

Madrone Trail Public Charter School

Jackson County, Oregon

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 5:30 pm

Madrone Trail Public Charter School – 3070 Ross Lane, Medford, OR 97502

I. Call to order/ Roll call

Amy called to order the regular meeting of the Madrone Trail Public Charter School Board at 5:45pm at Madrone Trail Public Charter School 3070 Ross Ln. Central Point, OR 97502.

Sarah conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Amy Gygax, Sarah Trujillo, Jane Higgins, Monica Rathjen, Leann Tourzan, Louise Lavergne, Kellee O'Shea

Karen Bailey (Administrator)

II. Opening verse

III. Approval of minutes and agenda adjustments

Motion approved

Sarah Trujillo I make a motion to approve February minutes **Amy Gygax** I second the motion

Aye – 5 (Higgins, Lavergne, Gygax, Trujillo, Tourzan, Rathjen, O'Shea)

No – 0

- ## **IV. Perspective Board Members Interview: Brenda Stein – Amy Gygax**
- Brenda, what skills will you be bringing to the board? **Brenda Stein** I can be on the finance committee **Amy Gygax** As it says on her application, Brenda is a financial advisor **Sarah Trujillo** I am interested to know why you are interested in serving on our board. **Brenda Stein** My main reason is because of what K through 8 did for my son, It was not a Waldorf school, but it was life changing for him to be in that kind of supportive environment. It was critical for his development, and I am so grateful. Also, it's a great opportunity to help, and serve. **Jane Higgins** The board has always been presented as it is kind of easy, but there is a lot of work to do as in reading, following up, work sessions. We are coming into a busy financial work time. Does your schedule allow time to do the kind of work the board is needing? **Brenda Stein** I gave that a lot of

thought and I decided that it is important enough to me that I am willing to make that commitment. **Leann Tourzan** I know you have visited a few times, what do you perceive as some of the strengths of the school? **Brenda Stein** I still can't get the play out of my head. Those eighth graders were amazing! **Leann Tourzan** And what about weaknesses? **Brenda Stein** One of the biggest challenges, and where I can help is the finance committee. I am not sure exactly what it will entail, but I know I will be able to offer insight. **Louise Lavergne** What are two things that you are passionate about in your life? **Brenda Stein** First, my family. My son is a senior, in Corvallis. When I got the chance to come here, because my son is doing so well in high school, I didn't want to move him. My husband is in Corvallis, while I start building my business. So, my family and my work are what I am passionate about. **Louise Lavergne** What do you do for fun? **Brenda Stein** I love to hike. **Amy Gygax** Do you have any questions for us? **Brenda Stein** I am anxious to know if you feel like I will be a help to the finance committee? **Karen Bailey** We haven't had someone able to help with that from the board. IT is time for budget, and the faculty need their contract offers. WE have a lot of financial desires that we need to start sorting out, and how to make those decisions. It will be helpful to have someone like that. **Jane Higgins** Are we talking about treasury? **Karen Bailey** No, she can't be treasurer. **Brenda Stein** Edward Jones won't let me, it could be a potential conflict of interest. **Amy Gygax** But, you are still able to offer your insight as we are discussing expenditures, right? **Brenda Stein** Yes **Jane Higgins** I think it is an important time in our school, where we need that. **Brenda Stein** It is also very motivating to me that I feel needed.

- V. **Perspective Board Member Interview: Jodie Arellano – Jane Higgins** What are some of the things you love, and enjoy doing **Jodie Arellano** A am a bit of a Jill-of-all-trades. I very much love doing Waldorf education, I am home schooling both my kids now. This is my third year. I love handwork. I am a certified handwork teacher. I went through the foundation studies at Rudolf Steiner College in Sacramento. I love to read and research. Painting, knitting, wood working, all the hands-on stuff. **Louise Lavergne** And, you were our handwork teacher here for a while? **Jodie Arellano** Yes. I am passionate about will-developed intelligence, and what that means. **Amy Gygax** Why are you interested in being on the board, and what is your understanding of what that entails? **Jodie Arellano** I just feel like it's time, I have been homeschooling, and I have time now. It makes sense to me to do it now rather than later, when my kids are older. Kellee encouraged me, and when she brought it up to me it seemed like a good time to do it. I want to give back. Also, at some point, my kids might go to this school, so I wanted to dive back into the greater community. As far as what it means for me on the board, it sounds like it might be varied and what I would say to that, is that I would like to be used in whatever way serves the board. **Kellee O'Shea** You are so talented Jodie, and you are mentioning a lot of things that you do, but you have not mentioned how musical you are. **Jodie Arellano** Yes, I've taught music in public schools in New

Mexico, I've done school plays, taught music here, and privately. I am also a performer, I am passionate about bluegrass music. I have been performing since I was ten. I have played at the May Faire the last three or four years. **Sarah Trujillo** What do you perceive as the strengths and weaknesses of our school? **Jodie Arellano** The strengths are what you are doing here. It is totally revolutionary. I have always felt even taking little bits of Waldorf education is revolutionary. The foundation of Waldorf curriculum is a strength. I think that teaching religious literacy, which is part of what Waldorf education does, is huge. The weaknesses I think would be parent education. Letting the foundation seep out into people's homes and families, and I know that has happened more, as the school has grown. It would be good to be more specific about health, rhythm and nutrition. **Leann Tourzan** With all the things going on in your life, do you feel like the time commitment is manageable? **Jodie Arellano** I feel like now is the right time. I am a little hungry for the larger community. Homeschooling has been wonderful, but also isolating. I feel like it is time to go out and interact. I am also looking into the possibility of going back to get my teaching credentials. I also feel very rooted in the community, and want to serve. **Amy Gygax** Do you have any questions for us? **Jodie Arellano** I do. In what way, would you be utilizing me for volunteering? Parent enrichment? **Amy Gygax** That would be great, but not really board work. We work on policies, the legal oversight of the school, financial oversight of the school. I could see you offering your experience with Waldorf education, because everything we do needs to keep that mission, and vision in mind. That is a valuable piece on our board. Also, being that you are not a part of the day to day at the school offers a different perspective. **Monica Rathjen** Board members are encouraged to join a school committee, so that would be a way that you could bring something, and be more hands on. **Jane Higgins** We are also do work meetings. For instance, we are working on family leave right now. When we have something that we need to meet more in depth about we have additional meetings to discuss. **Amy Gygax** We are also currently working on our Strategic Plan, and going through and finding objectives under each item, long term planning, which is something I think you could really help with. **Leann Tourzan** Your love for research and background in anthroposophy will help with the Strategic Plan, and other aspects of the development of the school. Someone like you could really help guide parent enrichment. **Jane Higgins** Even if that is not part of the board, it could filter down. **Jodie Arellano** That is just one of the things that I saw as an issue when I worked here. I do that in homeschooling, I do a lot of parent enrichment. **Louise Lavergene** Just so it is clear that what you were most excited about working on is not really board work. But then, you would have a reason, as a board member to attend those meetings, and help in that way. **Jodie Arellano** I do really love reading and researching I have been going through all the home school curriculums that are available, and gaining an understanding of the Waldorf curriculum. I have been researching schools that have home study programs, I am interested in creating a

Waldorf branch for homeschoolers. **Amy Gygax** That is something that would fall under board development work. **Jane Higgins** The two things that you could be good at are the Strategic plan, and the family leave policy, I know you do a lot of research, and I know you are a visionary. **Karen Bailey** Our charter also comes up for renewal next year.

VI. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion Approved

Leann Tourzan I make a motion to approve the consent agenda for February. **Monica Rathjen** I second the motion

Aye – 5 (Higgins, Lavergne, Gygax, Trujillo, Tourzan, Rathjen, O’Shea)

No – 0

VII. Discussion Items:

- a.) **Board Self-evaluation Amy Gygax** Did everyone get a chance to fill it out and give it to Sarah? **Sarah Trujillo** I have Amy’s and Monica’s **Louise Lavergne** I will email it to you. **Sarah Trujillo** You can email it to me or leave in in the Festival Committee box in the office. **Kellee O’Shea** Here is mine, there were some questions that I didn’t answer, because I am unable to judge, as I am so new to the board. **Amy Gygax** That is totally reasonable. Sarah, you will be able to correlate those and email the information out before the next meeting? **Sarah Trujillo** Yes. **Amy Gygax** This is the first time we’re doing this evaluation so we will see how it goes. Next time we will go over what the results of the evaluation were, and then talk about if we feel like there is anything that needs to be addressed at our April meeting.
- b.) **Strategic Plan – Facilities Objectives Amy Gygax** We can go around and see what everyone has to say **Leann Tourzan** First I would like to increase the current building efficiency, such as caulking doors and windows, and installing automatic thermostats that shut off at night. Standardizing the rooms so as teachers move from room to there isn’t anything missing that they need. Down the road, I would like to see a commercial kitchen, and I would like for us to get an auditorium. **Amy Gygax** Developing, and having a plan for the field area. Continue to build up the contingency fund, I feel like we will have a lot of facility needs in the future, and we need to focus on the financial point of view, so that we have funds available when we need to replace things. Create a position for, and hire a facilities manager, someone that can oversee the maintenance of the school, and manage it. Under that, someone that can do a facilities audit, to go around and assess how we can

improve, and what we will need to plan for, and know who to call, and manage volunteers. **Jane Higgins** It is important to have a gym and a stage. We have a strong need for that. In the vision of thinking of classrooms will we need another classroom, or how will we organize classes in the future. We did have the roof looked at last year, and assessed for adding solar panels, that would be something we would need to look at, and plan for. Our flooring in the classrooms is also getting bad. **Louise Lavergne** It is amazing how much we do without a stage. **Amy Gygax** Also, you have a stage, you can have performances, and graduations, you don't have to find somewhere else to hold those things. **Jane Higgins** It is also important that we are using our space wisely and efficiently. **Kellee O'Shea** The first thing I was thinking was a caretaker. Other things that are important to me, I would love to get a vision for a school lunch, healthy organic, and that fits in with the commercial kitchen. Also, a homeschool arm. Also, a bookstore where parents can get supplies and Steiner literature, that would be available to the greater community including homeschoolers. Energy efficiency is on my list. I don't know what the scope of our little farm out there. I was wondering what kind of biodynamic components we use. It would be nice to have someone develop that. **Louise Lavergne** Everything that has been mentioned is very practical. I know the parking lot needs attention. Energy efficiency would save us money in the long run. It would be good to have a caretaker. **Kellee O'Shea** Part of that caretaker position would be the tools for that role. We should have a small tractor, and be able to grade the parking lot. **Karen Bailey** Old things that are breaking. I just got a call that we have a water break, and we own the line two miles away. It is somewhere down Ross Lane. There are a lot of things breaking. **Monica Rathjen** That really highlights our challenges. Our school is old, pipes break, and things happen. **Karen Bailey** It was about \$2000 the last time we had a pipe break. **Amy Gygax** Let condense that into three or four objectives. **Louise Lavergne** Energy efficiency needs to be in there, just seeing what we can do in the short term and what our goals are for the long term. **Leann Tourzan** It would be good to have a one-year, two-year, and five-year plan. The caulking and move toward energy efficacy can be the one-year plan. We can figure out how soon we can afford to have a facilities manager. **Amy Gygax** That could be one of our objectives, to come up with a one-year plan, five-year, and ten-year, and that can encompass some of the improvements that we are talking about. **Louise Lavergne** We can have Pacific Power and Avista come out for free. There is a lot of ways that moving toward efficiency will save us money. The plan won't cost us, and they have special pricing for non-profits. **Amy Gygax** Coming up with a one, five and ten-year plan can be one objective. Another objective can be moving toward energy efficiency, and then another objective if figuring out the facilities manager and audit plan. They all kind of go together. **Leann Tourzan** Even if we could find someone that could come

and do that job one day a week to start, and then move toward full time. **Amy Gygax** That is someone that could help develop the bigger plans, as far as the maintenance things. **Jane Higgins** We also need to be careful to work it in a way, so that we are not overcommitting. We are moving toward energy efficiency, but we are not a green school. We are working toward that. **Amy Gygax** I think we can have a goal to incorporate more environmentally friendly and sustainable things as we are fixing and replacing things, but yes, we want to be careful to not say we are a green school, but that we are working toward that. **Karen Bailey** It's good to keep in mind the three R's, reduce, reuse, recycle. **Sarah Trujillo** When we went to the conference in Portland, one of the things that the Portland school has is a Sustainability Club, that the kids work on. That is something that we could potentially do, to get the kids involved. **Amy Gygax** Can you read back the three main things we have come up with? **Sarah Trujillo** Develop at one, five and ten-year plan, increase energy efficiency, and work toward a facility maintenance position, and audit. **Leann Tourzan** Are we going to go through all of the items on the Strategic Plan before working on the timeline. **Amy Gygax** I had envisioned going through all before coming up with the timeline, but we could do two different goals in one meeting, we have three left, we could potentially get all of them done, and work on the timeline this summer. It makes sense that if we are going to do two in one meeting that we do that in April, because May is our annual meeting and we will have more busy work. Come with objectives for fundraising, and pedagogy/Waldorf training/support.

- c.) **Family Support Fund – Amy Gygax** We had a committee meeting last Wednesday Leann, Jane, Sarah and I were there. Karen and three faculty members came as well and gave their feedback and thoughts of what they would like to see in a family support policy. The first goal was to hear from the faculty and talk about how policies are funded different places. The goal for the next work session is to start doing work on forming a policy. We received a request for a paid family leave policy, and in looking into the possibility of that we discovered that we had no policy in place at all. FMLA does not cover us, because we do not have enough employees. It has been an unwritten policy that we would give employees time off when they have children, and they will have their job when they get back. But we need to get something official in place. We need to decide how much time do we offer unpaid. We need to look at what we can offer paid, if any, and how that would be funded. Karen is researching what other schools do, and Leann was going to find out about Siskiyou School. What we felt we could commit to is that we do need to have a policy for family emergencies, and parental leave, but we did not commit to how much if any we could offer paid. Since the work session is not a regularly scheduled meeting I can be understanding if some board members can't come, but it's great to have as many people present as possible. Out of the work session we

would develop a policy that would be brought to a regular board meeting and voted on. **Jane Higgins** If you come to those meetings it is good to come prepared with some ideas of how others do that and what are other possibilities, and how to build a fund. **Amy Gygax** Let's schedule it for a time that is convenient for faculty, because I think they might be interested in hearing the conversation. **Leann Tourzan** Do we need to have the faculty input anymore, or do we need to figure out what we are doing a little more before involving them again? **Amy Gygax** They might want to hear the conversation. It is important to some people, and I want to make it available for them to hear the process and see what is happening if they want to. I just want to give them the opportunity. As long as it is really clear that it is the boards work, and a board decision. We just need to make it clear that it is a process that we are going through, and we aren't done yet. They are welcome, and if they have ideas they would like to contribute that is welcome, but we are not asking them to do extra work. They can be informed and up to date on the process. What works for people here? **Jane Higgins** What about April 19th or 26th. **Amy Gygax** April 26th at 4:30. Our goal will be to begin writing that policy in what we know we can commit to, and hear back from people that have researched other school policies. Talk about if we can offer any paid leave and where the money would come from.

- d.) **Director Evaluation – Faculty Feedback – Amy Gygax** We have it coming up. It is yearly, each board member will fill out their evaluation of the director, and then we will have an executive session to talk to the director. The faculty and Michelle Zindel have said that we should have a piece from the faculty that we factor into that. I think that is important because they are the ones who work with the director on a day to day basis. Also the director is their boss, it means that the members of the board do not participate in the board evaluation or attend the executive session because that would be a conflict of interest. Since they are not bringing the piece from the faculty, it would be good to have it from the whole of the faculty. Tonight we need to look at if we want to add that piece, because we will need to vote on that, and if we are going to do that we need to figure out what it will look like. There were a couple samples sent out as far as what that for could look like, and consider the work that it would take to compile that information. **Louise Lavergne** It would be easiest to do an online survey, it can give us an overview. **Amy Gygax** Kind of like the climate survey, and is what the school district uses and we could just set up our own. **Louise Lavergne** I think faculty input is important. **Jane Higgins** I do think it is valuable and helpful, but we don't have to vote on exactly what the form would be? We could vote on adding it, but we don't need to vote on exactly what that evaluation would be, do we? **Amy Gygax** We wouldn't. When we decide what we want to do need to vote on it soon, because it within the next few months that we will be filling out those evaluations, and the executive session is in

June. **Jane Higgins** I liked the one I sent you because it pertained to Waldorf education, and I did not care for the one from the district. **Amy Gygax** I agree that it needs to be Waldorf, and be unique for our school. It would be good to look at the one from the district to see if there are questions that the district would be interested in. By our April meeting it would be nice to have an evaluation for the faculty to fill out so that we can go over it. If we had it soon after our April meeting we could have a quick deadline, and take some time going over the two different evaluations. So we can vote tonight if we want to change that process, and then at our next meeting we can decide what we want to include.

- e.) **Climate Survey Amy Gygax** Louise, would you be willing to do that again. **Louise Lavergne** I would, last year I offered a chance to win \$100 gift card, but still didn't get much participation. I think teachers need to send out emails to their parents. **Leann Tourzan** Can you explain what the climate survey is **Louise Lavergne** It is a survey that goes out to parents to help us see how parents are feeling about the building, their children are doing. We need to review and see if there are questions we want to add. **Amy Gygax** We could. It talks about communication in the school, their experience in the classroom, a feel for how people are feeling about a lot of different aspects of the school, and we look at that information, and compare to years past. I'm inclined to not change the questions. This would be our third year of using this version, and I like that continuity, and we have a lot of other things that our time would be better spent on. **Leann Tourzan** Is it only online, or can you do a paper copy. **Louise Lavergne** Only online. **Monica Rathjen** Having a hard copy might get more participation. **Louise Lavergne** I think the teachers really need to email them out to all parents. I don't know how to ensure that teachers send them out. We could have parents do it during parent teacher conference in the office after their conference. We need to have teachers on board 70 or 80 people is not really enough people. **Sarah Trujillo** I could send them to Parent Council reps to forward to parents. I can send it out to them. **Karen Bailey** Teachers benefit from the information, so it is helpful the more participation we have. **Louise Lavergne** Parents can leave comments that are confidential. **Amy Gygax** Comments are not given to the teachers. **Leann Tourzan** I like the idea to have a computer set up during teacher conference. **Jane Higgins** It might be nice to share how the climate survey brings results, like how the bathrooms were fixed after the survey showed it was an issue. **Monica Rathjen** As a board, it would be helpful for us to see how many people participated, and see how having different ways of delivery, and if they helped or not. **Amy Gygax** When are parent teacher conferences are? **Jane Higgins** May 25 and 26. **Amy Gygax** I don't think we can wait that long, because we will need to have it sooner. **Amy Gygax** If someone can't do it at home, they can do it in the office, and I think the main issue of participation is knowing about it, not access to computers. **Jane Higgins** I think we just need to make sure all

teachers are sending them out. **Leann Tourzan** Including something in the Friday update. **Sarah Trujillo** We can post it on our Facebook page as well. **Amy Gygax** I don't know that we should focus on things happening because of it, but it gives us insight into how parents feel. In general, it is a useful tool. **Karen Bailey** Last year, it was helpful to me as a new director. **Amy Gygax** Louise, you are willing to take this on again? **Louise Lavergne** Yes. **Amy Gygax** We are behind on this, so we need to figure out our deadline. We could potential have it by our next meeting. Should we have the deadline be the April 8th? **Louise Lavergne** I will send Karen the letter that I have asking people to participate it, and then send it to Sarah and Karen to send out to teachers and Parent Council. **Amy Gygax** I think it would be good to have one announcement a the beginning of next week, and then there can be reminders in the Friday Update. The 7th of April will be the deadline.

- f.) **Financial Priorities -Amy Gygax** Leann did you get any emails about financial priorities? **Leann Tourzan** I didn't really **Amy Gygax** We were going to start having a discussion, based on the priorities that the teachers had. I had hoped that people would have some, but maybe we can bring them to the next board meeting and based on things that we end up with we can do what the faculty did, put it together and, maybe do a survey, maybe not, we can see how the discussion goes.
- g.) **Sabbatical Policy- Amy Gygax** This in not really for tonight, I just wanted to bring this up as a topic that we'll need to be reviewing. We have our sabbatical policy, that the board put into place four years ago, and now is a good time to see how it's work, and see if there are things that need to change. It is a pretty big policy that has a pretty big financial piece as well. It's important that as it came up in our discussion of parental leave, it would be good for us to go back and look at it.
- h.) **Thank you's -**

VIII. Action Items

- a.) **Vote on Perspective Board Member – Brenda Stein**

Motion Approved

Kellee O'Shea I make a motion to approve Brenda Stein as a member of the board for a two-year term. **Sarah Trujillo** I second the motion.

Aye – 5 (Higgins, Lavergne, Gygax, Trujillo, Tourzan, Rathjen, O'Shea)

No – 0

b.) Vote on Perspective Board Member – Jodie Arellano

Motion Approved

Amy Gygax I make a motion to approve Jodie Arellano as a member of the board for a two-year term. **Leann Tourzan** I second the motion.

Aye – 5 (Higgins, Lavergne, Gygax, Trujillo, Tourzan, Rathjen, O’Shea)

No – 0

c.) Vote to adopt Strategic Plan Facilities Objectives

Motion Approved

Leann Tourzan I make a motion to adopt Strategic Plan Facilities Objectives. **Louise Lavergne** I second the motion.

Aye – 5 (Higgins, Lavergne, Gygax, Trujillo, Tourzan, Rathjen, O’Shea)

No – 0

d.) Approve changes to director evaluation process adding teacher input

Motion Approved

Louise Lavergne I make a motion to approve the changes to the director evaluation process. **Monica Rathjen** I second the motion.

Aye – 5 (Higgins, Lavergne, Gygax, Trujillo, Tourzan, Rathjen, O’Shea)

No – 0

IX. Informational items: **Amy Gygax** From now on, send me any items you would like on the agenda by the Wednesday before the meeting, and I can put it together.

X. Closing verse

XI. Meeting adjourned

Minutes submitted by: Sarah Trujillo

Minutes approved by: _____

Board President