MeANS Board of Directors meeting minutes
1:30 p.m. September 20, 2019
Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Room A204

Board members present: Cheryl Bulmer, Stephanie Johnson, Kim Patnode, David Cyr, Scott Byrd, Sally Beaulieu, Tom Edwards, Troy Frost (by phone), Cheryl Mercier (by phone)

Staff members present: Matt Newberg, Danni Best, Becky Denisson, Emanuel Pariser, Nadya Plante, Solomon Heifets, Joe Schmalzel, Grace Hilmer, Rob Moody, Donna Ferenc McGorty,

Student/Parent present: Alyssa Smith, Mary Smith

Cheryl Bulmer called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

Introduction of new Head of School – Matt Newberg
The meeting began with introductions. Matt Newberg, the new Head of School introduced himself, provided his background and shared his enthusiasm for this new role. That was followed by introductions and a welcome to Matt from each Board member.

Additions/Adjustment to the Agenda:
There was an update about two MeANS students offered by Danni Best. Taylor Williams bass fisherman placed in the top ten in a national competition and now is the youngest member of the Maine State Team. He has received $20,000 in scholarships.

Kaylyn Brown graduated in August, but finished her standards early enough that she was able to begin hiking the Appalachian Trail in Georgia on April 1st. She is now in Maine and is planning to summit Mount Katahdin next Friday. Some of the staff plan to meet her there to celebrate the end of her journey.

Update on GWH (Rob Moody):
Rob Moody gave an update from Goodwill-Hinckley. They have four programs:

- College Step Up provides support for approximately six students transitioning from foster homes and heading to local colleges such as KVCC
- Glenn Stratton Learning Center is their day treatment center with 32 students currently enrolled.
- LC Bates museum provides resources for local school programs.
- Campus Life program provides 16 MeANS students with a boarding option for those whose homes are far from campus. There are 18 spaces in total.
- Roundel Residential program provides support for children transitioning from OCFS. The program provides intensive counseling. There are 10 students currently but the program has a capacity of 18. A new clinician was recently hired.

Land is currently being leased for a domestic violence program as well as Day 1, which is a program for 14-18 year olds recovering from substance abuse. Other expansion ideas and grant proposals may be developed in the future.

Matt, Donna, and Rob have been engaged in strategic planning. Four members from each board make up the committee and there is currently one open seat for a MeANS representative. Survey data is currently being collected from all stakeholders.

Rob thanked the MeANS Board for their support of the Gala. He anticipates that approximately 50 items will be auctioned off and about 120 people will attend. All proceeds will go to Campus Life to support MeANS students.

Revision Energy will install a solar panel array along route 201 across from the LC Bates Museum. It was suggested that, as part of the contract with Revision Energy, that the issue of maintenance be addressed.

Rob will discuss the history of GWH at the next Board meeting.

Student/Staff Presentation:
Threshold Student Alyssa Smith gave a presentation about her experience attending the National History Academy in Dulles. She was one of only 90 people selected worldwide to participate in this educational program. It was Alyssa's first opportunity to travel so far from home. She and her mother are very grateful that she was able to participate.

Public Comment on agenda items: No public comment

Consent Agenda: Approval of Board Meeting Minutes from 7/31/19

There was a motion by David Cyr to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Tom Edwards. Unanimous approval; motion carried at 2:30 p.m.

MeANS Report from the Heard of School (Matt Newberg):
Matt reported that there have been six new hires so far this year. There will be an interview for a clinician position next week as well. There is still a need for one more Threshold teacher, however. Current enrollment is 180 students with possibly up to 10 additional by September 30th.

There are currently 54 Threshold students, although the program budgeted for 60. We anticipate that there will be a 15-student underenrollment. David Cyr said that a meeting should occur in mid-October to discuss the impact of this.

Tom Edwards asked if enrollment could be kept open throughout the year. Only students enrolled by October 1st will result in funding. Students that enroll after this date will not increase funding. It was suggested that any students who enroll after October 1st could help to close the enrollment gap for next year. Danni pointed out that taking new students mid-year can be a disruption to the program that the school builds throughout the academic year.

It is not clear what caused of this year's enrollment gap. Matt suggested making the community more aware of MeANS. He has gotten the impression that we are losing students and that is a concern. This needs more investigation to see why this may be happening, beyond the expulsions that happened last year.

Some suggestions to increase enrollment were made including outreach activities to increase the school's visibility.

Matt concluded by reporting that NWEA testing has been completed. He also noted that the search for a school nurse is ongoing, and there is need for a new database program that will help staff keep track of reportable data.

Stephanie asked if the Board can receive updates on students that leave the school. Matt agreed try to provide this information. It was also noted that a new conference call number is listed at the top of agenda.

Update on Charter Commission visit (Matt and board members who attended):
The Charter Commission visited MeANS on August 30th. They asked about several areas during their visit including whether the Board has any way of measuring outcomes. They also asked about the independence of MeANS from GWH and suggested that MeANS should be doing its own strategic planning. They reminded the Board that the Charter Commission has money for training both teachers and Board members on the use of tools such as Epicenter.
Maine Charter Commission funds can also be applied towards the mandatory training to satisfy the correction plan.

They also raised some concerns over the relatively high percentage of special education students (50%) compared to the budgeted amount of 36%. The Commission will produce a report of their findings and recommendations in about six to eight weeks.

Due to difficulties in locating information because of the transition in the Head of School position, the report provided to the Maine Charter Commission may have been lacking some information. However, they were generally supportive of us and confident in our ability to run a successful school. They did inquire about the corrective action that MeANS is required to take in response to a due process claim, and a plan is in place to satisfy that requirement. There was discussion about the possibility of retaining counsel that specializes in special education law.

Matt, Stephanie, and Cheryl participated in a training offered by the Maine Charter Commission. They learned about Epicenter as well as the new financial matrix that will be used for reporting next year. They also learned about changes in leads effecting Charter Schools and things the Charter Commission can do to help schools.

Update on the barn (Joe Schmalzel):
After years of discussion regarding the possible construction of an auxiliary building as a home for workshop-type student activities, we have settled on an optimal building design that allows for great flexibility of use while also keeping within our budget constraints. The multi-purpose building is centered around a 20' x 20' core element, housing secure storage areas. Storage access is on all four sides, allowing for the construction of extension wing buildings dedicated to various activities. Our present goal is to construct the core building with two wings extending to the north and east. The north wing would be for woodworking and small engine repair, while the east wing would be for homesteader skills. We would like to proceed with pricing of planning/permitting and approval by the Board for the timely construction of the multi-use building.

Stephanie Johnson suggested that the funds necessary for the barn construction might be raised through a fundraising campaign. This could be a great idea for a capital campaign. The Capital Committee needs to move forward on this. Sally Beaulieu offered to join the Capital Committee. If anyone else from MeANS would like to join there is space available.

Board Meeting Schedule:
There was a discussion about changing meeting times to increase member participation. It was decided to change the time to be from 2:30pm to 5:00pm going forward. The next full Board meeting will be on October 25th. There will also be full Board meeting on November 15th, possibly including the mandatory training workshop run by legal counsel. Matt will confirm via email once this training is set up. There will also be a full board meeting on December 6th.

GWH Logo Change - impact on MeANS:
This agenda item was pushed to the next Board meeting.

MeANS Board Goal Setting for 2019-2020:

1) Website Redesign (Matt)
2) Head of School Evaluation Framework (Stephanie, Tom)
3) Policies
    a) Personel (Stephanie)
    b) School (Matt, Sally)
4) Review of By-Laws (Cheryl, Troy, Rob,)
5) School Performance Framework (Sally, Matt, Tom)
6) Board Evaluation (Cheryl, David, Troy)
7) Salary Matrix (Stephanie)
8) Strategic Planning (Scott B.)

Lead people will report on October 25th.

The Board has sponsored a table for means staff at the upcoming gala. Dana, Cheryl, Scott, Troy and Kim will also be attending.

Donna announced that she will be retiring next fall. GWH and MeANS will run a joint search for her replacement. The position will be posted early next calendar year with an anticipated hiring date in July.
The Development Committee is scheduled to meet on September 26th at 8 a.m.

Matt will create a calendar for Board meetings and will give editing privileges to everyone so that they can add content.

David Cyr made a motion to adjourn, Stephanie Johnson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.