

Howard Gardner MI Charter School

Public Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a public Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, March 21, 2023. Stephanie Westington, President, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Stephanie led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and took roll call for the board members and non-voting attendees.

The following Trustees attended: Laila Kane, John Ezbiasnky, Michael Barbetti, Laurie Cadden, Wayne Evans, Dino Galli, Dr. Clarence Lamanna, and Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen. Absent from the meeting: Sam Ceccacci and Susan Hennemuth.

Also in attendance: Dr. Marie George, CEO; TreeAnne McEnery, Principal; John Marsico, Business Manager; Joe Ross, Director of Facilities and Security; and Deana Bonacci, Assistant to the CEO.

Stephanie Westington asked if any visitors wished to make comments on items on the agenda, and names and school districts of residence will be recorded before remarks are made. No comments were made.

I. Minutes

Stephanie Westington

Stephanie Westington presented the February 21, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting minutes and asked for approval. A **MOTION** to approve the February 21, 2023 Board meeting minutes, as submitted, was made by Susan Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by John Ezbiasnky. Stephanie asked if there were any comments or corrections on the minutes. Not hearing any, Stephanie called for a vote. All Board of Trustees members present voted in favor of approving the February 21, 2023, minutes as submitted, with two Trustees absent.

II. President's Report

Stephanie Westington

Stephanie Westington welcomed everyone in attendance to the March 2023 Public Board meeting. Stephanie began by reporting the 2023-2024 Lottery was held on March 8th at the school and selected families have been notified. There was a very large population of applicants, with a noticeable increase in middle school applications.

The Howard Gardner Charter School Foundation Board will meet on Wednesday, March 21, 2023. Joshua Pollak, the school's solicitor, will be in attendance to go over the role of the Foundation as it relates to the School with a focus on development and fundraising.

Act 55 required training sessions for Board members are being scheduled. The school was approved by the state to provide this training onsite.

Stephanie then gave an update on the CEO Search process. The Search Committee has received eight applications and the Committee is vetting the applicants.

III. HGMICS Educational Session – “The Parent Forum Impact and Upcoming Initiatives”

Ms. Amanda Burke, Parent Forum President

Ms. Amanda Burke, Parent Forum President, began her presentation by introducing the officers of the Parent Forum. Karen Reed serves as Vice-President, Lee Yeomans as Secretary, Susan Hynds as Treasurer, Elena Kiernan as Volunteer Coordinator and Maggie Hawk as Fundraising Coordinator. Amanda continued by listing and describing the various events the Parent Forum hosted over the course of the 2022-2023 school year such as the August Ice Cream Social, Trunk or Treat in October 2022, Family Fun Night at Roba’s, Movie Night at the school, Ski Club, the Holiday Gift Shop, the Scholastic Book Fair, as well as providing several events for Howard Gardner employees such as Cookie Day and catered lunch from Cara Mia’s. Lastly, Amanda talked about upcoming plans such as the Spring Dance, Spring Mixer, and HGS Friends and Family Day at Knoebels. The largest event, the Parent Forum Walk-a-thon, will take place on May 5, 2023 at the Marketplace at Steamtown.

IV. Finance/Facilities Committee

John Ezbiansky

John Ezbiansky reported the Finance/Facilities Committee met on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 to review the January and February Financial Reports.

1. January 2023 Financial Report

John Marsico

Revenues for January 2023 of \$568,361 are \$56,448 lower than the revenues for December 2022. This slight decrease is due to the increase in rates per student for the Scranton School District for general education students and for special education students leveling over the 2-month periods of December 2022 and January 2023. Expenses for January 2023 of \$500,280 are \$81,838 higher than the expenses for December 2022. This is as expected as there was a 4% increase in Geisinger medical premiums effective January 1, 2023. In addition, we made 2 catch-up payments to our cleaning services vendor in the amount of \$38,290 in January 2023. Also, we continue to see the effect of the increased utility prices. The Net Operating Income for January 2023 is \$68,081, as compared to a \$206,368 in December 2022, with a fiscal year-to-date Net Operating Income of

\$440,141. This is as expected for the month of January 2023 for the reasons above. However, a one-time mathematical error of a net of \$66,979 was made in December 2022 and was rectified in January 2023. This mathematical error in December 2022 indicated that total income in December 2022 was overstated by \$3,093, total expenses were overstated by \$70,072, and thus net operating income was overstated by the net of \$66,979. This one-time adjustment was made in January 2023 and the net operating income now rolls forward correctly from December 2022 to January 2023. Title and ESSER funding received, as well as the National School Lunch Program, remained consistent for January 2023.

The school had \$833,751 in cash at the end of January 2023. This is \$239,193 lower than the balance at the end of December 2022. This decrease from December 2022 to January 2023 was primarily due to the receipt of the balance of the construction loan proceeds in December of \$305,667. All of these dollars, with the exception of \$24,990 which is still on hold pending the release of the Conservation District permit this spring, were paid out in January 2023 to the construction contractors, thus exhausting all loan proceeds. A \$351,829 payment was made to Mar-Paul and a \$49,777 payment was made to Scranton Electric Heating & Cooling in January 2023. These pay applications exceeded the dollars that were on hold but the difference was funded with the remaining fund balance committed to the construction project. We are currently making principal and interest payments on the Construction Loan in the amount of \$25,035.47 per month. The amounts being applied to principal and interest each month are based on a 20 year amortization schedule for a \$4,500,000 loan at an annual percentage rate of 2.99%. The amortization schedule was provided by Baker & Tilly and is being compared and reconciled, if necessary, monthly to the Construction Loan bank statement. The principal balance outstanding after the January 2023 payment is \$4,458,034.

At this time, John Ezbiansky entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report through January 31, 2023, as reported and submitted. The motion was made by Laila Kane and seconded by Dino Galli. John Ezbiansky called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the January 2023 Financial Report, as presented, with two Trustees absent.

2. February 2023 Financial Report

John Marsico

Revenues for February 2023 of \$305,749 are \$262,612 lower than the revenues for January 2023. A one-time true-up of tuition revenue compared to the tuition billing was performed in February 2023 ensuring fiscal year to date tuition income was equivalent to the amounts billed to the school

districts. Expenses for February 2023 of \$385,137 are \$115,143 lower than the expenses for January 2023. This is as expected as noted in the January 2023 Financial Report we made 2 catch-up payments to our cleaning services vendor in the amount of \$38,290 in January 2023. Also, as a result of the billing issues encountered by PPL, we did not receive a February 2023 electricity bill. Based on correspondence received from PPL surrounding this issue, we expect them to back on track with their billing in March 2023. The Net Operating (Loss) for February 2023 is (\$79,388), as compared to Net Income of \$68,081 in January 2023, with a fiscal year-to-date Net Operating Income of \$360,753. This is as expected for the month of February 2023 for the reasons above. Title and ESSER funding received, as well as the National School Lunch Program, remained consistent for February 2023.

The school had \$902,264 in cash at the end of February 2023. This is \$68,513 higher than the balance at the end of January 2023 and is as expected. An \$11,850 payment was made to Scranton Electric Heating & Cooling for outstanding pay application #14 and a \$48,380 payment was made to Joyce Electric for pay application #6 in February 2023. These pay applications were funded with the remaining fund balance committed to the construction project. We are currently making principal and interest payments on the Construction Loan in the amount of \$25,035.47 per month. The amounts being applied to principal and interest each month are based on a 20 year amortization schedule for a \$4,500,000 loan at an annual percentage rate of 2.99%. The amortization schedule was provided by Baker & Tilly and is being compared and reconciled, if necessary, monthly to the Construction Loan bank statement. The principal balance outstanding after the February 2023 payment is \$4,444,490.

At this time, John Ezbiansky entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report through February 28, 2023, as reported and submitted. The motion was made by Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by Laila Kane. John Ezbiansky called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the February 2023 Financial Report, as presented, with two Trustees absent.

V. Academic Committee

Dr. Clarence Lamanna

Dr. Clarence Lamanna reported the Academic Committee met on March 7, 2023. The Committee discussed action steps for the Strategic Plan, the Zoom presentations with Dr. Howard Gardner and the Project Zero goal, benchmarks for student progress, as well as projections for Special Education being somewhat lower for next year compared to the current school year.

VI. Nominating Committee

Laurie Cadden

Laurie Cadden reported the Nominating Committee met on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 to discuss possible candidates for the Board of Trustees.

VII. Personnel Committee

Laila Kane

Laila Kane, in the absence of Sam Ceccacci, reported the Personnel Committee met on March 7, 2023 to discuss an updated organizational chart, the Principal's renewal agreement, and the Employee Recognition event taking place on May 11, 2023.

At this time, Laila Kane entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Principal Employment Agreement with TreeAnne McEnery to extend her service as Principal for the Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School for the three-year period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026. The motion was made by John Ezbiansky and seconded by Michael Barbetti. Laila called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the Principal Employment Agreement, with two Trustees absent.

At this time, Laila Kane entertained a **MOTION** to approve the March 2023 Personnel Report. The motion was made by John Ezbiansky and seconded by Michael Barbetti. Laila called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the March 2023 Personnel Report as presented, with two Trustees absent.

VIII. School Matters

1. Administrative Updates

Dr. Marie George

Dr. George referred to the updates provided by the Administrative team including reports from the Principal, Student Support Services, Facilities and Security, School Operations, and Assistant Business Manager. She augmented the report with information about the zoom sessions with Dr. Howard Gardner which were a unique experience for all students.

IX. New Business

Stephanie Westington

At this time, there was no New Business and Stephanie Westington moved on to adjournment of the meeting.

Adjournment

At 8:00 p.m., Laila Kane made the motion to adjourn the meeting. No further items of business or comments had been raised.

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.**

