

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
February 21, 2023



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Asikainen, Samantha; Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Carabeau, Garry; Ellsworth, Robert (E); Frankhouser, Hans (W); Higgins, Edwin; Larrow, Jeff; Livernois, Jay (Ex-Officio); McGinn, Walter; Paquette, Philippa; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B); Quinn, Eric; Rich, Matthew; Samborowski, Leonard; Swenson, Christine; Young, Scott

ADMINISTRATION: Harten, Michael; Rigney, John; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Sturdevant, Jon; Susi, Michael; Woodland, Julie

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Cording, Leisl; Duvall, Nancy (C); Morse, David; Rhynhart, Hans; Tuttle, Brent (P)

GUESTS: Adam Teff and Elaine Lind of Titan Energy; Ryan Linares of Greenskies Clean Energy; Nate Gagnon

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Swenson at 7:02 p.m.

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of June 21, 2022 and October 18, 2022

MOTION: (Beckwith/McGinn) To approve the minutes of June 21, 2022, and October 18, 2022. All voted Yes except Hans Frankhouser who abstained on both sets of minutes. Motion passes.

4. Solar Presentation / Possible Action

Adam Teff and Elaine Lind of Titan Energy and Ryan Linares of Greenskies Clean Energy provided a comprehensive presentation for the Board to consider a ground-mounted solar array to be placed in the field behind the Bowen building, noting the Buildings & Grounds Committee decided against roof-mounted systems and/or car port solar models. After providing information about Titan Energy and listing reference projects in CT, maps illustrating project location were reviewed. Key timeline dates included: (1) executing a PPA with Greenskies by February 22; (2) Titan/Greenskies submitting the project into the NRES program by March 14; (3) Eversource to notify NRES recipients of award status by June 2023; (4) system could enter engineering, procurement, and construction phase in fall 2023; and (5) construction could begin in spring 2024 with construction complete by summer 2024. Selection by Eversource is a competitive process where the proposals with the lowest costs are selected first. Discussion about the PPA rate ensued, and PPA rate of .0675 was agreed upon. General questions about delivery rates for commercial customers, solar as back-up power during outages, supply chain delays, and possible savings over time were discussed. Having a low fixed price on energy for this 20-year contract would get the school out of the current energy volatility. Trustee Leisl Cording's questions were submitted in writing and addressed. Further discussion included possible insurance coverage to ensure timely removal of the solar array at the end of the agreement should the contractor not be in business at that time. Administration was asked to investigate insurance coverage and possible pricing.

MOTION: (McGinn/Livernois) To authorize the head of school and administrative team to enter into an agreement with Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC to install solar panels on Academy property for the purpose of establishing a discounted electrical rate according to the terms discussed at the February 21, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting, and as previously reviewed/approved by The Academy's attorney.

Unanimous

President Swenson thanked the Buildings and Grounds Committee for their hard work on this project.

Adam Teff, Elaine Lind and Ryan Linares exited the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

5. Board Reports

a. President's Report

i. Correspondence

Head of School Sanford reviewed the correspondence in the packet highlighting letters to Paul Kelly and Joan Trivella from Board Secretary Paquette, various letters of retirement/resignation, letters of appreciation/congratulations, letters of condolence, and letters celebrating the Head of School Award winners, Academy Champions, and CAPSS award winners.

ii. EASTCONN Representation

President Swenson asked Board members to consider stepping forward to assume Joan Trivella's former role as EASTCONN representative.

b. Committee Reports—questions/discussion on reports provided in packet

A wide array of meeting minutes was available for review, and President Swenson directed the Board to take special note of the December 13, 2022 Executive Committee meeting where Board vacancies were filled. There were no questions.

6. Woodstock Academy Administration Reports

a. Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Report

i. 2022-2023—Budget Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi reviewed the Profit and Loss statement with the group, noting cash flow concerns are tempered with the hope of receiving an anticipated \$2M grant from the IRS.

ii. Academy Building Restoration Project Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi and Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair Bob Blackmer shared that weekly meetings are still being held and communication with the contractors is going well. Current projections have the building opening in October 2023. Progress inside the building continues, and efforts have been made to keep water out of the basement and away from the building. Areas of wood rot in beams near windows is being addressed.

iii. Other

iv. Board questions/discussion

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. February Update

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton reviewed her February Update handout, attached below. Highlights included sports successes, grant awards, musical events, student achievements, and faculty/staff accomplishments. Also shared were updates to the girls' ice hockey program where several games were forfeited. The girls & boys tennis program faced challenges with a lack of viable home courts/limited availability on other courts, certified coaching gaps, and expensive transportation requirements for practices and games. Although club level competition was proposed for the spring season, community feedback indicated a strong desire to continue competing in the CIAC. After a successful grass roots fundraising campaign, the regular season was reinstated. The Board was encouraged to attend the April Buildings and Grounds meeting and the full Board meeting in June to learn more about possible future plans for South Campus.

Nate Gagnon exited the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

ii. Strings Whitepaper

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton provided an overview of the Strings Program Whitepaper which was recently endorsed by the Academic Committee. Research shows that student involvement in a music program provides creative, emotional, and social benefits. And by being in an orchestra, students will learn teamwork, accountability, perseverance, responsibility, and self-discipline. The focus will be on violins and cellos. In 2022-2023, our Strings Club began, and curriculum was developed for Strings I and Strings II. In 2023-2024, Strings I will be available for student sign ups (even signing up multiple times based on student skill level). Strings II will run in the spring, depending on student sign ups. Questions included whether similar offerings were available in other area schools, equipment rental, and financial support. Consensus was to move forward with the proposal.

iii. Other

iv. Board questions/discussion

c. Associate Head of School for Advancement

i. Loos Center Updates

Associate Head of School for Advancement Jon Sturdevant provided a Loos Center update. Recent events included the Ocean State Pops, WA's Winter Concert, the Tusk concert for nearly 900 people, and many special exhibits in The Gallery (including the Carol Spinney show). Fall will be a busy time as we continue to book events and schedule our own shows. Grant requests are in the works to expand the parking lot and help with hospitality and marketing at The Loos.

ii. Fundraising Priorities List

Associate Head of School for Advancement Jon Sturdevant reviewed a handout which reflected an addition to the Current Fundraising Priorities list already approved by the Board. "Bracken Library Upgrades (\$100,000 estimate)" is a proposed addition to the list because the 100th anniversary of the Bracken Library is in 2023-2024. Planned work includes refinishing the original gym floor, HVAC work, and painting. The fundraising campaign could begin in the spring to coincide with the Carol Spinney exhibit opening.

MOTION: (Livernois/Frankhouser) To accept the revised Academy Fundraising Priorities list to include Bracken Library Upgrades as discussed at the February 21, 2023, Board of Trustees meeting.

Unanimous

iii. Other

iv. Board questions/discussion

d. Head of School Report

i. Policies—Second Read

Head of School Sandford offered a brief review of each of the below policies, saying the Policy Committee, Academic Committee (for Policy 6146.3), and Executive Committees had already endorsed these final versions.

- 2131 – Head of School
- 2210 – Administrative Leeway in Absence of BOT Policy
- 3324.1 – Contracts
- 6146 – Graduation Requirements
- 6146.3 – Early Graduation
- 7100 – Master Planning
- 7551 – Naming of Facilities

MOTION: (Carabeau/Samborowski) To approve Policies 2131, 2210, 3324.1, 6146, 6146.3, 7100, and 7551 as presented.
Unanimous

ii. 2023-2024 Calendars

Head of School Sandford presented the 2023-2024 Academic, Residential Life, and Board of Trustees calendars. Two highlights of the BOT calendar included fewer meeting nights with more meetings per night and monthly Buildings and Grounds meetings to continue for the year. Adjustments to March 2023 meeting dates and times were reiterated. Key dates on the current Academic and Residential Life calendars were reviewed. A firm graduation date is expected to be set in mid-March.

iii. Certified Teacher Demographics

Although it had already been shared with several subcommittees, Head of School Sandford shared a Certified Teacher Demographics handout with the larger group. Discussion ensued about how active DEI efforts have resulted in increased diversity within our staff, employee retention, and employee turnover.

iv. Other

v. Board questions/discussion

7. Other Items

- Head of School Sandford provided his vacation notification memo to the Board.
- The Academy's testimony in support of House Bill 6624, which seeks to allow retired police officers and parole officers to provide school security/carry firearms on school property, was provided. Discussion focused on this critical area of employment shortage.

8. Executive Session—Personnel and Legal

MOTION: (Paquette/Samborowski) To enter into Executive Session to consider Personnel and Legal matters, inviting all currently present to attend at 9:22 p.m.

Unanimous

The meeting returned to regular session at 9:25 p.m.

9. Possible Action Based on Executive Session

MOTION: (McGinn/Bentley) To accept the agreement between The Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees and the Pomfret Board of Education as presented in Executive Session

Unanimous

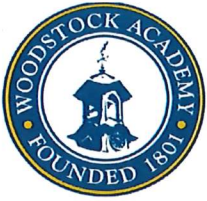
10. Adjournment

MOTION: (Paquette/Samborowski) To adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Woodland
Julie Woodland
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.



February Updates from the Associate Head of School

School Updates

- Girls Gymnastics won their 13th consecutive ECC Championship!
- Boys Hockey clinched the Nutmeg Conference regular season title this weekend.
- A fall PJ Day fundraiser for The Connecticut Children's Foundation raised \$1,463.50.
- The Boys' Hockey program raised \$450 for our local veterans' group at its recent Military Appreciation Night.
- Hill Singers performed on Great Day CT live and were recorded for WFSB's Great Day Holiday Special.
- Loos Center for the Arts was awarded a grant of \$24,400 from the CT Humanities Grant Program. This grant is specified to assist in enhancing the audience and performer experience. Half of the funding is going to install an assistive listening loop, which will be accessed by those guests with hearing loss.
- The RESC Alliance for Increasing Educator Diversity awarded WA a grant in the amount of \$5,000.
- Dr. Theresa Bouley, ECSU, author of Implicit Bias: An Educator's Guide to the Language of Microaggressions was the keynote speaker at today's professional development. Several superintendents from surrounding towns also attended. Also, as part of the Drug & Alcohol Grant funding, Project Courage provided two sessions on Current Trends in Drug Use. Other sessions included: Breathwork/Meditation, AP Roundtable, Efficient Work Strategies, and Self-Care/Work-Life.
- For the 2023-24 school year, WA will be starting a Strings program.
- Athletics Updates: Girls Ice Hockey, Girls & Boys Tennis.

Student Achievements

- Ava Basak (W) received a Gold Key in the Regional Scholastic Writing Award in the journalism category.
- The Woodstock Academy has chosen its fine and performing artists for the 2022-2023 school year. Connecticut Association of Schools Scholar artists include musician Cormac Nielson (W) and fine artist Charlotte Adase (W).
- 17 students were inducted into the inaugural National Art Honor Society.
- Model UN Program:
 - 5 students won awards at the UVA conference in October. Baden Eaton (W), Outstanding Delegate; Dominick Tocci (W), Honorable Mention; Owen Bland (W), Honorable Mention; Davis Simpson (B), Honorable Mention; Ava Lanoue (P), Honorable Mention; and John Murray (P), Honorable Mention.
 - Owen Bland (W) won Best Delegate and Baden Eaton (W) won a commendation at the Brown MUN Conference.
 - WA won Best Delegation at the NYU conference! Individual awards were won by 11 students: Gabby Couture (W), Commendation; Aly Niemiec (W), Commendation; Davis Simpson (B), Commendation; Ethan Craig (W), Honorable Mention; Maggie Hart (W), Outstanding Delegate; Yehor Bezshchasnyi (T), Outstanding Delegate; Leila MacKinnon (W), Outstanding Delegate; Matt Myslenski (B), Outstanding Delegate; Owen Bland (W), Outstanding Delegate; John Murray (W), Outstanding Delegate; and Nate Sarette (W), Best Delegate.
 - 3 students won awards at the University of Chicago MUN conference: Fiona Rigney (W), Commendation; Ethan Craig (W), Commendation; and Evan Rhault (W), Honorable Mention.

- Music Program:
 - 19 students accepted into the New England Music Festival: Aaron Allard (W), Gabrielle Couture (W), Nate Couture (W), Chandler Folkerts (W), Isadora Graham (W), Ava Hovestadt (W), Aleena Jafar-DeCesare (W), Ricky Jessurun (P), Lily Mercier (W), Bryn Miller (W), Kayleigh Murray (B), Cormac Nielsen (W), Avery Plouffe (P), Jillian Plouffe (P), Kate Ritzau (T), Michael Susi (W), Nicholas Webster (W), Sadie Wood (W), and Violet Young (W). It should be noted that sophomore cellist, Kate Ritzau is 1 of 4 students selected by the NEMFA Board of Directors and adjudication committee to perform as a featured soloist with a professional piano accompanist at the upcoming NEMFA Concert Festival.
 - 13 students were accepted into the CMEA Eastern Region Music Festival! Orchestra – Kate Ritzau (T). Band – Aaron Allard (W), Cormac Nielsen (W), and Violet Young (W). Chorus – Danielle Cabassa (P), Chandler Folkerts (W), Campbell Fraser (W), Isadora Graham (W), Ava Hovestadt (W), Olivia Mawson (P), Lily Mercier (W), Gianna Musumeci (W), and Sadie Wood (W).
 - 7 students were accepted into the All-State Music Festival (a school record)! Aaron Allard (W), Rio Cabassa (P), Chandler Folkerts (W), Olivia Mawson (P), Lily Mercier (W), Cormac Nielsen (W), and Sadie Wood (W).
- Michael Susi was accepted into the High School Honors Performance Series Choir at Carnegie Hall!
- Cormac Nielsen (W) competed in the 36th annual Young Artists Music Competition, sponsored by the Windham Regional Arts Council, and took 1st place and the overall Grand Prize which was awarded to the most outstanding performer in the competition.
- Braiden Saucier (W) will receive the Walter Camp Foundation UCAN Inspiration Award during the Walter Camp Weekend, bringing college football nobility to Connecticut to honor those who excelled in the game in 2022.

Faculty & Staff Achievements

- Andrew Morehouse was invited again to teach at a Latin immersion event in Florence Italy, and another Latin Immersion Conference in West Virginia.
- Val May has been invited again to be an AP Biology test reader in June.
- Gary Brine was inducted into the Killingly High School Alumni Athletic Association Hall of Fame Class of 2022 for his legendary coaching career!
- Cassie Noble and Amiah Jackson-Ward have both been approved as instructors for UConn's MATH 1131Q: Calculus I. Amiah also was approved as an instructor for MATH 1030Q: Elementary Discrete Mathematics.
- Sara Dziedzic was accepted into Facing History's program "Brave Classrooms: Confronting Bigotry and Hatred."