

# **Madrone Trail Public Charter School**

Jackson County, Oregon

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors

Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at 5:00 pm

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

## **I. Call to order/ Roll call**

Monica Rathjen called to order the special meeting of the Madrone Trail Public Charter School Board at 5:00pm at Madrone Trail Public Charter School 3070 Ross Ln. Central Point, OR 97502.

**Monica Rathjen** I welcome you all, and thank you for being here, I ask you to introduce yourself to the person next to you, and then ask the person next to you “what is the nicest thing someone has said to you today” If they say they have not heard anything nice today, I encourage you to say something nice to them. It could be as simple as “It was nice to meet you.” We model these qualities of kindness, care and respect for our children, and as adults lets practice those qualities tonight. If you have a personal issue with someone I encourage you to talk with that person on a one to one basis, if you don’t feel that you can do that, I direct you to the school’s current grievance policy. We do have a new complaint policy that we will be discussing tonight. Your constructive comments are encouraged during this public session. I will be calling names from this sign-up sheet. Please limits your comments to 3 minutes, to insure everyone has time to speak.

**Jane Higgins** As always, thank you for coming and showing support for our school.

**Leann Tourzan** Thank you for coming and welcome to everyone, especially on such a cold rainy night.

**Sarah Trujillo** Thank you all for being here, I know board meetings are not the most fun destination. In the last few months we have received so many people asking how they should help, and if board membership is something they can offer, it is very encouraging. I want to offer thanks to all that have offered to apply, encourage anyone interested in helping to investigate other ways of helping. We have some big fundraisers coming up, and I know Jessica could use help with the Auction. If you are looking for ways to help, fundraising is always a great way.

**Jodie Arellano** I agree, it is great to see such support for the school.

**II. Public Comment – Jessica Bray** spoke about the upcoming Auction on May 12, at the Ashland Springs Hotel. It will be a Monte Carlo theme with card and roulette tables.

Sponsorships available. I want to try and make our auction a community event, that is looked forward to by people in the larger community. I could use help with getting the word out. There are flyers available here. Ticket are \$75, and general admission for \$5. I want to remind everyone to please come and support out school and work together. If you have any questions or want to help let me know.

Sarah conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Monica Rathjen, Sarah Trujillo, Jane Higgins, Leann Tourzan, Jodie Arellano  
Karen Bailey (Administrator)

### **III. Opening Verse**

### **IV. Agenda Adjustments and Approval of Minutes**

**a.) Monica Rathjen** I would like to change item 7e.) Conflict of Interest form, I would like to do more research before board discussion, so I would like to table that item. Item 7l. I would like to subcategorize as Subpoint 1. Handling interest in serving on the board. Subpoint 2. Discussion I had with Parent Council, that I would like to have on the record, and further discussion. Subpoint 3. Discussion of board membership with groups A. and B. per our bylaws. Subpoint 4. Discussion of board members up for election tonight. Move Item 6b.) Directors report will be moved to the discussion items between q. and r.

#### **Approval of Minutes for March 7, 2018**

#### **Motion Approved**

**Leann Tourzan** I make a motion to approve the minutes for March 7, 2018

**Jodie Arellano** I second the motion

**Aye – 5 (Rathjen, Trujillo, Higgins, Tourzan, Arellano)**

**No – 0**

#### **b.) Approval of Minutes for March 15, 2018**

#### **Motion Approved**

**Jane Higgins** I make a motion to approve the minutes for March 15, 2018

**Leann Tourzan** I second the motion

**Aye – 5 (Rathjen, Trujillo, Higgins, Tourzan, Arellano)**

No – 0

**V. Approval of consent agenda**

**a. Expenditures for February 2018**

**Motion Approved**

**Leann Tourzan** I make a motion to approve the expenditures for February 2018

**Jodie Arellano** I second the motion

**Aye – 5 (Rathjen, Trujillo, Higgins, Tourzan, Arellano)**

No – 0

**b. Expenditure for March 2018**

**Motion Approved**

**Sarah Trujillo** I make a motion to approve the expenditures for March 2018

**Jane Higgins** I second the motion

**Aye – 5 (Rathjen, Trujillo, Higgins, Tourzan, Arellano)**

No – 0

**VI. Informational Items**

- a.) Faculty Report- Jane Higgins** Three of the teachers went to the job faire at SOU to recruit possible applicants for the teacher positions that will be open for next year. I brought main lesson books, and some of the people were excited to see us there and sought us out. Ms. Nancy brought examples of handwork, and we received a lot of interested applicants. The hiring committee is beginning to meet and interview applicants. We have two 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers that are graduating their classes and are feeling anxious about what they will be doing next year, and specifically the sabbatical discussion, and wanted me to bring that tonight.

**Leann Tourzan** It has been fun to see the May Pole out, and the kids practicing for May Faire. A lot of the teachers are very excited about their Auction projects, and we are starting to see some really creative ideas, and support from the parent community. Several of our faculty members we involved with the Forest Run, and

have just registered to be a team for the Siskiyou Challenge, there six of us that will each be doing a leg of the relay.

**Jane Higgins** We are having our Strings and Choir Concert tomorrow at 6:00pm at Central High School.

**Leann Tourzan** We will be have a Stewardship Day on April 20<sup>th</sup> after school, as well as the next morning to do some work on campus to paint, weed and generally spruce things up.

## VII. Discussion Items

### a.) Potential Board Member Interviews

- i. **Gesine Abraham- Jane Higgins** I know of many ways that you have been involved over the years, how do you think the board would benefit with your knowledge. **Gesine Abraham** I know there has been some turnover on the board, and I thought it would be helpful to have someone on the board that could offer the historical perspective. You are negotiating your contract with the district, and I was part of the initial negotiation, and I would be happy to help with that. I don't have a child in the school, so I don't feel pulled in a personal way, and I think at time when there is struggle in the culture of the school, I might be able to be somewhat detached. One of the question on your sheet is "what are two of your passions?" One of my passions is Waldorf Education, so I think the passion might be helpful for seeing things through. **Monica Rathjen** What do you think makes the difference between a good board and an excellent board? **Gesine Abraham** It's the commitment to the vision that makes a difference, a willingness to listen, to try to achieve consensus whenever possible, and to realize if you have a goal, there can be more than one way to reach it. Sometimes people get stuck on a single solution, and we can work together to come up with other possible solutions. **Monica Rathjen** Do you feel that you could be impartial and unbiased? And that you would not be bringing an agenda to the board? **Gesine Abraham** Yes, I feel that my agenda is very impartial, and to do what is best for the school. **Leann Tourzan** I wanted to ask what you see as the strengths of our school right now? **Gesine Abraham** I believe the education is strong. When I walk on campus and see the children, they look like they are thriving, and are happy. They have a sense about themselves that is identifiable at a Waldorf school, secure, and held, but confident in themselves in a way that is hard to put your finger on but is palpable. **Leann Tourzan** What about weaknesses? **Gesine Abraham** You have a lot of things on your plate all at once. Double track stopping, possible

budget deficit, you need to hire a director, first grade teacher, negotiate your contract, there has been bad publicity with the Medford School District, so I think you need to have improvement with the relationship and communication with them. **Monica Rathjen** What do you consider to be your weakest attribute as a board member. **Gesine Abraham** My mind is not great when things are super detailed, I have a more philosophical kind of mind, which is not the best kind of mind for board work. Knowing that about myself, I work really hard to compensate, and knowing that weakness, I think I can compensate for it adequately. **Monica Rathjen** As you can see from our agenda tonight, there is a lot to discuss, and so many issues that we will face. I anticipate the commitment to be significant and want to know how that works with your life. **Gesine Abraham** Right now I am working part time, and so it would be a commitment I can make. **Monica Rathjen** Thank you so much.

- ii. **Erik Johnsen- Monica Rathjen** I met with Erik for the first time last week, and I understand you have a child in kindergarten third grader, and a preschooler. Maybe you could just introduce yourself. **Erik Johnsen** My wife and I were attracted to the Waldorf philosophy because of the intermingling of the subjects. I went into business and have a couple businesses that I am managing, but my family is in education. My wife has a master's in early childhood education and taught for a few years, so I have a bit of a pedigree, and am happy to help. I have a finance background and some prior board experience, I am on the board of Roots and Wings Community Preschool and would love to bring some of that experience here. **Leann Tourzan** What was the most significant factor in your decision to apply to be on the board? **Erik Johnsen** I have thought about it for a while I do have quite a few things going on, but I like a challenge, and helping people. I believe in this school and when I started hearing about the issues that were facing the school I thought I could help. **Jodie Arellano** Do you see yourself primarily as a member of the community of a representative of the public charter school system? **Erik Johnsen** As a representative of the school as a whole. I am a parent, so I have some skin in the game, but I see myself as an impartial person, and there are many stakeholders here. **Jane Higgins** Given your busy career, and young children, how do you see your time commitment to the board? **Erik Johnsen** I am willing to do what it takes to help the school. I know what goes into it, and I know it will be more work than you think it will be, and I believe if you are going to take on a position of responsibility, you have a responsibility to see that through, and you don't get to move on until you train your replacement. That is the commitment I am willing to make.

**Monica Rathjen** What do you perceive as your weakest attribute as a board member? **Erik Johnsen** I am generally quiet and like to take in a lot of information before I speak. **Monica Rathjen** What do you feel makes the difference between a good board and an excellent one? **Erik Johnsen** A good board is when everyone shows up and at least participates. A great board means having an open mind, and having candid discussions with people, and ask tough questions of each other, and really try and understand one another's point of view. **Monica Rathjen** So you don't feel you have an agenda to bring? You feel that you can be unbiased and impartial in stepping on to the board? I know there so many factions, and being a parent and all of that, you feel you can be impartial? **Erik Johnsen** I feel that is why I am here. I've talked you, Monica, a prior board member and my son's teacher, and I got the sense that some of the turmoil was because maybe people were being inflexible, I disagree with how the prior board members left, but I am bringing the commitment myself that I can be open to finding solutions to keep the school going.

- iii. **Alyssum Barber- Monica Rathjen** Alyssum Barber was a teacher here, and now has a child here. Would you like to introduce yourself? **Alyssum Barber** I am finishing up my 20<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, currently at Howard Elementary. I have two kids, Olivia and Jack. We moved here in 2009 and bought a 20-acre farm, and my intention was to farm because I found public education challenging for my, because a lot of my ideals were not being met. We entered my daughter in Star of the Morning Preschool. Mardrone Trail needed a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher right away, and after some convincing I accepted the job, and went to Rudolf Steiner College and earned my Masters in Walford Education. I went on my Sabbatical to Ecuador, came back and felt that my passion for education could be met in a public school, that setting is just not as demanding for the teachers. I love Waldorf education and use the techniques and practices in my own classroom to much success. **Jane Higgins** What is your primary reason for wanting to join the board? **Alyssum Barber** I have always wondered if there were a spot for me on the board. I think I have a lot of experience in education that can help navigate some of the things that will be part of the charter renewal negotiations and coming up with an improvement plan. I know the faculty and many parents and have connections in the Waldorf community at large. **Jodie Arellano** No organization can do all they might like to do. What would be your priorities for the school in the coming year, and why and how do you select those. **Alyssum Barber** I think the first priority is obviously getting our charter renewed and get on track with meeting the suggestions that the MSD is asking us to meet. Finding ways to align the standards of Waldorf

education, and fill whatever gaps the district needs us to fill. I see the budget as a huge issue, because there is a possible deficit, and commitment to the sabbatical that would be the second. I think there is some healing that needs to happen. The administration, community and faculty have been disjointed and there has been some harm caused, and it needs to be remedied. **Monica Rathjen** Do you feel you could step onto the board without having any agenda or support for one group over any other or at the expense of any other at this school. **Alyssum Barber** I feel that I have enough distance now, from my relationship with the faculty and the administration. My agenda is to serve, and listen and make sure my ears, and heart are open. **Monica Rathjen** Again, the time commitment, in all reality I am so grateful that so many people have come forward and are willing to serve, but I can tell you from personal experience this is going to require a lot of work. How do you see that fitting into your life? **Alyssum Barber** I see it being an intense part of my life, but I have come to a time in my children's lives, and my professional life that there is more balance there. I am a very fast reader, I believe I can do it. **Sarah Trujillo** What you think would be your strengths and weaknesses as a board member? **Alyssum Barber** I'll start with weaknesses. I don't pay the bills in my house; financial literacy is not strong. Hopefully I can learn. Strength wise, I can collaborate well, I form connections with people, and relationships are easy for me. I have connections in the MSD and communicating with them would be something that I feel well qualified for.

**b.) Book Study- Monica Rathjen** As part of our board development, and what used to be public comment time, we spent the time discussing book study chapters. I am suggesting to the board at this time because of the change in the board membership, and since we will be having new board members come on and we are about half way through, my suggestion is to read the rest of the book on your own. It has lots of good information. If we have time for the May meeting we could revisit at that time, but for now finish it and turn it into the office if you don't own your own copy. I don't want to do away with book study, but with all the other things we need to do, it may not be the best use of our time. **Leann Tourzan** I agree that it is not really a priority right now, but I would like to share it with the wider community because that book is full of great information *Partnerships of Hope: Building Waldorf School Communities* by Christopher Shaffer Ph.D. **Jane Higgins** I feel fine with letting it rest, and maybe reading it on my own in the summer, but I would like to see it continue eventually. It is a great resource. **Jodie Arellano** I think it is a good practice and rhythm to do something like this at the beginning of meetings, we might be able to find an alternative that is a shorter time commitment. Something to reflect on.

- c.) **Field Trip Policy- Jodie Arellano** Up until now I have done research on different Waldorf charter school field trip policies, comparing and contrasting. I want to see if there are any holes in ours and make it the best it can be. I plan on scheduling our insurance representative to come and speak about our top liabilities, and what things we need to focus on. There has been one work session that mostly prioritizing everyone's thoughts for student, teacher and chaperone perspectives. We will be planning a meeting to work on that.
- d.) **Nikolic 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip- Monica Rathjen** Ms. Nikolic submitted a tentative itinerary, and behavior expectation agreement for the students. Since Dara is not here tonight, I know she wanted us to approve this tonight. I am wondering if it would be better if she were here, so we can ask her questions, like where are they staying? **Jane Higgins** They are staying in one location. Looks less expensive than previous plan. They will be doing activities hikes, rite of passage, and possibly some kind of service work. **Monica Rathjen** I know she is aware from the last time we talked about having 6 hours of educational time per day since it is a school trip. I think it looks great, I would just like to have her present go over a few things. If we schedule a meeting between now and the May meeting, so we could meet with her in the next few weeks.
- e.) **Conflict of Interest form- tabled**
- f.) **Teacher Sabbatical- Jane Higgins** I feel this could be a potential conflict of interest, so I will recuse myself **Jodie Arellano** I also will recuse myself because of a possible conflict of interest. **Leann Tourzan** I will recuse myself because of a possible conflict of interest. **Monica Rathjen** The sabbatical issue came up at the last meeting. It was brought to the board, we have heard of many issues tied to the sabbatical, teacher burn out, amount of effort that teachers put into the whole eight years. John Briggs the former board member put a lot of effort and has documentation from prior board discussions. I see the budget is tied in as the biggest issue with the sabbatical. I know the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers had asked us to decide, so they can plan for after they graduate their classes in June. I understand that but feel sorry to say I don't think I can make an informed decision at this point without a much clearer vision of the budget. As far as future sabbaticals, I feel there should be another advisory committee formed that includes board members, faculty, parents, school community, administration to sit down and revisit this issue to see how sustainable is this, if it is not, what can we do about it? How do we show support for those teachers? It is a tough item to discuss but needs to be addressed. That will be up for further discussion as soon as we have the five non-faculty voting members, and a clearer vision on the budget. We will have something definite for those 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers.

**g.) School Calendar- Monica Rathjen** This is the MSD adopted calendar for 2018-19 school year, they adopted it on January 8, 2018. One of the biggest changes to the calendar was starting the school year a week earlier and ending it a week earlier. Does any of the faculty want to speak on the calendar, and how closely we follow the district and what you would be able to work it out? **Jane Higgins** Four of us are going to be meeting this Friday to try to align our events with the Medford calendar. There was some concern with starting earlier, but we have not made the final decision. We typically have a couple different days, and try to align our in-service days with them, but also with Ashland, and the Siskiyou School. **Karen Bailey** I think Tracy needs to be included. She is the one that figures out if we are meeting our educational hours. We were a little bit minimal this year, which can cause problems if you have snow days or things like that. It is good error on the side of buffering that. **Monica Rathjen** The MSD would like us to have a final calendar turned into them by May 1<sup>st</sup>, and if we schedule some special meetings, and perhaps we can vote on a calendar at one of those meetings.

**h.) Hiring of New Interim Director/Director- Monica Rathjen** Since Karen has announced that she will not be renewing her contract for next year we will be needing to hire a new interim director, and ultimately a new director. I was not a part of the process of hiring the director last time, but it is my understanding that it took a year and a half, it is not a process to be taken lightly. There are many factors that go into that. I would suggest that we form an advisory committee at our next meeting to begin this process and start with hiring an interim director. **Jodie Arellano** I want to also bring attention to Tracy's position, and how integral she is to the school and what we might be able to offer her in the coming year. Perhaps offer her a position that is some kind of director, or administrative position. **Monica Rathjen** Katherine Holden, Amy Gygax and Satya Beneventi were part of the committee that worked on that. I can reach out to some of them, for some guidance on how that process worked, and how to get started.

**i.) Charter renewal and discussion with MSD- Monica Rathjen** There is quite an involved process that Karen has been very involved in, as well as other members of the board. In the earlier part of this year the Medford School District voted unanimously to renew our charter and the process moved into some other phases. Now we are in the 90-day period of negotiating the charter. During that time, Sarah, Karen, and I went to the Medford School District Offices and met with Michelle Cummings and two MSD board members on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and we had a conversation with them. They expressed concerns with where our school was at that time, and I would like to read for the record part of that letter. (see records binder) I know that this letter has created a lot of concern for people. Obviously, there are serious issues that we would like to address. I am in contact with legal counsel, who represents the

school. That legal advice is that this is not a termination letter, according to legal council this is a notice and an opportunity to cure. If we don't fix these issues within 60 days, then there is a possibility of termination due to non-compliance. After that meeting on April 2, 2018 I wrote a letter in answer to MSD (see records binder) and addressed the issues they asked us to cure. I want to clarify that letter and ask if there is anything that needs to be further explained? **Jane Higgins** Have you received a response to your letter? **Monica Rathjen** I have been in contact with Michelle Cummings. She has let me know that the district would like to see at least 5 non-faculty members on the board so that voting on issues when faculty must recuse themselves it still adherent to our bylaws. Since a process wasn't followed, that is how the faculty members came to remain on the board. As a matter of policy, there will not be faculty members voting on the board no later than May of this year. **Sarah Trujillo** After that point, will there be a discussion of the faculty role on the board, as far as participating in discussions beyond just the faculty report? **Monica Rathjen** Yes, and I would like to form a committee to address that issue. It is important enough that it needs input from faculty, board, and director. It was my opinion when I voted that the main issue was that they were voting, and that was a weakness. It is allowed by Oregon law for us to have voting members, but after discussing with legal counsel, I felt that voting was the issue. We can have a deeper discussion of teacher service on the board but going forward there will not be faculty voting members after May. Point two in the letter from MSD states that Madrone Trail shall maintain appropriate governance and managerial procedures and financial controls. I have communicated with Karen, and she informs me that she intends to work through the end of her contract which is June 30, 2018. She will continue to fulfill her managerial tasks as required by her contract. Point three, monthly compliance reports, which should keep us in compliance. I want to state that I addressed this in the Friday Update, so that the community has an update. I wanted to limit discussion on this to our board meeting time to make sure that we are all understanding what is going on, and steps taken to remedy the issues. Once we have new board members, we can start renewal meetings after April 17. We need to complete Charter Renewal negotiations by May 21<sup>st</sup> so that the MSD board can vote on it before it expires in June. I would like to reform the Charter Renewal Committee, Jesse Gammon has agreed to be a part of that committee, we will need some more members. I would love it if Karen feels she can be a part of that, as she has been the main person up until now to work on that.

- j.) **Medford School District Compliance Calendar- Monica Rathjen** The next item on this compliance calendar is May 1<sup>st</sup>, when we will need to submit proof of 25 requests for enrollment for the next school year, proposed annual school budget for next school year, that is why I will be requesting some special board meetings, so that we can speak about the budget, projected enrollment for the next school year,

demographic report of currently enrolled students, school calendar for next year including instructional hour compliance within 10 days of Medford's calendar adoption. Karen, I wanted to ask you if those pieces would be something we can provide? **Karen Bailey** Yes. **Monica Rathjen** The other significant date coming up is July 1<sup>st</sup>, annual adopted budget, so we have some time to make any changes before we adopt it, but I am recommending we get as close to that proposed budget on May 1<sup>st</sup> as we can.

**k.) Public Complaint procedure Monica Rathjen** Our current Conflict Resolution Policy was voted on within the last two years. There was a lot of time and effort put into creating that policy, and it is my understanding that it has been used successfully, it is what we currently have in place, but there was some confusion on who can bring a complaint. So, we went back to the drawing board, and looked at what else was out there. We looked at sample OSBA policies. They have the Public Complaint Procedure, and the Madrone Trail PCS Public Complaint Policy, and we have discussed these in work sessions extensively, at the last one there were some questions, so I would like to go over what changed in the policy. First, language in the preamble addresses that noting in the policy is meant to supersede or alter the complaint procedure set forth in the MTPCS Personnel Handbook. A school employee who believes they have been subject to any job-related harassment based on a protected category, or other reason, or believes they have been treated in an unlawful, discriminatory, or inappropriate manner is encouraged to promptly report the incident in a manner set for the in the personnel handbook. That language means that you would be directed to the personnel handbook, but you would not be precluded from using this policy. Language was added to include the community to be able to use this procedure. We took out language that said the board would have discretion to decide if they wanted to investigate themselves if a complaint was brought against them. We felt that language was contradictory. We changed it to reflect the individual board member. If someone had a complaint against the board as a whole they would name each member in that complaint, so it would not be up to the board to decide to investigate. The idea in adopting this new policy is that it would be easier to navigate, and to encourage complaints and the resolution of those complaints. The other question I want to address is that if there is a complaint that has begun in the current policy, it will continue the process of that procedure. If we were to adopt this new procedure it would be stated that any new complaints that are brought after the date of adoption will go through the new procedure. There are a few formatting edits and typos that we need to correct as well. Another change that was made was that in the current policy step 3 was outside mediation, that was required, the concern with that was that it could get expensive. In the new policy it states that we may offer mediation or an alternative dispute resolution process if all parties to the complaint agree in writing to participate. The decision of what kind of

mediation and how much the board would be willing to offer may depend on the complaint itself. The last point, is regarding the option of the board to refer investigation into complaints to a third party. Generally, the board would hear complaints, and that option doesn't prevent the board from hearing complaints.

## 1.) **Board Membership**

- i. **Procedure for handling interest in serving on the board- Monica Rathjen** Something that has been brought up, most recently by John Briggs was that we could have a nominating committee formed for the board. We have an informal nominating procedure and how we accept applications and we need to go back and clarify that procedure. As we receive so much interest we are also encouraging people to contact Parent Council to find ways to volunteer. My thought is that as people express interest in serving, in the hope of expediting the process we can have them fill out the application, and when we have a pool of applicants we can see who would be the best fit and make nominations based on that. It would give us the opportunity to hold on to applications, and as certain spots become available we could find the right candidate for that position. **Leann Tourzan** We could have person on the board that is responsible to maintaining the file of applicants, and also use those applicants as a pool for subcommittee work. And perhaps having that person be in charge of the initial meet and greet. **Monica Rathjen** That is something to work toward, but I want to make sure all recent applicants are being communicated with about their applicants. If we want to go back to the lists that we formed at an earlier meeting of people that had reached out to you, and get back to those people, and give them applications. If interested parties, contact the office we are asking that they come observe a meeting and contact a board member. At an upcoming meeting we can go over applications.
- ii. **Discussion with Parent Council- Monica Rathjen** Julie Furrer contacted me and broached the idea of Parent Council voting amongst themselves to nominate a board member. I spoke with her but wanted to bring it to the rest of you. What I said was that we are looking for someone who is unbiased, impartial, and consensus oriented. Someone who is interested in serving to the best interest of the school, and not to promote a personal agenda. Also, as a parent it is important to be able to separate to parent role from that of a board member. Board membership from parents and having too many parent members from one class can be a weakness. I sent her the description and application so that she could see the skills that were needed. I also let her

know, that although parent council can nominate a board member, they would still need to be voted on.

iii. **Groups A and B Board Membership- Monica Rathjen** In the board bylaws it states that the board of directors can be no fewer than 5 and no more than 14. Five is a small number and a liability for the board, 14 is a very large number, and to reach a consensus could be difficult. Is there an ideal number **Jane Higgins** Eight seems good. If someone cannot attend a meeting, we would still have a quorum. **Monica Rathjen** In the bylaws it states that we should have two classes with as even a number in each class as possible. The term of office for Class A would be one year, and Class B would be two years. The idea to not have overlap in terms so that the board is not depleted at the end of a term of office. Something to consider as we take on new members. We can discuss this further at our May meeting.

iv. **Board Elections**

a.) **Gesine Abraham- Leann Tourzan** She is very valuable with her history with the school as well as her understanding of Waldorf teaching. I support her as a board member. **Jane Higgins** I believe she would be an asset to the board especially during this charter renewal time. She is very thorough with research and fine print. **Sarah Trujillo** I believe her Waldorf experience is pretty important, and it is not easy to find outside community members who are so knowledgeable about Waldorf methodology and pedagogy. **Monica Rathjen** I called the references on all of our nominees tonight. Some feedback about Gesine was that she has lots of integrity, ability to think very clearly, unbiased, she would work in the best interest of the school. She is committed, kind, and most knowledgeable about Waldorf. She is calm, measured, with an extensive Waldorf background. **Jodie Arellano** I think it is important to have our history, to know where we are going. I think Gesine will benefit that.

b.) **Erik Johnsen- Jane Higgins** I don't know Erik, but I like that he has a financial background, and works with business and budgets. **Sarah Trujillo** It seems as though his previous board experience is also really helpful. I know when I was a new board member, it took me a while to get my footing, and know what I was supposed to be doing. He would be able to help right away. My only concern is that he does seem to have a lot on his plate. It is something to consider, that if we are going, to be having more than one meeting a month, and special committees, that the

time commitment is something to be aware of. **Leann Tourzan** I do feel he has given it a lot of thought. **Monica Rathjen** If we could find another board member with a financial background that we could also rely on to help us understand budget issues, it wouldn't just be that one person. I feel like that is an area that we have lacked. His references said that Erik was very professional, personality-wise very even keeled, a good decision maker without ego, agreeable, would be a perfect fit for our board, outstanding, consensus oriented, trustworthy and committed, not in it for the resume. One person from his other board is that he helped them get through audits, goes above and beyond, happy to research, and any board would be lucky to have him.

c.) **Alyssum Barber- Jane Higgins** I think the value that Alyssum will bring is knowing the public and charter curriculum and be able to help bring some merging, specifically as we enter negotiations. How can we show growth, and meet contracts with the district? She is a trusted college. She has lots of good ideas and has valuable information. Knowing how hard teachers work and knowing what it is like. **Leann Tourzan** I agree that knowing the community and have a foot in public and a foot in Waldorf. I think she will bring great experience and is good at collaboration. I think she shines. **Jane Higgins** I think time constraints might be an issue. **Sarah Tujillo** I agree that Waldorf experience will be an asset. My concern would be the time constraint, but if she feels like it is doable, she is the judge of that. **Monica Rathjen** References said Alyssum is professional, honest, funny, trustworthy, speaks with clarity, highly respected, people go to her to ask tough questions and get help, innovative, not afraid to try new things, fun-loving, kind and compassionate, yet assertive. She would care for the school, if somebody can do it she can do it. **Jodie Arellano** I think bringing a knowledge of Common Core is helpful, and how to merge it here to give us a better understanding.

m.) **School Budget- Jane Higgins-** I am going to recuse myself because of a potential conflict of interest. **Leann Tourzan** I will also recuse myself. **Jodie Arellano** I declare a potential conflict of interest, and will recuse myself. **Monica Rathjen** Karen has worked hard on bringing some proposed budget A, and proposed budget B. **Karen Bailey** That came out of a request by the budget committee to see what it would look like if they were to give us six more kindergarten spots, and allow us to have a morning only five day a week preschool tuition based program. That would give us 7 full ADM. So that is B, versus if the district said no to all that and we kept everything the same. There are additional expenses associated with B as well. There

is still a discrepancy in either version. That is just last year's numbers. John had recommended a Finance Committee according to the bylaws with just board members, not teachers. Teachers can give their opinions informally, which they had done, but it is a board decision to decide where that money will be cut from.

**Monica Rathjen** Does that include the anticipated PERS increase? **Karen Bailey**

Yes, as well as an increase in health insurance cost. **Monica Rathjen** The PERS increase is substantial and nothing to do with Madrone specifically, but an issue that is being dealt with across the state. Last year we did receive an increased ADM, but that is not something we can anticipate. There was also the communication that generally most years we are running a net cash flow of anywhere from \$19,000-\$86,000. This year it is \$186,000 without much of an explanation. I am not sure if there are expenses that have not been reflected, but that is why I feel I need some more discussion on this. **Karen Bailey** Both of these budgets reflect the end of the double track class, and both 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers having a sabbatical. **Monica Rathjen** To be clear, we are not operating at a \$150,000 deficit, that is just a proposed budget figure. I appreciate the work that John did to put this together but with the different pieced I don't feel that I can make an informed decision but will need someone to help go line by line. **Karen Bailey** It is hard, but things will need to be cut. We were generous on professional development, and on substitute teachers. But you cannot give a budget to the district that is not balanced. On the income side, we cannot increase the line item for fundraising, but to increase income larger class sizes is an option. **Monica Rathjen** There will be some tough decisions ahead, we need five board members to vote on it anyway.

- n.) **Balloon Payment of Mortgage- Karen Bailey** Bob Rudolph helped us with the down payment on this building, payments were set up. A meeting took place on March 2, 2013 where he submitted a proposal for repayment on the loan. The balloon payment is due May 1, 2018. It is \$52,286.94. That money is in a separate savings account, and is ready to be paid, but we need board approval to cut the check. **Monica Rathjen** This is the final payment to Bob Rudolph? **Karen Bailey** Yes, we still owe our mortgage payment, this was just a loan for the down payment. **Monica Rathjen** According to legal counsel authorization on an expenditure for a contractual obligation would not be a conflict of interest, so we can vote on that tonight.
- o.) **Climate Survey- Monica Rathjen** We would have taken this up in March but wanted to bring this up to let our school community express their feeling about where the school is. I know that Louise had taken it on in the last few years and used a survey service and wanted to know if we want to find help in getting that out. **Jodie Arellano** I know it has been hard to get participation in the past, we could make paper versions available in the office. **Sarah Trujillo** I think Louise did

that in the past, I am not sure it made a big difference. However, I suspect that with all the issues that we are facing, we might have some increased interest in participation. **Monica Rathjen** Would someone be willing to reach out to Louise and ask for some help or guidance on how to get that started? **Jane Higgins** I can reach out to Louise. Is it okay for her to do it as she is no longer a board member? **Monica Rathjen** I am not sure, I think it would be fine for her to get the questions out there, she just might not be able to receive the information, perhaps she can help someone with that.

- p.) Board Self-Evaluation- Monica Rathjen** This is something that the board does in April. The issue that I saw with that, is that we have had three board presidents since the last evaluation. **Sarah Trujillo** I think, with what we are trying to get from the evaluation, it might make the most sense to just answer the questions with the current president in mind, but if you see value in doing it a different way I'm open to that too. **Monica Rathjen** I am fine with that. Try to have those into Sarah before the May meeting. **Sarah Trujillo** If you can get them to me by May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- q.) Schedule Special Board Meeting(s) before May meeting- Monica Rathjen** I would like to schedule some meetings assuming that we will be voting on new members tonight, so that we can get to work on the budget, charter renewal and other items. Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. And Friday April 27<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm.
- r.) Director's report-** I don't have anything at this time.
- s.) Thank you's- Sarah Costa, and Michelle Sanders, Monty Zuaski, Amy Gygax.**

## VIII. Action Items

### a.) Vote on new board members

#### i. Gesine Abraham

#### Motion approved

**Sarah Trujillo** I make a motion to elect Gesine Abraham as a member of the board.

**Jane Higgins** I second the motion.

**Aye – 5**

**No – 0**

#### ii. Erik Johnsen

**Motion approved**

**Jodie Arellano** I make a motion to elect Erik Johnsen as a member of the board.

**Leann Tourzan** I second the motion

**Aye – 5**

**No – 0**

**iii. Alyssum Barber**

**Motion approved**

**Leann Tourzan** I make a motion to elect Alyssum Barber as a member of the board.

**Jane Higgins** I second the motion

**Aye -4**

**No-0**

**Abstain-1**

**b.) Nikolic 8<sup>th</sup> Grade trip- tabled**

**c.) School Calendar- tabled**

**d.) Public Complaint procedure**

**Motion approved**

**Jane Higgins** I make a motion to approve the Public Complaint Procedure pending edits of formatting and typos.

**Leann Tourzan** I second the motion

**Aye – 5 (Rathjen, Trujillo, Higgins, Tourzan, Arellano)**

**No – 0**

**e.) Balloon Mortgage payment**

**Motion approved**

**Leann Tourzan** I make a motion to approve the balloon payment on the loan from Bob Rudolph.

**Jodie Arellano** I second the motion

**IX. Summarize upcoming dates/ confirm next meeting**

**April 20, 3pm**

**April 27, 3 pm**

**May 9, 5:30pm**

**X. Closing verse**

**XI. Meeting Adjourned**

Minutes submitted by: Sarah Trujillo

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Board President