

Minutes of HCA April 27, 2022 Board Meeting

Board Members Attending: Cynthia Shelmerdine, Sally Mackenzie, Ed Harris, Barbara Merson, Peggy Muir, and Kathy Wilson.

Also in attendance: Scott Barksdale, HOS; Amy Bundt, Director of Finance and Operations; Mel Christensen-Fletcher, Interim HOS for 22-23; Angie Arndt, Assistant to HOS.

Cynthia called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

Cynthia said the purpose of the meeting was to hear a progress report on the work on the plan for consolidation to be submitted to Commission staff, Jeremy Jones and Gina Post, for comment.

Congratulations to all who worked on the plan!

Scott showed the changes he made based on Barbara's suggestions. Cynthia suggested that current enrollment numbers for next year be included with a note about the uncertainty for next year as a factor in recruiting.

Sally asked about the inclusion of student schedules. They take up a lot of space versus how much is devoted to the specific work plan. Mel said they were requested by Gina Post, so they need to be included.

Cynthia hoped the work plan could be larger. The text is small.

Ed wondered if all electives are available all the time. There will be a note about how the topics vary by trimester.

Barbara said include details rather than take them out.

Re: absenteeism. Peggy suggested an idea from Jess Jackson's PUSH initiative: Have attendance contracts signed by students and parents as part of the personal responsibility focus of HCA. Sally mentioned a plan another school used to increase attendance: Have all staff members record on a weekly basis how many contacts with families they make for absent students as well as others. Mel said that disaggregating the data about types of absences has already helped them think of strategies as well as reasons for some students' absences. Cynthia commented that the school will be filling in data as it becomes available.

Sally asked about a spreadsheet format rather than all text re goals, actions, and who is responsible on pages such as 12 and 26. The answer is these are timelines not tasks. Cynthia said having both timeline and tasks enumerated will be important.

Ed asked about the theater program as an example of engagement. Scott said they hadn't included programmatic items. Ed also mentioned the new curriculum committee. Mel said they had hoped to start it this year, but they will definitely do so next year.

Dave Jean was not able to attend, so Scott moved on to the financial questions.

Barbara said a budget is a political document. She feels it is unwise to be pessimistic in budget projections. The result of the conversation was that Scott will increase the number of students for FY23-24 to 200 students so that the budget amount will provide more optimistic projections. Furthermore, she said the fundraising amount should be 50K. There are some Plan B type plans, e.g., the debt to the Town of Harpswell is due in full by 2025, so if necessary, HCA can delay an annual payment.

The question of pulling the request to borrow money from the bank for next year came up. The latest budget figures and pledges 160 K indicate it's not necessary. Cynthia made the motion and Peggy seconded that the proposal not include the bank loan. The roll call vote was unanimous. Barbara said the proposal should indicate that we're not pulling the loan request because the bank said no. That's why Dave wanted to be able to include a term sheet from the bank.

Cynthia said the only big issue remaining is the parking lot placement and cost. Amy agreed.

Barbara said it is important that Dave write an "interim statement " about his in-process investigation of the budget "mistake" last year that relates to how there are checks and balances in place.

Scott and Mel are reviewing the proposal one more time. They will send it to Cynthia so she can send it to the Commission staff for feedback and request that an emergency meeting of the Commission be called if staff agree it's in acceptable shape.

Adjournment at 5:00 on a motion by Cynthia, seconded by Sally.