

VMA board minutes from meeting Jan 8, 2019

Present: Chris Carle, Alicia Chalmers (telephone), TJ Chitekwe, Mitzi Henson, Bill Johnston, Christine Schlesinger and Roberto Villanueva.

From staff: Neil Phillips, Louis Parker, Cindy Day, Tiffany Mickens and Mya Wiedmeyer

Consultant: Turk Lewis

Meeting called to order at 3PM by the chair. Approval of minutes from Nov 13, 2018 meeting was made by Chris Carle, seconded by Christine Schlesinger and approved unanimously.

Tiffany presented planning for next year both in terms of enrollment as well as teaching. She shared that our student library is now complete and thanked the donors who had made that possible. iReady was the subject of a long discussion due to its unwillingness to be “predictive” caused by the changes in the FSA. All schools in the district are subject to the same concern about how their students are testing. Results for all grades showed improvement from the beginning of the year and Tiffany explained the informational sessions planned for parents on Jan 16th. Parents that cannot attend will be reached out to either by phone or in person. Where needed additional tutoring will be done and thanks were given to the volunteers who make this possible as well as our permanent staff. Kudos were given to Tiffany by Christine and other board members made comments as did Neil.

Turk Lewis presented an updated timeline and suggestions for a proposed capital campaign. The extension of the time for a Certificate of Occupancy to September 2023 and the work then went into its being granted were discussed. Meetings with Fawley Bryant later this month and a meeting with the planning committee were mentioned. The addition of Sharon Lerner to this committee was praised. The concerns over the annual need for donations and ways to reach out to new sources of funds brought thoughts about grant writing and suggestions from around the table. The identification of foundations that are passionate about education is time consuming but could be of great value to VMA.

Mya shared a list of recent donors to the school. Engagement with community foundations was discussed and updates on events was brought up. Mailings to donors in December were positive and Roberto suggested a test program which Mya will expand to ensure that all donors are being reached. Discussion about thanking donors and being in contact with lapsed donors also was considered. Neil complimented Mya for her skills with Donor Perfect and transition into this new job.

Louis presented cash flow numbers and there was more discussion about the new school house and timing concerns. Decisions need to be made shortly so we can proceed from planning to embarking on a capital campaign. Again the need to raise over a million dollars a year from donations was the major subject.

Neil made some comments about possible agencies that might support VMA. We decided to hold an interim meeting in late Feb and a doodle poll for dates has been posted by Alicia. We adjourned at 5:15.

