

## Ledyard Charter School Board of Directors

### Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 13, 2023 | 5:00 P.M. | Ledyard Charter School

*This meeting was conducted via Zoom. The authority to conduct a public meeting in this manner was granted by Governor Sununu's 12th Executive Order issued on March 23, 2020.*

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#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 P.M.

Present: Lucretia Witte, Tom Puleo, Wendy Kozak, Ben Beisswenger, Bethany Solomon, Amie Bettle, and Tonya McMurray

Absent: Ivy Schweitzer

A quorum was present.

#### 2. Public Input

There was no public input.

#### 3. Consent Agenda

Approve [minutes from 8/9/23](#)

*A motion was made by Ben Beisswenger to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Tom Puleo and approved unanimously.*

#### 4. Discussion of Membership

- Lucretia discussed the potential board membership of Alison Heller, a former teacher at LCS. She believes Alison would be an asset to the board and that she requested that current members discuss their thoughts. She also believes that ideally new board members be approved for membership with terms running annually from July to June with renewal as an option if desired in July.
- Ben stated that he agrees Alison would be an asset and a set term would be wise. He also believes that all board members should be allowed on the board and allowed renewal with the requirement that they are actively engaged with the activities of the board.
- Tom agrees with Ben and furthered the argument that board members should be required to donate in some form, whether it is monetary, a donation of time, materials, etc.
- Wendy offered her approval of Alison as a board member and went on to say that over her last 12 years in the employ of LCS she believes the current board is the best she has engaged with. She does not believe that the time of year matters in regard to only allowing new members to join. We should not turn away good candidates.

*Takeaway: Lucretia expressed that expectations for board members would be provided to new members. These will be drawn up and revisited in February or March for voting in April. She plans to invite Alison to join the October board meeting.*

#### 5. Executive Director's Report

Wendy Kozak provided the Executive Director's Report. Some of the highlights she brought up are included below:

## Goals for LCS:

1. LCS Expansion
  - a. LCS currently has 48 students which is higher than initially expected. There are two students currently on the waitlist.
  - b. The plan is to increase the number of LCS students gradually while also increasing the number of teachers on staff to accommodate them.
  - c. The current problem is space. Since they were hoping to have the upstairs space completed by September they increased the number of students. However, only one day prior to school starting they were informed the space could not be used due to problems discussed later in the meeting. Therefore, there is not enough space available. This may be addressed with awareness and fundraising.
2. Engaging the Student Body (internal)
  - a. Focus on special education as 13 students currently have an IEP.
  - b. Events planning class for fundraising. Their recent fundraiser generated \$480 in two hours confirming that student involvement in the process is key.
  - c. 5 field trips scheduled, with 1 every two weeks is the goal to keep experience as a foundational aspect of academics at LCS.
  - d. Full school assemblies are also planned. One was just completed.
3. Engaging the Community (external)
  - a. The original LCS founder contacted Wendy, plans to visit and tour the school, and make a donation.
  - b. Social media posting (FB)
  - c. Donation request letters are being sent out and 2 responses have been received.

## Other topics Wendy discussed regarding issues and progress at LCS:

- Wendy went on to thank the board members for their participation and engagement with her over the last month. She is grateful to all of those who provided her with a list of potential donors.
- Amie is working on putting a donor wall up on the website.
- The federal grant audit is complete and she is thankful to the bookkeeper for helping in that process.
- The remaining grant funds are currently going toward paying wages.
- As the Covid relief funds are ending this year funding will be of extra importance.
- The commercial kitchen was funded through the DOE and she plans to request funding from the USDA to cover free and reduced lunches for students. The grant writing is currently handling this.
- Wendy met with Tonya and she noted that she is especially grateful to Tom Puleo for his involvement in the building renovation and construction project.
- Next month she is going to the Concord leadership conference.
- Lucretia stated she is very pleased with Wendy's progress.

## **6. Building Report**

Tom Puleo provided the building report.

#### Legal Issues regarding upstairs space:

- A representative with the city of Lebanon contacted Tom indicating that the upstairs space cannot be used until LCS receives a Certificate of Use. The current certificate issued by Banwell Architects when the space was going to be rented for use as a coffee shop identifies that space for a different purpose.
- Tom is in the process of obtaining a new certificate from Banwell.
- The city also requires an elevator if LCS wishes to use both the upstairs and downstairs space for the school. They also need to create a hallway to close off the storage area for legal reasons.

#### Construction progress:

- Walls are all primed and ready to be painted.
- The electrical outlets are installed
- Light fixtures were ordered and will be installed.

Lucretia asked how the board could help but Tom indicated there is not much that could be done at this time, he is primarily waiting for the Certificate of Use from Banwell. The elevator problem must be addressed at a later date and a fundraiser project could generate the funds required when the estimates are available.

## 7. Financial Report

Ben Beisswenger provided the finance report

#### Current status of accounts as of September 13, 2023:

Checking: \$33,832.28

Money Market: \$1,021.28

Emergency Fund: \$7,200.00

Credits: \$127,696.52

Debits: \$128,052.34

#### Notable Credits:

State of NH (tuition): 29,682

Transfer from loan to demand; \$20,000

AP Payment State of NH (tuition): \$11,913.08

#### Notes

\$75,000 was pulled from the loan

\$52,437 was received in tuition payments

*Takeaway: We continue to use our line of credit, and have received a good amount of the tuition from the state that we expected.*

Lucretia would like to have Ben prepare a model depicting when large credits and debits are expected for the purpose of fundraising and planning of large capital expenses (e.g. elevator) hopefully by the next board meeting. Tom estimates \$250k for the elevator. A lift may possibly be installed instead at a much lower cost of about \$50k.

#### Sending Towns

Lucretia met with Wendy regarding tuition from sending towns.

**Goal #1:** Obtain tuition from schools not currently providing tuition

**Goal #2:** Request that sending towns increase the tuition they provide (e.g. Lebanon, Mascoma, Hartford, etc., excluding Vermont)

- Wendy has sent invoices to all schools that are currently not paying. The total should be about \$5,000 if invoices are paid. Rivendell has already sent a quarterly payment for one student. She also says we may need to take a different strategy for smaller schools in smaller districts.
- Lucretia says that sending towns are willing to pay \$9,000 per student which is an increase from the previous year. The cost for each student is \$13k after state contributions. Next year Covid grant funds will not be available. She went on to say that the sending towns are not obligated to give any money so \$6500 would be a reasonable ask with an annual increase to meet increases in costs.
- Tom said that the new superintendent at Lebanon HS is charter friendly and may be a valuable asset.

## 8. Community Events, Fundraising, & Website

### Community Events

Tonya reported on the **community events** planning:

1. Engaging parents: a parent committee will be organized to contribute to fundraising and other efforts.
2. Student mental health: speakers will be planned to address various topics with students and staff. She is especially interested in telehealth appointments during school hours as this would be optimal to get appointments with providers.

### Fundraising

Bethany reported on **fundraising** that she introduced Lucretia to Beth Wood. She is not interested in a board position but would be a good consultant/advisor for community fundraising efforts. She may be able to provide additional ideas.

### Website

Amie reported the following changes:

1. The volunteer form page was moved under the parent resources tab while the newsletter has a spot on the main menu.
  2. The donor page is removed from the main menu and added as a graphic/button to the top section which links to the donor page and appears on every page on the site. It is more eye catching and will hopefully garner more page visits.
  3. Changes were made to drafts of the donor page to include a donor wall. Two drafts of the revised page have been created and links to these will be sent to board members for comments and suggestions.
  4. No changes to the donor form were made but she said it would be great to be able to request additional information from donors such as the cause they would like their donation to fund, permission to add them to the mailing list/newsletter list, etc. for the database.
- Ben noted that he happens to know the developer of Donorbox (the app used on the website for donations). He said he could ask about backend functions in the app.

- Ben also said that he has received all of the information from the grant writer and has worked with her to start a database for donors called “Airtable” which is a program for storing data and has other functions namely reminders for sending mailers for fundraising, etc.
- Wendy said she would request Ben and Amie access to donorbox.

*Lucreita made a motion at 6:10 P.M. for a nonpublic session under RSA 91A3. Tom seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. At 6:16 P.M. Tom made a motion to return to public session and Lucretia seconded and the vote was unanimous.*

## **9. Adjournment**

Lucretia adjourned the meeting at 6:17 P.M.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2023 at 5:00 pm via Zoom.