

**Linn Christian Education Association
Isaac Newton Christian Academy
Board Meeting Minutes
2023-04-25 6:00-8:15pm**

Attendance

- staff: Dean Ridder, Tracy King
- board members: Neil Gutschmidt, Amy McDonald, Jonathan Newberry, Bob Mosey, Stephanie Prochaska, Laura Devaisher, Harris Holsapple, Barb McDaniel; John Garbes was absent due to illness
- guests: Steve Howard and Katie Warner, potential new board members

Opening

Amy opened the meeting in prayer. Amy introduced potential board member Steve Howard, and each board member, in turn, introduced themselves. Laura shared a short devotional from Psalm 46, that God is always with us, even in the worst situations, and He still does miracles.

Neil volunteered to present a devotional at the May meeting.

Amy noted that a board vote was taken via email to accept a recommendation from Dean to extend an offer to Christina Root in an elementary teaching position, which passed unanimously.

Secretary's Report

Bob had provided draft minutes from the March meeting to the board, in advance. Amy had provided some enhancements and clarifications, including details on the financial report from the Treasurer. Neil made a motion to accept the minutes with the enhancements; Harris seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by a verbal vote.

Head Of School's Report

Dean presented three policies for review, with no changes proposed. Board policies 7.10, 8.14.02, and 9.01.02 were all approved with no changes.

Dean reviewed the results of a recent security audit, paid for by the state, providing a summary for the board's awareness. Many of the findings were physical facility oriented, and will be considered for future investment. Amy asked for confirmation on an overall assessment, confirming the findings were enhancements and not "mandates" and our process is appropriate. Dean concurred that the report did not include an opinion on our state of security per se, but generally positive and findings were, in fact, enhancements. A state grant exists that may be available to help fund facility enhancements, but further investigation is necessary to determine potential strings attached. Neil requested an update from Dean at a future meeting on the mechanisms for the grant.

Dean reported that Christina Root was issued a contract and has signed as an elementary teacher for the 23/24 school year. He is still looking for candidates to fill other open staff positions.

Director Of Development & Enrollment Report

Tracy reported that Annual Banquet preparation is going well. There are 270 attendees registered, more than last year's 234. There are 9 business table sponsors and 20 individual table sponsors, both more than last year.

\$52k of the \$201,545 STO allotment for the 23/24 school year has been raised. A few additional students receiving STO assistance in the current 22/23 school year have withdrawn from Isaac Newton, and their prorated balance will be returned to the STO.

An additional \$159k has been raised in donations, of the \$270k budget, including sponsorship for the Annual Banquet.

Tracy reported continuing volatility in current year and next year enrollment. Current year enrollment remains flat at 277, with 2 departures of students that were new this year, for varying but largely practical reasons, offset by 2 new students. Enrollment for next year (23/24) is currently estimated to be 350, up 25% from current year. There was discussion about one particular grade, which currently has enrollment right on the edge of what makes sense to split into two sections. A decision will be made at the May board meeting.

Treasurer's Report

As a result of technology impacts, Neil didn't have financial data in advance of the meeting, but will send out a report to the board when the data can be assembled. Julie Sattler is working through an upgrade to the software used for payroll and other bookkeeping.

Closed Session

Tracy, Katie, and Steve were dismissed from the meeting for a closed session discussion on staffing. Upon completing the discussion, Neil made a motion to approve Dean's recommendation to not renew Mr. Robinson's contract for next year; Jonathan seconded. The motion passed, with one abstention.

Tracy, Katie, and Steve returned to the meeting.

Students First Act / Education Savings Accounts

Dean said the state has advertised that ESA applications will be available sometime in May and are required to be submitted to the state, by parents, at the end of June. Amy asked about the status of reviewing the impacted areas, in light of the impending growth in the student body. Dean said several different areas are already being reviewed, including lunch, maintenance, and other facility aspects, plus the Resource department and other faculty and administration aspects.

Annual Meeting

Amy reminded the board about the date and time for the annual meeting, May 8th, 6:30-7:30pm, and encouraged board members to attend.

Facilities Committee

Amy reported, on John's behalf, that he is working with the facilities committee on the summer project: replacement of the final original windows, and the facelift of the Pre-K classroom. A deeper dive of the longer-term facility considerations is targeted for the May board meeting.

High School Committee

Laura will be assembling this committee soon.

July Board Meeting/Board Training

Amy proposed splitting the normal July meeting/retreat into separate gatherings, to allow an emphasis on strategic discussion. Board members were generally interested in the separate meetings, especially including a training component. Amy and Dean will follow up on the availability of the trainer, and work with the board to pin down a date.

Closing

The meeting concluded in praise and prayer.

Future Board Meetings

- May 23rd