

Odyssey Academy
6201 Noble Avenue North
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Wednesday September 21, 2011
6:00 P.M.

Odyssey Board Mission

The purpose of the Board, on behalf of Odyssey Academy membership, is to create sustainable conditions in which Odyssey Academy achieves desired results for students, parents, and staff in a financially responsible manner.

Community Members: None

Guest Visitors: Steve Skramstad, Presenter – Strategic Planning Process

1.0 Call to Order: Board Chairperson, Jodie Hardenbrook, called to order the regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Odyssey Academy at 6:03 P.M.

Roll Call:

Present: Chair Jodie Hardenbrook and Members; Alicen Thorstad, James Rosengren, Kris Lawrence-Anderson, Lisa Larson, Pa Modou Ann, Craig Smith, Barb Newbauer, John Sedey, Executive Director, ex-officio member.

Absent: Ian Sinclair

2.0 Additions to Agenda – Made at Board Meeting: It was agreed that any additions needed would be added as the meeting progressed.

3.0 Approval of Agenda: September 21, 2011

Motion: Larson moved, seconded by Rosengren, to approve the September 21, 2011 agenda.

Motion carried.

4.0 Approval of Minutes: Regular Board Meeting: August 24, 2011

Lawrence-Anderson requested a correction be made to the August 24, 2011 Board minutes under agenda item 8.7 Marketing Committee, to state, the reason that Odyssey had to pull out of the Robbinsdale Parade was due to the committee being unable to access the parent volunteer database to provide the necessary updates needed for the event.

Motion: Thorstad moved, seconded by Rosengren, to approve the Regular Board Meeting minutes, with the noted corrections, from August 24, 2011.

Motion carried.

5.0 Community Comments: No community comments.

6.0 Closed Meeting as Needed: A closed meeting was not called.

7.0 New Business:

7.1 Fund Balance Policy – First Reading: Sedey announced that the audit had been completed and presented a first reading of the Fund Balance Policy to the Board.

The Board discussed the expectation for Odyssey's administration to operate a successful fund balance.

First reading – no action taken.

At this time, the agenda was adjusted to allow for a presentation by Steve Skramstad, on the Strategic Planning Process; which is located under agenda item 9.4 Strategic Planning.

8.0 Committee Reports:

8.1 Community Action: Thorstad reported that the committee reviewed the feedback from families regarding how the Open House was structured, as well as, the disjointed and somewhat unwelcome feeling the event conveyed to those attending.

A discussion followed focusing on what could be changed in the structure of the evening to promote a more inviting setting for new and returning students and their families.

The committee agreed that these concerns needed to be addressed and corrected when planning next year's event.

8.2 Health and Wellness: Larson updated the Board on how the SHIP Grant money was being utilized in regards to staff health and wellness.

Smith added that he was currently researching the cost of purchasing a refrigerated healthy drink and food vending machine for the staff lounge.

8.3 Finance: Rosengren reviewed the Cash Flow and Balance Sheet with the Board noting that Odyssey had received the holdback payment from the State. He reviewed how Lease-Aid is calculated and reported that Odyssey's Lease-Aid had been adjusted based on the current enrollment.

Sedey added that the Lease-Aid law had been extended for one more year. He stated that the State of Minnesota will not start paying the Lease-Aid until a budget revision had been completed.

8.4 School Improvement: Smith reported that the State of Minnesota had asked for a waiver to withdraw from No Child Left Behind on a national level. He briefly explained to the Board that with the waiver, schools would not be held accountable for any declines in test scores; however, any improvement in test scores would also not be recorded. He noted that this would leave schools, including Odyssey, at a standstill.

8.5 Technology: Smith reported that the committee had not met, however he did report that Engrade, the electronic grading system, was up and running. He also added that the committee would be looking at ways to provide text communication to Odyssey families.

8.6 Marketing: Committee did not meet. No report given.

8.7 Facilities/OSBO: Sedey reported that High Mark was no longer working with Odyssey and that the Charter School Development Corporation was again working with Odyssey to try and make a building purchase. He added that a contractor was in the process of bidding out the work for the building improvements.

9.0 Director's Report:

9.1 Enrollments: Sedey reported that student enrollment was at 266, which was 25 more students than last year at this time.

9.2 School Opening: Sedey stated that the beginning of the school year went smoothly.

9.3 Curriculum Adoption: Sedey reported that the year started out with staff adopting the new curriculum updates. He added that the staff was using the Wednesday meeting time to continue providing instruction in each of the curriculum areas.

9.4 Strategic Planning: Skramstad, a fourth and fifth grade teacher with Odyssey, provided a brief presentation to the Board on the Strategic Planning process. He explained the importance for Odyssey to have an identity that makes it unique in comparison to other schools. He stated that part of the process would be to look at the current practices and core values of its staff and students, as they pertain to the school and the educational opportunities that it provides. He discussed the need to set goals when it comes to increasing parental involvement, improving student test scores, and marketing Odyssey to the surrounding community. Skramstad invited Board Members to make suggestions or comments.

Modou Ann started a discussion focusing on the process of strategic planning. He offered his participation in Odyssey's Strategic Planning process.

Lawrence-Anderson added that it is often beneficial to review an organization's mission statement upon starting the strategic planning process.

Thorstad stated that the community surrounding Odyssey was showing resurgence in families with young children moving in to the area.

Newbauer suggested involving students in activities which would focus on empowering them to be young leaders could be an option when looking at creating a unique identity for Odyssey.

Smith suggested that the December Board Meeting would be a good time to bring Skramstad back for an update of the Strategic Planning process.

10.0 Consent Agenda:

10.1 Payment of Bills/Payroll:

Motion: Smith moved, seconded by Newbauer, to approve the disbursement of checks # 20748-20796, for the payment of bills, including payroll.

Motion carried.

10.2 Personnel Action:

10.2.1 Hires: Sedey recommended to the Board the hiring of Amanda LeFevre for the kindergarten teacher position and Sherifa Spriggs for the paraprofessional position. He noted that the agenda should be amended to remove 10.2.1.3 from the Personnel Action at this time.

10.2.1.1 Kindergarten Teacher: Amanda LeFevre

10.2.1.2 Paraprofessional: Sherifa Spriggs

Motion: Rosengren moved, seconded by Larson, to approve the hiring of Amanda LeFevre for the kindergarten teacher position and Sherifa Spriggs for the paraprofessional position.

Motion carried.

10.2.2 Resignations: No Resignations.

10.3 Receipt of Donations: No Donations.

10.4 Contracts: No Contracts.

10.5 Assurance of Compliance (non-discrimination in the use of funds): Sedey suggested to the Board that they approve an Assurance of Compliance which states that Odyssey will not discriminate in the use of all federal and state dollars it receives.

Motion: Thorstad moved, seconded by Newbauer, to approve the Assurance of Compliance.

Motion carried.

10.6 FY12 Budget Revision: Sedey recommended to the Board that they adopt the FY12 budget revision to reflect an enrollment number of 266 students which would lead to the adjustment of the general education aid, the amount of Lease-Aid received and the total cost of Odyssey's lease.

Motion: Rosengren moved, seconded by Thorstad, to approve the FY12 budget revision to reflect an enrollment number of 266 students.

Motion carried.

11.0 Old Business:

11.1 Discussion of Change of Board Election Year to Match School/Fiscal Year: Sedey introduced the idea to change the Board year to align with the fiscal/school year calendar.

The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages to changing the calendar with the main focus being the possible change to this year's scheduled Board elections.

11.2 Board Elections Committee Update: Hardenbrook announced that the nomination forms for the upcoming elections had been sent out.

The Board continued to discuss whether or not the November election could be changed.

The Board agreed to changing the election year, and to having Sedey obtain a legal opinion regarding the matter.

Sedey stated that after he consulted the attorney, he would notify the Board if the election needs to occur in November, so the committee can proceed with sending out the necessary election paperwork.

Motion: Newbauer moved, seconded by Larson, to approve changing the Board election year.

Motion carried.

12.0 Action to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 P.M.

Smith moved, seconded by Rosengren.

Motion carried.