

Hawthorn Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, December 12, 2016       5:30 p.m.

1901 N. Kingshighway Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63113

Board Minutes

**Board members present:** Kathryn Love (Chair)

Jess Portis, Edes Gilbert, Nikki Doughty

John Ross, Jason Hall

**Staff:** Meg Bliss,Mary Stillman, Adrienne Watkins, Robyn Wiens,

**Washington University**: Vicki May, Lori Sommer

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by Kathryn Love

Edes Gilbert moved to approve the consent agenda, Jason Hall seconded and the Board unanimously approved.

Mary Stillman presented the Executive Director’s report.

We have filled a science and a math teaching position as well as the Assistant Dean and Program Achievement Specialist positions. Meg Bliss, the Program Achievement Specialist, described her role in analyzing student data and researching resources to support student academic achievement. Adrienne Watkins described her role as Assistant Dean focusing on certain grades and student cohorts.

The Board discussed student recruitment efforts targeted at incoming 9th graders. Board members discussed a slow growth approach – expanding the class by no more than the number of returning students; in other words, doubling the size of the class would be the outside recommendation. (Current 8th grade students’ intent to return forms are due at the end of January.) Board members agreed that marketing Hawthorn by clearly articulating the school’s mission and academic program will result in the most successful blending of returning students with incoming students. Board members emphasized that in the school’s early years, expending resources on a smaller number of students, even though it will result in a smaller graduating class, is the approach that will lead to student success and, therefore, organizational success. Under the terms of the charter, Hawthorn only admits students in grades 6, 7 and 9. The Board will need to determine whether students who leave the school would be able to return in grades in which we do not accept new students.

The Board discussed the range of options offered to students in academics and extracurricular activities in the early years of the high school program, emphasizing the need for excellence in the areas we do offer.

The Board considered a revised enrollment plan with students from Riverview Gardens now that the school district has received accreditation. Riverview Gardens has proposed that Hawthorn continue to enroll the students from that district that we have this school year and that the tuition be revised from the original ($10,500) set by Hawthorn’s Board to $7,000 annual rate which would be prorated for the school year that remains after January 1, 2017. John Ross moved to accept this proposal, Edes Gilbert seconded and the Board unanimously approved.

Dr. Robyn Wiens provided the Principal’s Report.

We have begun work with a Design Team spearheaded by a consultant, Linda Henke, along with Washington University’s Institute for School Partnership to provide direction and texture on our developing high school program. The Design Team, which includes Hawthorn administrators, teachers, a Board member, and parents, is using an “Appreciative Inquiry” approach. One of the first questions that team will look at is the design of Hawthorn’s leadership team as we move into high school.

Dr. Wiens described several of the Project Based Learning units that are culminating at the end of the semester, including a debate unit, dance concert, genetics of twins, campaign ads, student-written fairy tales, and breast cancer awareness.

We will administer the NWEA standardized tests at the end of January and rescreen reading levels for students who were more than three grade levels behind in the fall.

Board members provided committee reports.

Jess Portis gave the Budget and Finance committee report. She reviewed November financials, highlighting a modest YTD surplus, primarily due to donations coming in ahead of schedule and a higher than budgeted federal revenue. On the expense side, support services are under budget, and plant operations and transportation are over budget.

Ms. Portis reviewed the audit report, noting that the audit was qualified due to the auditor’s recommendation that the Hawthorn Leadership School Foundation’s financials be consolidated with the School. The Board discussed that it will be important to explain the source of the qualification. Lori Sommer reported that she had discussed the qualification with DESE and that the Department had not been concerned. Board members discussed looking into other non-profit organizations that have supporting organizations and how they handle this issue.

Edes Gilbert moved for approval of the audit report. Kathryn Love seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

In Tim Rowbottom’s absence, Mary Stillman gave the Building and Grounds Committee report. She reviewed the status of the plans to renovate the basement and third floor to prepare for high school. The contractor has bid the project based on schematic designs, but we have gone back to ask for the bid to be broken out differently. Hawthorn Leadership School Foundation is the party to this contract.

Mrs. Stillman reported on fundraising year to date. The school still has some YOP and NAP tax credits remaining. The Foundation is raising operating funds and capital funds.

Nikki Doughy reported for the Governance and Nominating Committee that the Board is looking to add two new members and has a quality slate of candidates. Edes Gilbert noted that we might want to add an Advisory Board at some point.

The Board has a robust discussion about the scope of extracurricular activities (including athletics and tutoring) for the high school.

The meeting was adjourned by Ms. Love at 7:14 p.m.



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Consent Agenda

(Applicable documentation distributed to the Board)

1. Approval of the Minutes of the prior meeting of the Board of Directors
2. Check Ledger for November
3. Hiring Approvals:

Math – DeJong

Science – Rahming

Administrative Support – TBD

In-Building Substitute -- TBD

2016-17 Board Meetings, all from 5:30 p.m.– 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise notified:

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| December 12, 2016 | March 13, 2017 |
| January 9, 2017 | April 10, 2017 |
| February 13, 2017 | May 8, 2017 |