



THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

THE GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

One Mackworth Island, Falmouth, ME 04105

Board of Directors Meeting June 3, 2021 Minutes

- 5:06pm I. **Call to Order and Roll Call of Board Members – Lisette Belanger, Chair**
Michelle Ames, Roxanne Baker, Lisette Belanger, Robin Foster, Jennifer Gaulin, Paula Matlins, Tommy Minch, Terry Morrell, Amber Oakes, Mike Pulsifer
Board Excused: Corda Kinzie, Anna Perna
Student representatives: Keyana Kassa
Board nominees: Jaime Guerette
Administration: Karen Hopkins, Cathy Murphy, Kaitlyn Millen
Staff: Natalie Austin (staff nominee), Kevin Bohlin, Kristen Shorey, Katie Duncan, Steva Feir-Scarpelli, Megan Garrity, Alicia Pieper, Christy LoCicero
Interpreters: Marisa Zastrow, Julia Schafer,
Public: Shane Feldman and Davin Searls of *Innivee Strategies*, Laura Peterson, Samantha Jones, Rita Sloat
- 5:10pm II. **Motion to approve May 6, 2021 board minutes**
“I move to approve the minutes of the May 6th, 2021 board meeting without changes.”
Robin Foster **motioned**. Tommy Minch **seconded**.
9 In favor. 0 Opposed. 1 Abstained. Terry Morrell was not present at May meeting.
- 5:13pm III. **Adjustments to the Agenda**
“I move to approve the agenda with these changes: approval of the host family, one additional staff nomination and three staff resignations.”
Mike Pulsifer **motioned**. Terry Morrell **seconded**.
10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.
- 5:15pm IV. **Public Comments** Question from member Amber Oakes as to why the meeting was being recorded. The board secretary explained the reasons for recording and the chair stated she had approved recording and if anyone objected to let her know.
- 5:17pm V. **Shane Feldman, Davin Searls *Innivee Strategies***
Shane and Davin shared their progress toward the strategic plan slated to be completed and presented to the board for approval at the August 5th meeting.
 - Focus groups have been well attended and provided invaluable feedback
 - Staff
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Deaf community
 - Medical community
 - LEAs
 - Board members
 - A community survey and a staff survey will be shared in English and ASL
 - An ad hoc committee is working on the plan’s mission, vision and values statement and will present to the board at the July 1st meeting



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- In July, all information from the focus groups and surveys will be presented to the ad hoc group who will then develop the strategic plan goals
- The hope is to present these goals to the board at the August 5th meeting

5:28pm VI. **Budget Update**

Catherine Murphy, *Director of Operations/Human Resources*

Revenues: currently collected \$9.6 million against a \$9.8 million budget. Won't be as far behind in our revenues because the majority of our revenues are state allocations. Stock market is doing well which make numbers look a little better although it's not 'real' money.

Expenses: We spent \$7.9 million against a budget of \$9.8 million. This is due to the impact of COVID and remote instruction

Because of flat-funding by the state, we will have a budget shortfall for 2022 and 2023. Shortfall for 2022 will be \$87,000 and in 2023 the shortfall will be \$175,000. The leadership team, with the help of the coordinators and classroom teachers, will need to figure out how/where we are going to find that money. To that point, we are gathering data on student needs for next year... what do the students need and what do the programs look like. This is a challenge because things constantly change throughout the year. For instance, suddenly we hear of 2 or 3 more students coming into one of our programs. We really need to scrub the budget and because of that, asked the state for only a 1% increase in our allocation for the next 2 years. Hopefully, in July or August, we will present a plan for a balanced budget to the board.

Capital Reserve Account. Because of our large fund balance the state will probably want most of that money back. A Capital Reserve Account is an account strictly for building repairs and expenses. It's a good way for us to put money aside and not have a huge spike in our operational budget because of an emergency repair/replace situation. Typically the state encourages this type of fund. This is not a fund to cover operating expenses as that would cause the fund to run out.

Chapter 304 revisions have been delayed. This has allowed us to reach out to the Department of Finance and the Bureau of General Services to prepare them for the creation of the Capital Reserve Account and our integrating it into Chapter 304. If Chapter 304 passes, great. If not, we can move the money out of the account.

5:40pm VII. **Executive Director's Report**

- Shout out to maintenance team
 - freshening the picnic area
 - spruce-up of the grounds
 - building updates and maintenance
- Lots of outside play for preschool, and the elementary students temporarily on island
- Deaf seniors plan to return in the fall
- Specific museum hours to be established



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- HRSA grant on state-wide needs assessments is coming to completion with a report including how to work with the medical community and hospitals to ensure birth-22 children are a part of the process, this report will be presented to the board
- NH grant work is coming to a close
 - o Helpful information for TODs, staff and parents to understand the NASDE (National Association of Special Ed Directors) guidelines
- June 16th, All Staff meeting
 - o Innivee Strategies will share updates
 - o Review of certifications and projects needed to be completed
 - o Self- and department assessments; are they following NAEYC guidelines
 - How can we plan for summer and fall
 - How can we improve our curriculum
 - How can we improve assessments/certification processes
 - How is our instruction
- June 17th all staff safely in-person on island for an ice cream social
 - o Museum will be open to staff
- Kaitlyn and the ESY team are working to create plans for summer school on island
- PSO will continue on a referral basis
- Resignations
 - o Margaret Ryan is retiring but will continue in a volunteer capacity
 - o Deaven Smith is relocating
 - o Polly Early is pursuing a new opportunity
 - o Abby Wilkins-Booth will work for MECDHH/GBSD as a contractor
 - o Megan Dube is relocating

5:55pm VIII. Committee Reports

- **Policy** Mike Pulsifer reporting: nothing to report
- **Strategic Planning** Michelle Ames reporting: nothing to report, Innivee Strategies covered it all
- **Human Resources & Finance** Terry Morrell reporting: nothing to report
- **Facilities** Lisette Belanger reporting: nothing to report
- **Board Development** Michelle Ames reporting: thinking about board retreat and training for new members
- **Member Recruitment & Retention** Roxanne reporting: legislative hearing for nominees and reappointments on Friday, June 4th
- **Legislative Action** Robin Foster reporting: nothing to report
- **Bylaws** Terry Morrell reporting: nothing to report

New Business

6:00pm IX. Motion to approve an hour-long July board meeting on Thursday, July 1, 2021 to review and approve the MECDHH/GBSD mission, vision, and values (MVV).

"I move to approve an hour-long board meeting on July 1, 2021 to review and approve the updated MECDHH/GBSD mission, vision, and values (MVV) without changes."

Roxanne Baker **motioned**. Lisette Belanger **seconded**.

10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.



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- 6:02pm X. **Staff Resignations** Polly Earl, Meaghan Dube and Abby Wilkins-Bishop
“I move to accept the resignations of Polly Earl, Teacher of the Deaf; Meaghan Dube, Teacher of the Deaf; and Abby Wilkins-Bishop, Speech Language Pathologist without changes.”
Mike Pulsifer **motioned**. Jennifer Gaulin **seconded**.
10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.
- 6:04pm XI. **Motion to approve Host Family Applicant, Rita Sloat**
“I move to approve Rita Sloat as the MECDDHH/GBSD host family for school year 2021-2022 without changes.”
Paula Matlins **motioned**. Tommy Minch **seconded**.
10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.
- 6:12pm XII. **2nd Year Probationary Contracts**
– Jennifer Opperman
– Caitlin O’Connell
“I move to approve 2nd-year probationary contracts for Jennifer Opperman and Caitlin O’Connell without changes.”
Tommy Minch **motioned**. Amber Oakes **seconded**.
10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.
- 6:15pm XIII. **Continuing Contracts**
– Kevin Bohlin
“I move to approve a continuing contract for Kevin Bohlin without changes.”
Tommy Minch **motioned**. Roxanne Baker **seconded**.
10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.
- 6:18pm XIV. **Staff Nomination** Natalie Austin for Director of Early Intervention and Family Engagement
“I move to accept the nomination of Natalie Austin for the position of Director of Early Intervention and Family Engagement, effective June 7, 2021 without changes.”
Tommy Minch **motioned**. Jennifer Gaulin **seconded**.
10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.
- 6:26pm XV. **Staff Nomination** Jennifer Hickey for ASL Specialist, South
“I move to accept the nomination of Jennifer Hickey for the position of ASL Specialist, South, effective July 1, 2021 without changes.”
Roxanne Baker **motioned**. Amber Oakes **seconded**.
9 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.



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6:29pm XVI. **Staff Nomination** Christy LoCicero for Special Education/Teacher of the Deaf, South

“I move to accept the nomination of Christy LoCicero for the position of Special Education/Teacher of the Deaf, South without changes.”

Tommy Minch **motioned**. Terry Morrell **seconded**.

9 In favor. 1 Opposed. 0 Abstained.

6:34 pm XVII. **Motion to Exit Public Meeting and Enter Executive Session to discuss a staff member’s request for leave.**

“I move to exit the public meeting and enter Executive Session as per article MRS 405-6A at 6:34 to discuss a staff member’s request for leave”

Tommy Minch **motioned**. Robin Foster **seconded**.

10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.

6:45pm XVIII. **Motion to Exit Executive Session and Enter the Public Meeting**

“I move to exit Executive Session and enter the public meeting at **6:45.**”

Tommy Minch **motioned**. Amber Oakes **seconded**.

10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.

6:46pm XIX. **Motion to Approve an employee request for leave**

“I move to approve a staff member’s request for leave without changes.”

Tommy Minch **motioned**. Robin Foster **seconded**.

10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.

6:46pm XX. **Announcements**

- LD1336 passed
- Deaf tea committee needs nominations for awards
- Retreat for the fall with full board in October?
 - Share ideas with Michelle for location and agenda items
- Deaf culture festival is the last Saturday in September and will be held outdoors on island
- GBSD 65th anniversary, celebrate next spring, let Karen know if you want to join the planning committee

6:52pm XXI. **Adjournment**

“I move that we adjourn to **Thursday, July 1, 2021.**”

Roxanne Baker **motioned**. Amber Oakes **seconded**.

10 In favor. 0 Opposed. 0 Abstained.