

GFA Board Meeting Minutes

Date: September 8, 2014, 6:30

Location: GFA

Attendees: Andrew Hedrick, Brent Petersen, Steve Hepburn, Peggy Downs, Michelle Arnold, Jamie Walker, Tom Koehler, Loren Pankratz

Guests: Jared Van Orden, Tami Davids, Lisa Pockrus, Cheryl Burger, Carter Randall

Absent: Charity Smith

Taking Minutes: Natalie Trumbo

Prayer: At 6:35 Tom Koehler opened the meeting with a prayer.

Approval of Minutes: Steve Hepburn motioned to approve the minutes from last month. Michelle Arnold seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Open Forum/ Update: Jamie Walker brought up the issue of finding a caterer for the Christmas party. She volunteered to find one providing she is given a budget. The board will discuss more during the events section of the meeting.

PTO Update: Cheryl Burger handed-in the PTO minutes. PTO did their first fundraiser, which was Back to School night with Heidi Cakes and made \$100. PTO will plan on using her again in the future. The next event is Fall Festival and will take place October 11 from 3-6 pm. It will be a new event for the PTO this year and they are going to use it as a fundraiser. PTO is going to rent out booths to vendors for \$25 a spot. There will be a meeting to solidify the details tomorrow. There is a parent on PTO setup for the parking lots to be striped for GFA, which will take place this weekend. Brent requested to have a meeting with the PTO before that takes place to plan out what that should look like. Tom raised a question about recoating of the parking lot and Peggy informed him that it will be happening after the remodel because it needs to be reconfigured. PTO has their quarterly luncheon coming up on October 23rd, which will be a taco bar. Fundraising committee has another fundraiser coming up on September 11th at Chick-Fil-A from 5-8pm. PTO is going to be changing the prices of the yearbooks this year. Hardcover will remain at \$25 and softcovers will change to \$17 to make up the gap so that PTO can get ahead in their budget. PTO is willing to take the Book Fair back on. They are willing to handle all the funds. The Walk-A-Thon will have a goal for the technology. It will take place around the same time as the school picnic, which might be sometime the first week of May.

Business Administration

- **Budget/Red Apple:** Jared Van Orden passed out a financial summary. A special area of interest is local funds. The school lunch program just got started, so the majority of the local funds will start trending up during the school year. The state funds are looking good. The Federal funds will be requested at the middle of the year around January or February. Purchase Property Services is still in the 400 in the line item. Other Purchase Services are all the insurances that are done at the beginning of the year, supplies, materials, and textbooks are also included in that as well. Property and equipment includes the new computers that are now installed in the computer room and throughout the school. The debt service is at 800 and that is the bond that we have no expenses in that at this point. Operating margin is at 3.7%. Debt Service Coverage ratio is at 1.23%. Days Cash on Hand is doing really well with 103 and a calculation of a Building Lease/Bond is now at 16%. Steve asked about a line item on the budget summery. Steve Hepburn also brought up that the budget for the content insurance needs to be increased. A full inventory will also need to be made. Risk management contacted Peggy Downs about upping insurance. Jared Van Orden will gather more information and the board will discuss this issue and vote another time.
- **Loan S&P:** Carter Randall informed the board that he is going to meet with Riverdale City tomorrow. Finally all the plans are done and they should be approved. The remodel for the building can start to move forward. Carter Randall heard from Don and is waiting to get back from the seller's attorney about the cost for the water service. The city came back and informed the school that GFA only has to split the water and not the sewer. The sewer will be billed separately. CHS will pay half the cost of the division of the water. They will raise the purchase price by \$15,000. They will either pay for it all up front or escrow all the money or whatever the city requires them to do. CHS will front everything so that GFA does not have to go out and get three bids and do the process that way. The city agreed to give GFA an extension. Right now GFA is at \$3.9 million as the purchase price, 22% will be rent which is around \$7,000 a month, so GFA has about a \$70,000 credit already pledged against the bill. The attorney will go through all that process and send back an addendum and clarify everything that is about to take place. Andrew will email the agreement out when he gets it and schedule a meeting to get the process moving.
- **Grants Michelle:** Michelle Arnold read the minutes for last meeting and an email from Josie and got the impression that Josie has never written a successful grant. Josie is on the funding committee for Venture Academy. Michelle Arnold recommended that if the board wants a professional grant writer that they not pick her. She also recommended that the board not go through a grant writer to get grants after more thinking. She suggests that the grants be written internally or using a program that would track down grants. The Office of Sponsored Projects is what she uses through Weber

State. Peggy Downs suggested that she could contact APCS to get more information and Michelle Arnold said that she would also talk to those she knows at the Office of Sponsored Projects at Weber for more information.

- **Gym Rental:** Jamie Walker reviewed the current gym rental policy. Jamie Walker had a call from a Kurt Miles. He has used the gym located across the street from GFA in previous years for private basketball lessons and can no longer do that. He has asked if he can make an arrangement with GFA to use their gym. The arrangement he had with CHS was \$10 an hour per hoop he was using. This would run the whole school year on Monday thru Friday from 4:30pm to 9:30pm every night except for nights that GFA would need the gym for their events. Kurt said that he averaged about \$1000 a month to CHS and he is wondering if GFA would like to do that. Loren brought up the issue of him having insurance. Jamie Walker will have to contact him and find out if he has insurance. If he does not, then the answer will have to be no. It was suggested to make an arrangement of \$40 a night from 5-9 pm providing he has insurance. It was suggested that GFA charge him \$800 a month and he has to work around the schools schedule and show proof of liability insurance. Steve Hepburn brought up the issue of non-marking shoes and if there are any problems then GFA can cancel at any time. Jamie Walker said that GFA has a policy in place and a contract.

Enrollment

- **Lottery:** Jared Van Orden ran the lottery.
- **Current:** We have had some interesting things happen in the past few weeks and Jamie Walker has plowed through the waiting lists like she has never had to do in the past. Currently GFA is only full in the third grade. There are only waiting lists in first and second. The response that Jamie Walker keeps getting is that they have already been accepted at another charter school. There are more charter schools doing a big enrollment push. There have been more charter schools opening up in the past few years and things are a lot more dispersed than when GFA first opened up. From what Jamie Walker can sense there are a lot of parents that want their student in a charter school, so when they get accepted into one they are good to go. Jamie Walker feels that it is really important that GFA snags their parents as early as possible because the later things go the harder it is for her to fill the spots. The waiting lists for the 1st and 2nd grades are all rollover waiting lists from the previous year. The applications that are going through the lottery tonight are all applications that have been received since the last meeting and there are only 23 applications altogether. Michelle Arnold suggested that GFA overfill their classes early to account for those who drop before school starts. Jamie Walker discussed the trends of student withdrawing. Jamie Walker can only speculate of the reasons of why they withdrew. Jamie Walker would recommend when GFA starts doing their lottery in February overfilling each grade by at least 10 spots and holding onto those 10 spots until August 1st. That would not have impacted any grade this year. Every single grade would

have been at their correct enrollment this year when school started. She recognizes that it is a gamble, but Jamie Walker feels that it is something that the school needs to do, as of now GFA will not be full this year. Steve Hepburn wanted clarification of the lottery process. Michelle Arnold asked what would be the contingency plan in case the 10 extra students all accepted and the grades ended up overfull. If it did happen then GFA would have to make room for those students. The board does not need to make a decision until February. Peggy Downs suggested that the board put it back on the agenda for next month and discuss and decide next month after getting the October 1 numbers in. Jamie Walker also brought up the problem of obtaining kindergarteners. She suggested putting an ad or a mail-out from the Standard Examiner advertising that GFA currently has openings. It's an expensive option. It was also suggested to have the employees post on Facebook that the school has openings. It was also suggested to have a radio ad run for a few weeks or have a banner put up on the school. Peggy Downs said that she would look into that. Michelle Arnold suggested putting up flyers in grocery stores and libraries. Andrew Hedrick suggested having a flyer made up to send home with the students. The discussion was tabled until next month.

Policy/Strategic

- **Marketing/Awareness Steve Hepburn:** Steve Hepburn has gotten an invite to the Ogden Weber Chamber after hours to hand out the fundraising flyer and to spread the word about enrollment openings. Steve Hepburn has not gotten a call back from the people who did the series for the Standard Examiner on Charter schools and feels like the series did not explain the difference between common core and core knowledge. He feels that having a good explanation of the differences between the two could help the school with enrollment. Steve Hepburn left a message with the people who put out the series and will follow up with them.

School Environment

- **Custodian:** A decision needs to be made. The options are hire one person full-time or two part-timers. The main concern of the board is whether one person can keep the school clean by themselves during the hours available. Hendersen has also informed the school that the school does not own the cleaning supplies and equipment. A salary of \$28-30k for an employee is available. Jamie Walker said that she would post a listing to start acquiring applicants for the position. Tom Koehler volunteered to do some research of what other schools have in place and their job description of the position. Jamie Walker will also research how much cleaning equipment would run the school to acquire whether buying or leasing. A decision will be made at a later time.

- **BOD Walk-thru Charity:** Did not join us for the meeting, but will be in town to do the walk-thru later this month.

Board Annual Calendar

- **Professional Development Progress Report:** The Core Knowledge Domain-based Unit writing training went well. It is required for the continued progress towards a school of distinction. 92% of all teachers participated even though it was a voluntary program. Plans are on the schedule to offer additional training to new teachers. New teachers will get new teacher orientation and returning teachers will have time to use what they learned in that workshop and apply it and work together to write units. Aimee Hall is leading the new teacher orientation throughout the year. All teachers have submitted revised curriculum maps and those are posted on the website and Aimee and Lisa are working on updating the hallway display. Peggy Downs passed around a copy of the staff meetings and professional development schedule for the board to review.

Events: Brent Petersen has a Bullying assembly for grades 3rd-6th that is also scheduled during the gym floor refinishing. Andrew Hedrick suggested that the board decide when to have the Christmas party. December 11th was suggested. Jamie Walker brought up the problem of the location and a caterer. It was suggested to ask Suzanne Kemp to host at her house. An activity was suggested. Jamie Walker said she would research activities and prices and a decision will be made at next meeting. She was given \$1000 for her budget.

Administrative Update

- **Director:** Peggy Downs and Brent Petersen offered a question and answer section to their last staff meeting for new teachers who had any questions. Trainings for new teachers in Teach Like A Champion which is teacher techniques GFA focuses on, standards alignment, Riggs phonics, and DIBELS. All the new teachers attended a math in focus meeting at Monticello Academy in West Jordan. Peggy Downs discovered that GFA and Monticello are very similar in their curriculum. Peggy Downs and Jason Finch are trying to find more opportunities to do joint trainings for the teachers and staff. There are mentor teams and Aimee Hall and Sherry Mambot have stepped up to be the team leaders for the mentors. They're taking ownership of the whole program. They have developed the calendar and the agendas for the meetings and Peggy Downs feels confident that they are going to make a fantastic mentor team for the new teachers and anyone else who hasn't reached level 2. Peggy Downs and Brent Peterson have already completed 25 written informal observations in the first three weeks of school, which means they are out there in the classrooms giving the teachers written feedback, support, and being available for them. Peggy Downs handed out her advertisement list on Facebook. Peggy did \$45 worth of advertising on Facebook in July, \$200 in August and so far \$29 in September. In that

collection 19,000 people saw GFA's name. Peggy Downs is planning on doing another Facebook ad this month and keep running it and trying different images and wordings to see what works. Bryan Jensen had his first meeting last week and is really happy with the teachers in the first focus group. He thought that they were very helpful and loved what he was hearing. There is an official special education complaint against GFA. A complaint was filed against the school on August 14th and GFA's response is due by September 14th. The parent has ten days after that to respond and then the state will make a final determination. The basic issue of the complaint is a concern with the level of training provided GFA's staff regarded as what is called the least restrictive environment. GFA will respond to this position and their plans for training. Peggy Downs believes that GFA looks fine and that GFA's position is very strong and the complaint will just go away. All the computers are updated. NWA testing began today and Jamie Walker reports that everything went well without problems. There were a few struggles with the teacher's computers, but Anchor Six was very responsive and present to help resolve the issues. Peggy is planning on looking into acquiring external hard drives for teachers who need them. Steve Hepburn brought up an issue with the PayPal link on the school's website. Peggy Downs said that she would take care of changing that. Squire is the company that GFA hires to do their audits. Squire recently sent Peggy Downs GFA's student membership report. The report states that Squire did a random audit of the students to confirm that GFA does have the number of students they claim they have and that they are attending school. They confirmed that and had no complaints.

- **Dean of Students:** The playground sand is coming out this week. If they do not come, then Brent Petersen will call Andrew Hedrick so that he may contact the company. The playground still needs to be ordered and it will take 6 weeks. The rep did not inform Brent Petersen of this fact when he spoke with her earlier in the summer. Brent Petersen requested to have the rep give him a few more options within GFA's price range, but she did not send any. Peggy Downs then requested more options and the rep sent the option that Brent Petersen had already received. Brent Petersen will give Andrew Hedrick the rep's name and number so that he can talk with her. The plan for the playground now is that the company will leave the old playground structure on the east side of the playground. They will remove the sand and put in woodchips. They will also tear out the west side playground and clear all the sand out and put a six foot chain-link fence around that to secure the area until the new playground comes. That way, GFA can proceed with having the gym floors refinished without tracking sand everywhere. The gym floor will be started Monday and will be finished by the end of that same week. Brent Petersen brought up the problem of painting the bleachers. The bleachers will need to be painted before the gym floor is refinished. Brent Petersen will post on Facebook for volunteers to come help paint the bleachers. There have been problems with traffic flow during drop off and pick up. There was an incident where there was a conflict between parents that some students witnessed, and Brent Petersen is researching

changing policy to help fix the traffic flow problems. Any input is appreciated. Michelle Arnold offered to have her husband come and help with directing traffic. Brent Petersen would like neutral opinions from people who are observing the flow of the traffic during drop off and pick up times to help better address hazards to the parents and students. NWEA testing began today for K-2 only. SAGE has yet to come up with their interim test. Respect Assembly took place on the 5th. There are still issues with the cafeteria. Brent Petersen is having a couple of aides collect feedback on the issues to help with fixing the issues. There have been two suspensions this year so far. One from aggressive behavior on the playground and the other a student accidently brought a razor blade in a package to school.

Other

- **BOD New member Update:** Tom Koehler said he is working on getting new members. Steve Hepburn said he has one potential. Someone who also works with him. She has taught previously. He said he will meet with her later this week. It was sent out publicly that GFA was looking for new Board members.
- **Committee list Update:** Andrew Hedrick sent out a subcommittee list to the board. The list needs to be updated. Andrew Hedrick suggested that the board look over it more and come up with ideas and discuss it at the next meeting. One committee that he wants to look at is the Director Evaluation Committee. Loren Pankratz and Michelle Arnold volunteered to be on the committee. The BOD recruit is Tom Koehler and Steve Hepburn. Andrew Hedrick said he will email Charity Smith and ask her if she would be on the Director Evaluation Committee. Policy Review Committee is Steve Hepburn and Charity Smith. All other committees will be discussed next month. Jared Van Orden let the Board know that they need an Audit Committee as well.

Loren Pankratz motioned to go into closed session. Michelle Arnold seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motioned passed.

Closed Session