

Coastal Montessori Charter School

Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, January 11th, 2016 ~ 6:00 PM

BOARD MEMBER ROLL CALL

The following members of the Board were present:

Kristin Bohan, Jason Hendrix, Rob Horvath, Gene Mannella, Stella Mercado, Cathy Scott, Scott Steffen, and Rachel Tomovski

There were no Board members absent.

OTHER ATTENDEES

Nathalie Hunt, CMCS Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Mr. Rob Horvath, called the meeting to order at 6:09PM.

COMPLIANCE WITH FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA)

Chair, Mr. Horvath read aloud the FOIA statement.

READING OF THE MISSION STATEMENT

Board Secretary, Ms. Rachel Tomovski, read aloud the CMCS mission statement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND THE DECEMBER MINUTES

Chair Horvath asked for a motion to approve both the January agenda and the December minutes, as previously circulated. Mr. Gene Mannella made a motion. Dr. Cathy Scott seconded it. The Board VOTED unanimously and the agenda and the minutes were approved.

DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Nathalie Hunt updated the Board in a document previously circulated, and highlighted some of its content during the meeting, as follows:

Board members should have received a copy of Dr. Hunt's completed Annual Report, which was emailed to GCSD on December 31st. This report does include a three page narrative which compares CMCS scores to other schools. Dr. Hunt reported that this Annual Report can be shared with the community. She plans to replicate the way that East Cooper Montessori Charter School incorporates the report into their website.

Current enrollment is at 193 students, with 235 students being the ideal target for next year. Dr. Kristin Bohan inquired about marketing to Horry County, particularly for the 7th

grade spots. Dr. Scott suggested asking if PALS (a charter school in Myrtle Beach) would be willing to share their wait list. Dr. Hunt agreed to look into recruitment opportunities in Horry County.

During the winter break, a CMCS staff member unexpectedly opted for early retirement, resulting in a vacancy for a Lower Elementary Teaching Assistant. Dr. Hunt is confident she will be able to fill this position, as the pool of candidates is strong.

Similarly, she received many glowing resumes, both male and female, for the Middle School Teaching positions.

Dr. Hunt told the Board that she plans to post a Guidance Counselor position for next year, as soon as the Budget is drafted and she knows the salary. Ideally this hire would also serve as Assistant Director.

In reviewing the ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), Dr. Hunt feels that it will put more control in the hands of the district. Given this, she advised the Board that careful thought and consideration be put into the revision of the Memorandum of Understanding between CMCS and GCSD this spring. It will be important to be prepared with what the non-negotiables are and their reasoning.

Dr. Hunt shared that the ESSA appears to designate more money for Early Learning. She suggested that in light of this, CMCS may be able to resubmit their pilot program pitch. Dr. Bohan added that if so, as many people as possible need to be recruited to rally and advocate for the program. GCSD needs to see the extent of the demand in the county for a new Early Learning option, and the desire the community has for it to be a Montessori program.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Stella Mercado inquired about comparing CMCS test scores with other Montessori schools, instead of solely comparing to District schools, which do not use Montessori teaching methods. Dr. Bohan replied that Brooke, who is coordinating research for the Furman study, would have the resources to be able to assist CMCS with this data. She went on to caution about comparisons to schools having different demographics.

Dr. Bohan raised the issue of branding for CMCS. She implored Dr. Hunt and the Board to take the opportunity to tell the public that as a Charter School, CMCS is already doing those things which the State is now talking about trying to accomplish. High quality teaching cannot be defined by legislature; rather parents know high quality when they see it. CMCS should continue to brand themselves in terms of “this is how we’re different; this is how Montessori does, and has been doing for 100 years, what everyone else is now talking about doing; this is what CMCS is doing.” The Board of Directors has the responsibility of setting the vision and promoting the vision. Dr. Scott suggested CMCS be continually creating and posting short You Tube videos to help achieve this goal.

FACILITY UPDATE

Chair Horvath reported that the building project is currently two weeks ahead of

schedule. They were in the framing stage when he went by this past Thursday. They had all the steel up in the media center and the front entrance, and it may all be framed by now.

Chair Horvath advised the Board of a complication the architects ran into with the Waccamaw Neck Overlay. As a result of a misunderstanding, the roof will have to be redesigned. The trusses that had already been ordered need to be changed. The Board all agreed that CMCS should not be responsible for the extra costs this mistake will incur. Chair Horvath explained that James could not speak on behalf of SGA, but suggested he discuss it with Steve Goggans.

Instead of a Ground Breaking Ceremony, as the building is significantly past that stage, the architects recommended a “Topping Out.” Dr. Bohan will plan it for three or four weeks from now. She welcomes help from any other members.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Treasurer, Mr. Jason Hendrix and Mr. Gene Mannella reviewed the budget. All appeared to be in order and there was no discussion.

DIRECTOR EVALUATION

Chair Horvath asked Dr. Scott to take the lead on developing and implementing a Director Evaluation, and she accepted. Dr. Hunt will send her the evaluation that Dr. Pamela Martin had created during her term on the Board.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business to be transacted, Mr. Scott Steffen made the motion to adjourn. Ms. Mercado seconded the motion. The Board VOTED unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachel Tomovski
CMCS Board Secretary