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# January 22, 2023

Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Board Chair, Doug Keefe convened the meeting at 5:36 PM.

Meeting style: In Person

Attendees Included:

Board Officers: Doug Keefe; Kari Plaster

In Attendance: Board Members:

Kyla Plaster

Tracy Evans

Ilana Harrus

Mike Risley

Jodie Osofsky

Ashley Hill

Tina Gillman

Administration:

Angela Pontious – Principal

Bethany Hansen

Emily Andersen

David Kubinski

Keegan Fitlow

Absent: Kristi Swett

**Past Board Meeting Minutes Approval**

Jodie moved we approve the minutes, Kari seconded. Motion passed.

**Student Council Report**

Keegan Fitlow : biggest issue is around not many seniors and a lot of new students, new building, not as many students to pass on the culture…. To 3.0 and moving culture to a bad direction. Don’t all eat lunch together, don’t have a sense of underdogs overall, but not something we can bond over anymore. Seniors need to be involved in creating the culture, and we have lots of new students. Some cliques forming, don’t have a communal space we all go to. The SPA 2.0 isn’t great, it isn’t inspiring confidence. Doug, what are the top few things that need to happen?

* The underdog feeling, very small school, had a crappy building but amazing performance spaces, but new kids don’t know what that was like. Shakespeare Festival, knowing we were a small school but competing in the bigger categories. Winning feeling even though we were the underdogs.
* We all ate lunch in the hall together, can hear what they are doing but it was same level. Lots of people are leaving to go to lunch.

The student council could host lunches to bring everyone into the same spot. Maybe an assembly that acknowledges what SPA 2.0 was and what SPA 3.0 will be in the future.

What about performances? Yes, but the spaces had history and you would have the history there. You are carrying on the legacy, right now we are the legacy and there isn’t a sense of an alumni community. Miss the people who used to be there performing. Maybe have alumni come in to do master classes.

Some students brought a concern that there are no bulletin boards in the elevator. Please put up a community bulletin board. Kyla will bring the boards we have from the old school to Bethany. We don’t want to forget our humble beginnings and where we came from. We are starting an alumni association and this is very timely.

Cara with Advisory she kept her kids and started with a new class of freshmen, helping the kids out so that they keep their kids all 4 years. Keegan has had a different advisor all 4 years. Would keep it all the same grade versus all mixed up. Loves the mural idea, we made this and the students the next years could be from the next class. Nice idea to have the old school and have the new school too. Maybe a little lacking in school spirit. We have competition teams and want it to be SPA SPA SPA HOORAH! The biggest thing is SPA is cheering for everyone, not just us. We want to win but we are more focused on the art aspect and support each other. Mr. Smith and all of the teachers are great at this, sharing our ART and creating together.

**Artistic Director Report**

Bethany: the last little while has been amazing, families and everyone. Had the Theatre Showcase performance on the 4th Floor the first time. Also the first time the theatre department performed. Had our huge night for Six on Broadway, traveled there on Trax. Kids were well behaved and this was really inspiring to see kids get to go. We should not take it for granted. Things with Broadway Across America are great and we are planning for our master classes, potentially on Feb. 28th. They are doing Michael Jackson. Broadway Dreams is another group. No additional shows until February, not much in March. Most are preparing for region and state competitions. Those start in March. Going to places where we receive feedback is important. Curriculum should be dove-tailing with what we are performing. We have contemporary/jazz ensemble for the Grizzly Game after the first period. March 11th. Proud of the Directors and all happy to have second semester done and will gear up for the fourth.

Question about feedback from Mean Girls: we were sold out every night. Westminster doesn’t care how many performance nights we have. The decision of how many to have is based on the cost of how much we pay for the rights to it. Having sold out shows and doing VIP and general admission is going to be more lucrative for us. We have discussed hosting more sessions. Thinks we could raise the ticket price and it won’t make any difference but will compound revenue. They also raise the royalties based on ticket price.

Discussed whether we are not allowed to take pictures, backstage, etc… could we not have cast photos of the kids in costume? There is opportunity there and when it was mentioned in the PTO meeting, everyone would pay for that. We have some coming up, would have loved to have photos of Sam in their costumes. Keegan, also challenging as an actor if you can’t post them. Has an idea about Theatre Conservatory.

**Marketing and Development Report**

Angela: Lindsay Charon was our marketer, she was finished on Dec. 31st. The leadership team has taken on marketing for the remainder of this year. Bethany has On the Stage and Bethany and Angela take the rest. They are working on ideas right now. We came up with yard signs. Jess Hirsch has taken on all of our social media. There is more posting and it is happening in the moment. She comes to every event and is making a point to capture those. Tina: in SPA’s name do people know it is a high school? The team is aware of that, and it will be included in the Deseret News. This will be in print in space and digital.

Development: David: the Grizzlies event will be a marketing event too. In addition to raising money, we will have a table out there. After half a year, noted infrastructure was shaky We needed a donor management system. Went from 200 to 1,200 names. Getting a base for that and didn’t do too much. Didn’t attract as many as we were looking for. We netted $13,000. Year-end mailing shocked we didn’t do better, we only raised $1.300 and only 432 even opened their e-mail. We had a video attached and that didn’t fly. The fourth item is we had no signature special event. Report on the web, 86 fund raising ideas from Classy. The events go from bake sales. A dance marathon could be fun – 24 hour event where dancers are out there and raising money for pledges, how many hours and entrance fees.

Bowling Alley with lanes: Another event was shared that you got a lane for $10,000 and a celebrity would talk to those folks each.

Foundations: where to now? Writing grants and David has a hit list and we are going after 10:

Ace: City Project

Zap: County, guidelines out on March 1.

Eccles submitted on Friday. Going after money for Broadway Dreams.

Sorenson Foundation due March 1. We will go for general operating funds.

Herald Burton Foundation due Feb. 15th.

The Stuart Foundation

Hemingway Foundation sometime in March.

SL Arts Council soon.

Dee Foundation due on April 15th.

Also the McCarthy Foundation.

Will put together a business sponsorship package for them to support for the remainder of the year our various Art disciplines. For example, dance or any of our other packages. We should have had this product ready in August. I think we need a lot more networking in the business arena. Think it would be wise to be involved with the SLC Chamber of Commerce.

What have you found? Wants to know the benefits and what it will do for them including how are you benefitting? What do they like to see? Attendance and associations, some want to see their businesses and marketing, how many times they get to see their name. They want to see it all, that night announced, banners, etc.

Keegan: could see it on our jackets as well. The fence could be helpful too. As a Charter School do we have naming rights? Yes. Could put it on the SPA bus.

What about in the programs? We could also do that? When we get cash for the 4th floor, that would be amazing.

We want to collect alumni names. We can write the parents. We could try social media.

Not everyone who donates does it for a product. We are only a few blocks from downtown, I need to be out talking to 15 Chief Marketing Officers for education and theatre. They aren’t looking for a specific thing. Have to spend time meeting and networking. Come take a tour, what about recruitment? Shouldn’t we be looking at that number now?

Both should be equally important and they are. We have to open new sources and connecting to those downtown is critical. We could also be a local United Way type.

**Administrative Report**

Angela; at 155 today, we had 3 graduates that have moved on. We are maintaining 155 students. We have had our Mission statement focus group. Waiting for the student feedback. Relationship with Highland, they started the selection process last week and sent a letter to say we aren’t doing that. We will be offering Earth, Systems and Biology. This room will likely be turned into a classroom.

Academics: we are in need of a math teacher. I am interviewing and will continue. Meanwhile we are operating under the direction of Emily’s license. Done under a licensed teacher. Our students are staying up to date. Want to hire the right person.

Shadow Day: Friday, Feb. 2nd. Jessie said we have 40 students right now. We have 2 more.

Would kids do it? What would we have to give away? How about an Ipad or a raffle? Get a ticket for the opportunity drawing. A raffle would be cool, but something that has more to do with SPA, like maybe a dance party or something, perhaps a celebration. Have a thermometer and if the whole school gets a referral.

**PTO Report**

Kyla: regular schedule every second Friday of the month, at 3:30. We got that in the minutes this last time. We spoke about doing concessions this Saturday and need signups for that. We talked about book drives, department liaisons and the PTO are available if anyone needs help. PTO did a survey out and asked for feedback to have department liaisons, talking about cast photos. We reached out to Nathan to do that. We are definitely talking about this. Also, if there is a space for doing the reels or pictures for applications and things like that. Even if we just did a self-taping class, over the previous summer I learned how to do that; I couldn’t have done that. We also need to learn this as part of what we do. Lots of professional auditions would be great.

Teacher Appreciation: need to do something on a quarterly basis tied into spring break. May 6-10th, want to do potluck or something like that. We got a VP: Cheyenne Starks. Tina is also happy to help with Teacher Appreciation.

**Land Trust Meeting**

Kari Plaster: Chair

Tina Gillman: Vice Chair

Ilana Harrus: Parent

Angela Pontious: Principal

$46,000 dollars were used for teachers. Paid for the Advisory Program called Meet This World and the planners were purchased with those funds. Speaking to Emily and Stacy and speaking about other options. No one likes this program so we are exploring new ideas. How successful and how beneficial to have success coaches (2 FT success coaches). Emily is working with those. Predicted funds next year are $50k. This covers our after school staff who help. This year it’s about planning for next year. We take a vote in the third meeting about how to use it. Are we required to spend money on social emotional learning? This has to go to a specific need. Some topics are required by the state. The students like it, they are more focused once they get this. The curriculum is different for each student. The committee has to be 50% or more of parents, which this new group is.

**Financial Report Review**

Jeff: brief rundown of the financial summary. State funding didn’t change too much, we went up slightly. Biggest change in revenue, not too worried, worried about cash availability. The donation that the building owners gave us was in June, we had hoped to defer that, but the Auditors said we had to take it in June. That’s the reduction. We are up a little in state and federal. With expenses we are doing pretty good and are saving a little bit. I like to bring up property and equipment, it’s been high all year. Not concerned about going over there. Supplies and materials are doing pretty good. The other categories we are doing fine on. Fund raising is the biggest area to focus on. Overall the budget we had I think Angela and others have done a good job working on the parameters. Doug: we are way behind on fund raising. We need to catch-up on that and we will speak about that. Doug sent out the audit report from last year.

There was an ERC credit in the audit that got reversed.

Employee Retention Credit: this was for Covid. There is some debate whether charter schools should have qualified or not. Governmental entities were not allowed. Some think we are a government entity. There are 3 charters notified by the IRS that they have to pay it back. Most think they will win. Auditors said we are not counting this revenue. We are not allowed to count it as revenue. This was reduced from revenue and deferred in the balance sheet ($500k).

The other audit finding was our fault. The SL School District when we were at Highland, they would bill every quarter. Their bill comes later. We had closed books and had given to auditors and they had to go back and restate those. Those were the two findings.

Our view is it is a risk, but a low one that the revenue will eventually be reversed back in our favor. The industry association, UAPCS, has obtained a legal letter supporting our position.

**Charter Authorization Status – Next Steps**

Talking to SL Community College and the State Charter School Board. The State CSB is supportive and wants to help us out. There is an application we are filling out to change authorizers from SLCSD to State CSB, We have to translate our current Charter and Bylaws from the District to a State CSB Charter. Doug is leading the application process. Need to pull other financial and academic reports. Need to put forward a business plan with projections. They will want to know where we are and where we are heading. The plan is to review those drafts with them and submit by early/mid March. That timing should work. We’ll amend Charter and Bylaws, Emily will help if needed.

**Closed Meeting at 7:19 for Contractual and Personnel Discussions**

Motioned by Kyla and seconded by Tina to close the meeting. Motion passed.

**Reopened Meeting at 8:11**

Tracy moved and Kyla seconded. Motion passed.

Next Board Meeting TBD.

Tina motioned to adjourn the meeting.