

## **The Children's Education Center of the Islands**

Board Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2023 at 10am

### **Board Members Present:**

Andrea Murphy via Zoom

Matt Gaudreau

Brad Andres via Zoom

Michelle Keltner

### **Board Members Absent:**

Laura Gales

*These minutes summarize the discussion and action of items of the present members of the CECI Board of Directors on Friday October 13, 2023 at 10am*

#### 1. Welcome and Roll Call

- a. Andrea Murphy, board president, called meeting to order at 10:03am and conducted a roll call to determine if there was a quorum present
- b. Minutes from previous meeting were accepted as written

#### 2. Old Business

- a. The Board Resolution to keep Matt Gaudreau on the Board of Directors was available, however without two (2) members present in the room, it was decided that signing of the resolution would be completed at the school when the President (Andrea Murphy) and the Vice President (Brad Andres) were available. Michelle Keltner (Director) was able to sign

#### b. A discussion was had pertaining to the formation of new sub committees

- i. Laura Gales (Secretary) had executed and sent out descriptions of four (4) committees to be put into place for the school (Restoration & Resiliency; Fundraising; Governance; Community Engagement)

- ii. Brad Andres (Vice President) pointed out that it was necessary to have a Finance Committee given the continued efforts of the Board and the Director to bring the financials into a more organized state, and to continue to make decisions on accounts (both active and new)

- iii. After discussion pertaining to the additional committee which would make one more committee than board members could head, it was decided that the best course of action would be to have two (2) committees. The first would encompass Financials, Insurance, Construction/Restoration/Resiliency, and Governance. The second committee would focus on Fundraising and Community Engagement

iv. Matt Gaudreau (Treasurer) asked if he could still act as the liaison between the preschool and The Sanibel School since he already put those plans into motion. This stemmed from the assumption that Matt and Brad would head up the Financial, Insurance, Construction/Restoration/Resiliency Committee. It was discussed that Board members, while heading up/being a member of one committee over another, would still be able to have a hand across both committees where needed and this would not be a problem

c. Updates from Benchmark on insurance and adding square footage to the school were then discussed.

i. Michelle Keltner (Director) has not been able to get in touch with anyone at Benchmark for a few weeks. It was discussed that she should keep trying, and that Matt would also reach out. Michelle and the rest of the Board had discussed a project to be potentially completed over Christmas Break, to include new windows, siding, doors, etc. to be completed by Benchmark, however there is no plan, contract or completion date in place yet

ii. Matt gave an update that Benchmark has also not responded about working through the insurance claims with him. Matt sent the insurance breakdowns to Brian Wood and Brad Nickel previously, but they did not respond. Matt brought up that he (and potentially Benchmark) needs to go through the line items to cross check what was paid out by Frontline & Wright Flood, versus what was paid to complete the projects. There is potentially money that can still be recouped

iii. The Board members present discussed what needs to be done in terms of adding usable space/buildings/classrooms to the campus. The overarching discussion concluded that adding a brand new 3k sq. ft. building does not seem reasonable at this time given the financial constraints and scope of project. As Director, Michelle indicated that she does need additional space, both for the present and assuming the school will continue to grow. This could look like an addition to the school (either connected, stand alone, or semi-connected by an enclosed walkway at a smaller scale). Michelle also noted that she would really like it if the space below Thompson Hall could be remodeled into an indoor "outdoor" space for kids and potentially for outside events. This would mean it is enclosed but has outdoor elements with all around windows and access to the playground/outside. Matt mentioned that we may be able to work with an architect to put phased plans together for future use. This could entail an addition now, a second phase if the school grows, and a potential third phase so the end result would be similar to the initial plan of a brand-new building and campus. This was tabled as an idea to bring to an architect, but tempered by the fact that the current board would not be the same when this would be implemented, and a new board would be able to assess and make better decisions at the time it was needed

iv. Discussion was had about how to approach the need for space in the meantime as well. This encompassed speaking about portables as a temporary solution. It was decided that the school should get estimates for what a portable would cost, what it would look like, where it would go, and if it was reasonable. Michelle brought up a concern that if it was away from Thompson Hall, she would not be able to easily access it. This was noted as something to investigate, whether it can be attached/elevated, etc.

### 3. New Business

a. Per the conversation concerning the new committees above, how best to add members to these committees was discussed. Currently there has been very little interest in joining a board or committee, however with the school year still relatively new, rolling out the newly discussed committees may have a most positive effect

i. Board members also discussed the makeup of these committees, as well as the board. The prevailing attitude here was to keep the Board set up as parent-led, given the history of it being a co-op. Bringing in outside community members has been a topic recently, however the Board discussed that it seemed to be in the best interest of the school to keep the Board makeup just parents. Brad Andres discussed that there is the chance that adding non-member/family/parents to the Board could completely change the way the school is handled, meaning more of a business/corporation than it has been in the past. This could potentially have consequences in terms of how money is spent, how the school is run, who is involved etc. All present agreed with this assessment

b. Fundraising was discussed, speaking to a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. It was discussed that the school could combine that with a major Fundraising event for 2024. As was discussed in previous meetings however, the need for plans for the school is of utmost importance in order to be able to show potential donors what they would be donating to. This came back to Michelle reaching out to Joyce Owens pertaining to the potential new plans of an addition, researching portables, and deciding on a plan before reaching out to any event planners to assist in putting this event together. Andrea Murphy indicated she would help with this event, starting with finding a planner, but also agreed the Board needs to be set on the scope of the project

### 4. Director's Update

a. Michelle provided the following update to the board:

i. Michelle Keltner indicated that a new teacher was hired and was being onboarded. Due to this, she will be able to resume Director activities more so, since she had been covering daily classes while the employee search was taking place

Next Board Meeting 11/10/2023 at 9am at the Sanibel Public Library with a Virtual Option