SPRINGWATER ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES SCHOOL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**MEETING AGENDA**

August 16, 2023

6:00pm

Held via Zoom

**Call to Order:** 6:04pm

**Members Present:** Nathalie Doherty, Lissa Hettervig, Jessica Henrickson, Chris Sugg, Melly Murphy, Andy Edmundson

**Members Absent:** Sarah Head

**Non-Voting Member Present:** Greg Mylet

**Community Present:** None

**Swearing in New Board Members**

\*Nathalie is swapping agenda items 2 and 3.

The first item of business is swearing in new board members. Chris Sugg, Melly Murphy and Andy Edmundson were sworn in.

**Approval of Board Meeting Minuets**

**MOTION TO APPROVE JULY 12, 2023, MEETING MINUTES - APPROVED BY ALL**

**Voting on Board Officials**

Voting in board officials will occur at the August meeting.

**Schedule Board Meetings**

The 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6pm works best for the Board Members. The dates are as follows: September 20, 2023; October 18, 2023, November 15, 2023; December 20, 2023; January 17, 2024; February 21, 2024; March 20, 2024; April 17, 2024; May 15, 2024; June 19, 2024; and July 17, 2024.

Greg suggested Clackamas Community College as the location because it might be good to make it a goal to get more people to attend. Nathalie will ask Tory regarding the process for booking a room at Clackamas Community College. Andy recommended a grange in Redland or Beavercreek. Andy will reach out to his contacts. Lissa reminded Andy to make sure it has good access to internet. Andy confirmed that he has done meetings there in the past. The board has a budget for meetings if they charge a fee. We will have the August meeting at school and by September we can figure out where future meetings should be held and if we want to stagger them at different locations. Nathalie suggested doing a road show of different areas for different meetings to give members of the public a chance to attend.

**Principal’s Report**

Summer camp started this week. Springwater offers two weeks of summer camp and this will be the last year we can use the SR funds so it won’t be free next year. We have 80 kids this week with four groups, four teachers, and eight counselors.

**First Student Bus Service**

We would like to contract with First Student for transportation next year. The state will reimburse 70% of transportation. They will only reimburse us if we charter buses through the district. We paid for one bus ourselves and we won’t be reimbursed. Next year they said they won’t do buses. We can’t afford to cover buses. OSEA will charter a bus using First Student through a memorandum this one time. It would cost $190,000 and we would pay $57,000. If chartering, we would pay $1,200-$1,800 a month, not $57,000. This wasn’t included in our budget because we didn’t know that it would be like this.

The early release day on Wednesday was decided because of the bus that had to be somewhere else. We switched early release from Friday to Wednesday which increased our attendance significantly, so we are not switching it back unless the board chooses. Instead of an early release we could make a late start. If we did an early release, then we would have staff development in the afternoon. The teachers are so tired at the end of the day. The beginning of the day seems to be better for teachers. We will have to ask in a survey if this works worse or better. We will send out a survey and then go to the board with responses.

Back to transportation, we need to approve the contract. They have a rough draft. We must approve the spending of $57,000 that isn’t written in our budget. Chris asked how many kids ride the bus? Greg responded that about half the kids do and we must provide transportation and it must be free, which is state law. Andy asked what limitations do we have to buy two buses and employee two people? Greg responded that buses are too expensive, can’t claim 70%, can only claim if we contract through the district and the district must be the contract agent. Chris asked if Greg could put the possibility of an early release on Friday. Greg said that when looking at the data, students were lower attending on Friday, and he doesn’t recommend it. Chris said that early release is a burden on families. Greg did a fair amount of reach out to determine if families would have a hardship because of the early release which is why we do aftercare. Based on what we have as a school and what the state has, less than 10% of families should not be chronically absent. We are knowingly adding another 5% that would be chronically absent. We and other schools keep track of this. Melly asked if it is because it was a year after COVID? Greg responded that when we had early release on Friday, we watched the change of attendance happen and he won’t make a recommendation to move it back to Friday. We would knowingly be doing something that would hurt the school. Nathalie said that we approved Greg’s recommendation based on the board goals we had set. Jessica asked when Greg would be sending this survey out. Greg responded soon. Nathalie would like the survey to phrase the early release day assuming we will provide before or after school care. Andy asked how we are going to interpret the results? Greg will make the recommendation as the administrator and then the board can look at the data, listen to reasoning and decide. Greg stated that there wouldn’t be a before care option and aftercare is only available if you can’t pick up your kid. Jessica said that, as a board, we made goals around attendance, the data stated that when we had an early release the attendance went way down. Chris said that early release is important for some families and if the response is overwhelming then we should hear them out. Andy said he doesn’t think it would be best to put something on the survey that we as a board wouldn’t vote for. Greg shared the data of around a 3.5% attendance difference. Greg said he would send the survey and we can then discuss it further at our next meeting. Greg said he will preface Friday with a concern around attendance.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AMENDMENT OF $60,000 FOR THE BUS TRANPORTATION - APPROVED BY ALL**

**SpEd Hiring by OCSD**

Greg said that Oregon City School District is responsible if we aren’t providing outlined services and they would like full responsibility through hiring the SpEd. District employees go to our school once or twice a week. OCSD would stop giving us additional funds for the special services. We would receive $200,000 less but wouldn’t have to budget to hire these individuals. Andy asked what the impact would be on the teachers. Greg said that the district would have to negotiate hours because our teachers work less days. Nathalie asked if the district could defer them to other schools? Greg said that yes, they could move them elsewhere and give us someone else, but he doesn’t think that they would do this. Andy asked if we could get out of this or are we stuck if we don’t like it? Greg said that he would have to look back at our contract and see what providing these services would entail. Jessica asked if we have a say in this? Greg said that if SpEd was audited and we were not providing appropriate services then an audit would occur. Nathalie asked if we must decide tonight. Nathalie expresses a preference for having Springwater hire the SpEd employees and that it is important that they are a part of our community as they work well together. Greg thinks that we may not have a choice. Lissa asked if the teachers knew. Greg said yes and the insurance and pay may be better. More to come.

**New Instructional Assistant – Tara Walp**

New Instructional Assistant, Tara Walp, to be hired.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE NEW INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT, TARA WALP - APPROVED BY ALL**

**No Public Comment**

**Updates**

 **Facilities**

Greg said that the fence must be put back up, deck replaced, and we have a new container for storage that will be painted with a mural. The blacktop is a small job so waiting for leftover asphalt and then we can get the fence back up. The cafeteria had its wall knocked down and we are moving the copy room for PE space. We have basketball hoops coming in and might even have one in the cafeteria so hopefully we might have more sports at school like volleyball and basketball. Chris asked what is on the horizon for the budget? Greg said that pipes broke, and we had to replace a lot, boiler primary driver on that, all those problems solved. Greg had a meeting with Soderstrum to meet with the architects on how we can make this place great.

**Fundraising**

Nothing much to add. There is a facilities bond coming, but we can’t be a part of that because we own the building.

**Budget**

Checking Account- $361,771.52
Money Market Account- $864,484.49

Jessica said that Chris, to your point via email, on the low interest rate for our money market account, Tory and I had discussed this a lot over the course of the year. She checked with her network of financial advisors (one even that was a board member at another school) and they weren’t aware of the rules regarding school bank accounts. You are not wrong that earning 0.60% is less than ideal. As a start, it would be worth giving US Bank a call and seeing if we could negotiate a higher rate in the near term. I wonder who OCSD banks with and uses.

Greg said that we can’t invest public funds in something that can lose money, not sure why not a CD though. Greg will email a guy that would know.

Jessica said that, as far as the budget is concerned and as the first year on the budget committee, it appears to be more of an art than a science, and a lot is out of our control, for example the bus issue.

Next meeting will be on the 16th of August; April will put it on the school calendar.

Nathalie mentioned that we need to discuss bios and pictures for the board site.

Greg mentioned that we may need a special session for an early release decision.

**No Public Comment**

**Adjourn: 7:38pm**