



Cotter Schools Board of Directors
February 28, 2023

Board Members present: Chris Michener, Fatima Said, Meg Krinke, Mary Kirk, Barry McRaith, Amy Donnenwerth, Kurt Knuesel, Fr. Pat Arens, Fr. Mark McNea, Mary Eileen Fitch
Christina Uribe Nitte, via Zoom

Board Members excused: Fr. Cronin, Crystal Hiatt

Meeting called to order by chair Chris Michener at 7:30 a.m. Prayer was led by Fr. Arens

Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda by Barry McRaith, second by Amy Donnenwerth - Motion approved.

Minutes: Motion to approve the December Board of Directors meeting minutes by Barry McRaith, second by Fatima Said - Motion approved. Motion to approve the committee meeting minutes by Erica Jerowski, second by Amy Donnenwerth - Motion approved.

Board of Directors minutes: (12-20-22)

Committee minutes: (Mission Effectiveness: 1-1-23, Operational Vitality: 1-17-23 and 2-21-23, Governance: 2-8-23, Advancement: 1-17-23 and 2-21-23)

Board Formation – Institutional Advancement Presentation

Mike Swenson, Vice Principal of Advancement, introduced the following Advancement Team members who were present for this portion of the meeting: Jeff Novakoski, Residential Enrollment; Tammy Hoeger, Admission & Residential Enrollment; Jana Korder, Communications & Marketing; Mike Costello, Alumni Relations Director. Mike also recognized Celia Kaiser, Local Admissions, who was unable to be present this morning. Each team member introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their duties and current areas of focus.

Mike distributed 'Cotter Talking Point' cards and guided the Directors on ways, as Cotter Ambassadors, in which they can promote Cotter in the community. He also encouraged the many ways they can give financially and also encouraged attendance and support at our many Cotter events. He also asked the Directors to consider potential fundraising prospects and alumni contact information and to advise the Advancement Department team with any suggestions and/or information that they may have.

Committee Reports:

Operational Vitality Committee:

Barry provided a financial overview from a profit/loss standpoint, which is coming in a little better than expected. Mary Eileen reported that a budget will be voted on in March and that there is a proposal for a 3% increase for staff, with

some positions possibly requiring more, especially when trying to hire. Mary Eileen also reported that our lunch program has experienced a big turnaround and that we are almost at a break-even point.

Governance Committee: Fatima asked the Board to consider potential names for future Board positions as well as potential committee members. She also advised that President Evaluation Surveys were distributed to teachers, staff and to our Directors and asked Directors to complete their survey if they have not already done so. Mary Eileen distributed a handout which reflected feedback from our December Board Retreat. It was noted that several items were areas of focus that were reflected on our Strategic Planning mission.

Governance also made a motion to approve the By-Law amendments that were presented to the Board. A vote was taken and the motion was passed.

Mission Effectiveness: Amy shared the Together in Community Timeline and reviewed priority items that are being worked on and pointed out action items that have importance, however, will take time to implement.

Advancement Update: Meg advised that the committee has been working on identifying priority items. She referenced the Institutional Assessment that was provided to us last year and advised that they had spent time at the last meeting outlining action items and timeline goals. She also advised of a new committee member, Megan Strange.

President's Report: Mary Eileen provided updates on the following:

DOW-R residual funds: We advised the Bishop that the Diocese Gender Identity link has been placed in our Student/Family handbook. The WACS residual funds were distributed to us right before the new year.

HVAC System Update: Financing options from Merchants, WNB and the option of borrowing from our endowment were discussed with our benefactor. Our benefactor advised of potential financial support providing our enrollment numbers continue to grow, however, support would not be available until 2024. Once we receive financial support confirmation, we may look at taking out a short term loan to secure the required down payment to enable the ordering of parts and so that we could be put on the WHV calendar.

MCA Update: We are now in the process of waiting to receive SMU's legal proposal for the transfer. Mary Eileen did advise the committee as to her meetings with MCA's employees and potential programming growth and the possibility of hiring a replacement Director, however, these items will be something that will need to be further analyzed and will take time. Mary Eileen has appointed Jacque Paulsen as a liaison to handle communications with MCA's employees. There continues to be concerns with the added building maintenance, upkeep, and additional work within our Business Office, but communication will remain open with our benefactor as to added costs that Cotter Schools may incur with the transfer. We continue to look at a June/July transfer date.

Cotter Good News: Mary Eileen spoke to several items of interest involving our Cotter students.

- Southeast Technical College is officially offering a free two-year college education for any Winona 2023 or 2024 graduate.
- Our Counseling Office is currently individually meeting with all juniors to talk about their post-graduation plans and goals.
- Next year we will be offering Computer Science and CNA classes.
- Mary Eileen attended a Catechism of the Good Shepherd program at our St. Stan's campus with Sr. Mary Andrea and some of our 3-5-year old students. She expressed how impressed she was with the program and that we are exploring adding the curriculum to our 1st grade religion class next year.
- We received \$400,000.00 from the EANS grant to support COVID learning loss recovery and mental health and counseling.
- Our reading recovery programs are going better than expected and we are offering reading and math recovery programs this summer for those students who are not at grade level.
- Our Awards Banquet will be March 23rd. Sister Judy will be receiving the St. Joseph Award and Mary Eileen encouraged all board members to attend.

At this time Mary Eileen and Dawn Guzzo left the board room as per the request of Chris Michener so that the board could discuss policies regarding the President's annual evaluation. It was later relayed that a Special Meeting would be necessary to further discuss and determine the policy. A special meeting will be held March 15th, wherein the board will meet in private for the first portion and then invite Mary Eileen to join to answer any questions that the board may have for her for the second portion of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Dawn Guzzo