

Coastal Montessori Charter School

Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, March 19th, 2018 ~ 6:00 PM

BOARD MEMBER ROLL CALL

The following members of the Board were present:

Ryan Fabbri, Patricia Gadek, Dr. Cathy Scott, Scott Steffen, Lesley Steedly, and Rachel Tomovski

There were no Board members absent.

Also in attendance:

Dr. Nathalie Hunt, CMCS Director

Emily Topper, Coastal Observer

Amy Williams, CMCS Lower Elementary Lead Teacher

Joe Pittman, CMCS Music Teacher

Lynn Thurlow, CMCS Assistant Director

Robert Horvath, Former Board Chair

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Dr. Scott called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

COMPLIANCE WITH FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) and THE READING OF THE MISSION STATEMENT

Chair, Dr. Scott read aloud the FOIA statement and Secretary, Rachel Tomovski read aloud the CMCS mission statement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments at this time.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY MINUTES AND THE MARCH AGENDA

Mr. Ryan Fabbri made a motion to accept both February's Minutes, and the March Agenda (previously circulated.) Ms. Lesley Steedly seconded the motion. The Board VOTED unanimously to approve both the Minutes and the Agenda, and the motion passed.

DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Hunt responded to the Board's inquiry regarding the criteria she considers when determining a teacher's salary:

- South Carolina certification
- Montessori certification
- Advanced degrees
- Add-Ons
- Years of experience

- Years of Montessori experience
- Shortage in the particular teaching area

She plans to provide more details and discuss the money that follows this in her Special Report following Open Session. Dr. Hunt told the Board that one of the challenges for salary planning is that CMCS is subject to variable revenue due to the fact that the money follows the child (weighted calculations for students admitted by a lottery system, which are based on the number of special education services required,) and as such, it can vary by as much as \$100K per year. The accountants recommended that salaries be no more than 65% of a Charter School's budget, and that is currently where CMCS is, whereas in the rest of GCS D, it is 90%.

Dr. Hunt told the Board that for all intents and purposes, next year can be considered "Year One" due to the fact that it is the first year CMCS will be operating at full revenue and full operating costs, and as such, this is a good time to look at the matrix. She raised the question, "how do we allocate the 65% when we don't know the variability?"

Chair, Dr. Scott suggested that perhaps it could be looked at as a "bare bones operation" and any extra monies that come in as a result of special services should be treated as a bonus.

Former Chair, Mr. Rob Horvath, added that if District pay is most important to teachers, it could be a possibility, but it would mean the District taking over the school, and that would most certainly come with other challenges for the teachers, and CMCS would need to seriously consider how it would change. He asked if there is a decrease this year in the budget for things like furniture and building costs, etc. Vice Chair, Mr. Scott Steffen responded that it is fair to say where there have been decreases; there have been equal increases elsewhere.

Dr. Hunt told the Board that CMCS is out of space, and therefore Special Needs students who are entitled legally to a special environment present a challenge, and this is certainly a conversation to have with the District.

With regard to Food Services, Dr. Hunt reported increased communication with better efficiency and accuracy, thus serving to better protect students with allergies.

Dr. Hunt shared with the Board that she is working to tweak CMCS' advertising in order that potential applicants have a clearer understanding of the lottery process.

Finally, Dr. Hunt expressed the need for an HR Conflict Policy and Procedure Process that is specific and flushed out. She has some recommendations from an HR consultant on how to handle internal conflict that she wishes to incorporate.

BUDGET REPORT

Dr. Hunt reviewed the Budget (previously circulated) with the Board. There did not appear to be any significant changes in February. Dr. Hunt reported that the expected money for students receiving academic assistance was thought to be \$13,5K but the accountants determined that due to an increasing population of students and their weighted calculations, it should actually be \$95K. They are currently investigating the discrepancy with the District. Dr. Hunt reported that federal money is starting to trickle into the Districts.

The Board agreed that CMCS is pretty much on target with expenses. Dr. Hunt reported that she has not had to pay a lot of Overtime, other than for staff meetings. She also shared that East Cooper Montessori Charter School chooses not to employ substitute

teachers, and instead work out the coverage among the other staff. She said the number of subs being utilized at CMCS continues to increase as staff is using their banked PTO days, and that the way the Specials Schedule works, they may be able to re-evaluate the need for full day subs.

Dr. Hunt reported that CMCS had to increase Psychological Services from \$12K to \$15K for the rest of the year, as there has been an increase in service hours. She also reported the hiring of a Media Specialist.

There is money left in the Professional Development budget as a result of school closings due to weather decreasing the number of PD days for staff.

With regard to transportation, Dr. Hunt shared her concern about the liability involved in using parent drivers. CMCS tries to arrange for the use of District buses whenever possible, however it is difficult because of the limited hours they are available. Dr. Hunt told the Board that the teachers voted to seek out a fourteen passenger bus, and plan to use money raised with an online art auction for this purchase.

Another consideration for the budget, Dr. Hunt pointed out, is the annual inspections that were not anticipated, such as sprinklers, fire extinguishers, etc. Money needs to be allocated for this, as well as HVAC maintenance.

As discussed at February's meeting, Treasurer, Mr. Ryan Fabbri explained the benefits of using the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) to earn interest on the school's reserve funds. The money can all be in one place, and it eliminates the need for always ensuring the amounts in the bank accounts meet the FDIC requirement. The interest rate fluctuates daily and interest is compounded monthly. There is zero risk. Only twenty-four hours' notice is required to withdraw funds. There can be different funds set up within the one account. The USDA Reserve Fund can be one of these. Mr. Horvath will call Nikki Toomes to confirm that this designated fund can be in such an account. CMCS would keep their Operating Account, and everything else would go in the LGIP. The Board of Directors for ECMCS recently voted to put their money in this kind of account. The Board agreed to vote on this at the next meeting after receiving Ms. Toome's response.

BOARD BUSINESS

Chair, Dr. Scott, reported that the Board has received resignations from the following members, effective immediately:

Mr. Jason Hendrix

Mr. Gene Mannella

Ms. Stella Mercado

She asked that the Board consider another finance person to assist Treasurer, Ryan Fabbri.

Dr. Hunt suggested a Board Retreat where members coming off the board share the story of CMCS and bring new members up to speed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Steedly moved that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss a contract issue.

Mr. Steffen seconded the motion and the Board VOTED unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 7:00 PM. All guests were excused. Dr. Hunt was invited to remain.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION and MEETING ADJOURNED

Mr. Fabbri moved that the Board return to Open Session, and there being no further business to be transacted, adjourn. Ms. Gadek seconded the motion. The Board VOTED unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachel Tomovski
CMCS Board Secretary