

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**RETREAT**  
**September 12, 2023**



These minutes are for informational purposes only.

**PRESENT:** Asikainen, Samantha; Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Cording, Leisl; Higgins, Edwin; McGinn, Walter; Morse, David; Munroe, Heather; Paquette, Philippa; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B); Quinn, Eric; Rhynhart, Hans; Rich, Matthew; Swenson, Christine; Tuttle, Brent (P); Young, Scott

**ADMINISTRATION:** Durga, Kyle; Favreau, Amy; Harten, Michael; Hogarty, Aaron; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Susi, Michael; VanderSwaagh, Shannon; Woodland, Julie

**ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION:** Carabeau, Garry; Duvall, Nancy (C); Ellsworth, Robert (E); Frankhouser, Hans (W); Larrow, Jeff ; Livernois, Jay (Ex-Officio); Samborowski, Leonard

**1. Welcome Reception (6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)**

Trustees and members of the administration enjoyed light snacks and refreshments.

**2. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by President Swenson at 7:03 p.m.

**3. Building Tour (7:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.)**

Director of Facilities Aaron Hogarty and Director of Housekeeping Kyle Durga accompanied Head of School Sandford, Associate Head of School Holly Singleton, and Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi as a tour was conducted on every level of the Student Center Building. General questions were asked and answered throughout the tour.

**4. Presentation and Discussion (7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.)**

Option #1: Therapeutic Day School

Director of Student Support Shannon VanderSwaagh provided information about developing a therapeutic day school to be housed in the student center building. The philosophical, conceptual, and practical discussion focused on meeting the needs of students seeking enhanced social emotional support. Currently, students needing this type of therapeutic assistance are on outplacement waiting lists for many months. As a special education program, costs would be covered by the student's sending town. Other services will include employment and vocational skill building. Revenue earned could be used to cover long-term building maintenance and improvements.

Option #2: CTE Programming

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton and Dean of Academics Dr. Michael Harten highlighted the potential benefits of transforming the student center space into a Career and Technical Education Center. Related classes could include 3-D animation, game design, computer lab production space, journalism, sports journalism, digital marketing, additional culinary classes, CAN nursing certification, real estate licensing, stock market & investment, and more. While exciting opportunities, most of these classes would be subject to student interest, enrollment figures, and budget limitations. In addition, many of these classes could be taught in other spaces on campus.

Option #3: Sell the Building

Head of School Sandford and Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi explained the limitations surrounding selling the building at some point in the future. As part of the school's USDA loan, not only would the selling price need to satisfy the loan, but any proceeds would also need to be applied directly against the loan. It is thought the building would not be allowed to sit vacant and tear-down costs would likely be very high. For historic and informational purposes only, the Board was curious about the building's actual market value.

Conclusion:

Robust discussion ensued and it was agreed that administration should move forward and explore a combination of Options #1 and #2 in greater depth and present the results to the Board.

**5. Other Items**

Head of School Sandford expressed appreciation for Brooklyn Superintendent Patti Buell for her help developing this new special education concept/offering.

**6. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** (Perkins-Banas/Rhynhart) To adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.  
Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

*Julie Woodland*

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Board Clerk

*The Woodstock Academy prepares all students by providing diverse opportunities through a rigorous curriculum and a variety of programs in order to cultivate the necessary skills to become lifelong learners and global citizens.*