow. But this idea (Waldorf Charter Schools) is not new. There are successful models that we can look to for guidance. We have the right to thrive, not to survive. It is our mission to be as Waldorf as possible. It's our responsibility to give

the space to those those who need it.”

Mary Ann Corey - Mary Ann pointed out that it's important to bring people together, get that joy back, and avoid the drama. There are a lot of people who want to help, but don't want to be involved in drama.

Kalysta McCloughry- “I am asked to wait all the time for this process. I don't feel things moving. I've been waiting for a long time. I would like to offer that we are ready. We've not been asked to join committees, etc. I hope that the waiting can be over soon because we are going to start losing people and faith and all the beautiful things we've started here.” When asked by the board what she means specifically so we can address those issues, these are the things she mentioned. Policies (fire drill policy, lock-down procedure). The school's mission statement- is it changing? There is uncertainty about what parent communication is going out and when. She would like more specific recess rules.

Brandi Robinson- Evelyn has begun to develop our story, and I think that will be a good little seed for the parents in the community.

Julie Doray- Julie that this summer she emailed a letter, which she admitted may have sounded harsh, to Jack about concerns parents had about a variety of things. She is concerned it fostered a level of separation. She has been waiting for resolution in the matter that she feels has not come. There is a strong growing feeling of separation and isolation going on. There are currently parents who are incredibly involved, who have chosen to step back. Many parents are wondering what Jack's job description is. This is not about Jack personally, this is about what his job description is. She is also concerned about the lack of money being raised.

James McDonald - I'm not a political person. That's not how I operate here. I understand I should be. I feel like I'm in my own bubble. It's good because the students don't feel the impact of the drama. I also recognize that that's not the way to make a community. I feel like a big part of education is to First Do No Harm. Maybe I don't know what Jack does either, but I think we have to keep that in our minds. We have to make sure we are not doing any harm.

Parent - Parents also want to get involved. Families who are involved are less likely to talk negatively.

6. Adjournment

- a. There were board members who would not be able to make the October 16th meeting. There are also Parent/Teacher conferences on that night. The board chose to move the next regular session board meeting to October 23rd, 2014.
- b. Remaining Board meetings – 10/23/2014; 11/20/2014; 1/15/2014; 2/19/2014; 3/19/2014; 4/16/2014; 5/21/2014; 6/18/2014
- c. Motion to adjourn - Laurie Ristig, 2nd: Eva Manz-Jackson, Motion Passes.