

**Board Meeting Minutes**

Desert Sky Montessori

62968 O.B. Riley Rd

Bend, OR 97703

March 15, 2023

Jessica Loukonen called the meeting to order at 6:17pm.

**Present:** Jessica Loukonen, Cara Nowak, John Eskew, Daisy Sexton, Dave Trexler, Jenna Wazny

**Also Present:** Heather Phillips, Deli Thordarson, Jen Baires, Heather Marshall, Al Colombo (until 6:26pm), Darlene Weaver

**BUSINESS**

1. Financial/Treasurer Report
   1. Year over year
      1. Albert Colombo: over budget on income, offset a bit by payroll; cash balance is higher than at this time last year
      2. John Eskew: payment went out in June for July’s rent; district revenue is based on the total number of students DSM estimated before the school year—there are less students enrolled than what was budgeted, which will affect the numbers later; still financially in good shape
   2. Budget vs actual
      1. Albert Colombo: district revenue is up; total expenses are less than budgeted due to property services and PERS [Public Employees Retirement System]
   3. John Eskew: will be starting the audit in October—some things to clean up from last year
      1. Albert Colombo: pleased with how things have transitioned so far; most of fiscal year 2023 is ready to go—does not see any pending issues for the audit or the kick-off meeting next month
   4. John Eskew: thinks the system to track financials will work well, with Deli Thordarson taking some of this on, Albert Colombo overseeing, and himself doing his part

2023.09.20.01 Daisy Sexton moves to approve the minutes for June and August. Dave Trexler seconds. The minutes for June and August are approved by unanimous vote.

1. Heather Marshall’s board application reviewed

2023.09.20.02 Jessica Loukonen moves to vote Heather Marshall onto the Board of Directors. Cara Nowak seconds. Heather Marshall is voted onto the Board of Directors by unanimous vote.

1. Heather Phillips: Head of School Report
   1. The school year is off to a great start—the level of concentration in the classrooms is amazing
   2. New team members have settled in nicely: Louise Wilson is working 2 days per week; Jay Carlton is working 4 days per week; a team of specialists is stepping in—especially helpful with the incoming kindergarteners; additional staffer added to the aftercare team
   3. Enrollment
      1. Lots of the upper el students transitioned out of DSM—would like to see the numbers for the Steelhead and Owl classes at 26 each, but it is difficult to fill those grades
      2. Lower el spots are easier to fill—have some new students starting on Monday, and have some additional school tours for potential new students scheduled
      3. Comfortable leaving enrollment at 175
      4. Spoke with Bruce Abernathy at the district: based on the above numbers, DSM will need additional classroom space next year
         1. At least one additional classroom will be needed, as there will be 77 upper el students (55 currently)
         2. Could bump out into the “den,” but that space is being used for special ed services
         3. Would like to be able to offer Susan Andre a spot with the school, but need to secure funding and a possible modular first
   4. Harvest Festival is coming up
2. Deli Thordarson: Business Director Report
   1. 3 significant changes to the planned budget
      1. ADM [Average Daily Membership]
         1. Budgeted for 182 students; currently have 170 students enrolled
         2. Rate per student did increase since budget was drafted
         3. Looking at a $12,000 shortfall for the year if the numbers stayed the same—would like to add at least 4 students to cover this deficit
      2. Before and aftercare
         1. Budgeted for 60 students in aftercare—with staffing, number enrolled, and scholarships for some students, there is a $3,300 per month shortfall
         2. Will hold a “Kids’ Night Out” once per month, staffed with aftercare employees—expecting $800 per occurrence after paying for food and staff
         3. Beginning to offer the choice of sporadic before and aftercare for those who need it—hoping for an extra $200 per month
         4. Hired a new aftercare staffer allowing for 15 additional spots to open up
      3. Resource fees
         1. Budgeted for this, but have since found out we can no longer request these—are legally able to ask for a donation toward this cost, with no one pressed to make payment
         2. $30,000 budgeted, have collected about $8,600 so far
         3. FODS [Friends of Desert Sky] will be reminding the community of this while fundraising
      4. Awarded 2 supportive grants for educational purposes from ODE [Oregon Department of Education]
   2. Facilities
      1. Property manager will be handling roofing improvements
      2. Property manager pointed out that the Owl building is showing lots of wear, specifically the siding on the front and the wood trim around the doors and windows—would like DSM to hire a contractor to make these repairs instead of utilizing volunteer help
         1. John Eskew: thinks he can request this of us, but not require it
         2. Deli Thordarson: notes DSM has some parents who have contractor’s licenses
   3. The new janitorial company has not been doing the work outlined in their contract: spoke to them multiple times before putting in writing a 60-day termination notice with a caveat for improvement
      1. Heather Phillips: currently exploring other options
      2. Jenna Wazny: has had a good experience with Final Touch
   4. Renewed contract for snow removal—costly, but budgeted for
   5. Jared Michaels paid for the new security cameras and their installation—DSM will reimburse these costs to him
   6. FODS: crucial roles have been filled; this group is taking on a lot of the tasks that have been challenging for admin to handle on their own
3. Jen Baires, FODS President: FODS Update
   1. Currently organizing parent volunteer hours
   2. The FODS board has 14 positions, including President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer—these 4 will be working closely with Heather Phillips and Deli Thordarson
   3. Committees within FODS
      1. Fundraising Committee: focused on events and drives; will be partnering with admin
      2. Grant Committee: Darlene Weaver will head this committee and continue to work on securing grants for DSM; has 5 new members
      3. Campus Beautification Committee: contractors and handypersons; headed by a parent with a contractor’s license
      4. Volunteering Committee: arranging and tracking volunteers as needed; helping to fully launch a room-parent program in each classroom
      5. Social and Enrichment Committee: in charge of non-fundraising community events (ie park dates, skate nights, etc)
      6. Special Projects Committee: helping with the Middle School Task Force and build outs
      7. Care Committee: helping to build relationships with families and staff
      8. Parent Buddy Program: pairing parents who are new to DSM with seasoned parents
      9. Library Committee: liaison with Deschutes Public Library; hoping to create a free library on campus
      10. Communications Committee: in charge of fliers for events, thank-yous to donors, newsletters, etc
      11. All but 2 of these committees have chair heads; have received 5 new applications today
      12. Currently focusing on bringing in the new volunteers and getting them set up to launch their committees; have seasoned volunteers leading the upcoming fundraisers
4. Jessica Loukonen: Board President Update
   1. Kevin McKennon resigned from the board
   2. Daisy Sexton is up for reelection next month; John Eskew is up for reelection in November
   3. The community coffee chat went well this month
   4. Pushing the board retreat to winter when there is more information about expansion to share
5. Expansion
   1. Jessica Loukonen: need to reform a committee around this, with expansion for the current student body being the priority
   2. Daisy Sexton: thinks the order of operations would start with permitting and seeing what can be done with the current space
      1. Deli Thordarson: spoke to the landlord about the possibility of modulars and it was well-received; landlord had some recommendations of where to put them based on utility hook-ups; thinks the space would accommodate at least one double-classroom modular
   3. Jenna Wazny: wonders where DSM stands concerning a middle school
      1. Heather Phillips: a grant Darlene Weaver is currently working on would be used to hire Susan Andre as an employee
   4. Dave Trexler: wonders if 1 expansion committee with 2 subcommittees are needed—thinks doing the bare minimum for what DSM’s needs are currently would be a mistake
      1. Deli Thordarson: FODS’s Special Projects Committee is slated to work on general expansion as well as middle school specific expansion
         1. Jen Baires: has received applications for this committee, but would like someone from the board to work in tandem with them
      2. Heather Marshall: wonders about the current head count for a middle school program
         1. Heather Phillips: the numbers have changed since last year because some students have moved on
      3. John Eskew: thinks it would be helpful if there was someone on the FODS committee who would help with permitting, city planning, parking, sewer hook-ups, etc, and an estimated cost and timeline associated with these things
      4. Deli Thordarson: thinks DSM will continue to lose students if no middle school program is offered, considering the exodus of upper el students this past year; thinks finances and admin will be a struggle if DSM does not have a middle school program; believes choice-option schools are needed in Bend
         1. John Eskew: does not think DSM will be able to offer this at our current location without a lot of financial help
         2. Dave Trexler: agrees—even a double-classroom modular would only see DSM through 1 year; believes there should also be a 3-year plan in place
      5. Dave Trexler volunteers to chair FODS’s Special Projects Committee
         1. Jen Baires: thinks this is wonderful; will have Dave Trexler figure out a co-chair from the FODS applicants
6. Attendance Policy reviewed

2023.09.20.04 Cara Nowak moves to adopt the Attendance Policy with the noted corrections. John Eskew seconds. The Attendance Policy is approved with the noted corrections by unanimous vote.

1. Visitor Policy reviewed
   1. Heather Phillips: plans to take the board’s questions to the district for answers; will speak to these at October’s board meeting
   2. Deli Thordarson: all board members and FODS members will need updated background checks done annually; will email the information to the members
      1. Heather Phillips: Safe School Training and Mandatory Reporting Training for board members will be sent out

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.