

The Autism Model School
Board Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Attending: Isaac Demarest, Toni Gerber, Mark Greenblatt (early departure), Lisa Marsalek, Raj Parikh, James Rothschild, Bruce Weinberg, Linell Weinberg

Excused: Ed Cancio

Also Attending: Mary Walters, Director; Catherine Moore, Service and Support Administrator/Recorder of the Minutes; Marcus Flynn, Administrator II; Joel Vidovic, Behavior Management Director; Mary Cornell, Assistant Behavior Management Director; Lucas Reed, Developmental Director; Jessica Bair, Sponsor Representative - ESC Lake Erie West; Amy Trautwein, Job Training Coordinator; Roger Warnock, Mark Zinc, and Daniel Buzaleski, WTA; Matt Kerr, USI; Danielle Stebli, Autism Model School teacher

Meeting began at 5:31 PM

- I. Presentations by Mark Zinc, Roger Warnock, and Daniel Buzaleski of WTA and Matt Kerr, USI
 - a. WTA Presentation
 - i. Mark Zinc, engagement manager/project management, introduced the team: Roger Warnock, CEO, President; and Daniel Buzaleski, Technology Director, custom solutions management.
 - Warnock introduced the 26 year old company to the board, indicating that they have worked with many local organization and Fortune 500 companies, including Duke Energy.
 - ii. Zinc informed the board that the Requirements of Discovery (statement of work) phase has been completed and began presenting “Next Steps: development of a prototype of the “final” product and design workbook”. He then handed the presentation over to Buzaleski.
 - Buzaleski said that they were targeting June 30th for the prototype, focusing on the “must haves” and developing

the software as we agree on specific features. The “should haves” will be added later in the process, although they may not get done.

- B. Weinberg asked for specific examples regarding the AMS proposal, stating that the presentation was thus far fairly broad and generic.
 - Buzaleski skipped ahead to present the WTA Illustrated Design of Anticipated Sample screen. They are creating “wire frames” or mock-ups of all of the screens. Zinc added that this is just a sense of how WTA will pursue the statement of work going forward.
 - B. Weinberg asked Parikh to interject any questions he may have to satisfy his desire for the presentation in the first place. Parikh summarized his understanding of the project and product and is satisfied with what WTA is presenting.
- iii. The WTA team said that they are genuinely excited to be part of this endeavor, this effort, and that they are anxious to move forward. They then opened themselves up for questions.
- Rothschild asked about the arrangement in terms of ownership of this software. Parikh answered that AMS will own the software and work product generated by WTA.
 - Zinc informed the board that he is ready to answer any questions the board may have via e-mail.
 - Parikh praised WTA, saying they’ve done a fantastic job. He finds it really refreshing that we have a local company for this endeavor.
- iv. 6:00PM WTA signed off.

b. USI Presentation

- i. Matt Kerr introduced himself to the board. We have been working with USI for many years; they are the largest insurance broker in the area.

- Participating AMS employees are currently insured through Paramount, who came back with a proposed increase of 21%.
 - Kerr said that this is based on last year's plan, with two participants driving up the premiums; it seems that Paramount is billing AMS for "sins of the past."
 - Kerr challenged their findings. As a community rated group insurers should not look at the history of the group (although they still do). After a few rounds, they came back with an increase of 12% and a review of the group scheduled for April 13th.
 - This is not a terrible increase, considering trends.
- ii. Kerr opened himself to questions from the board.
- Parikh asked if there was any harm in seeking other bids. Kerr said that there is no harm, and he would be happy to market this to other insurers, but he does not know the history of the group and therefore does not know what to expect from other insurers. He has heard that the AMS staff seems happy with Paramount as their insurer.
 - Walters said that seeking other bids is a fine idea; we've done it in the past. She wants to do it now and be ready by April, which is the best time to renew.
 - B. Weinberg endorsed the idea of seeking alternate bids, since we have the time. Kerr might try to find a two year arrangement, if possible.
- iii. Walters asked Kerr to get the information to herself and Jeana Kirkendall as soon as possible.
- iv. 6:13PM Kerr signed off, and in a sign of the times, told everyone to "Be well."
- c. WTA Presentation, revisited
- i. Parikh asked Walters if we've tried to shop the project out. She replied that we have not.
 - ii. The key project participants provided the board with their assessment of WTAs work.

- Parikh wanted the board to understand how easy WTA has been to work with. Their product is very good and they are a local company. He said, “I haven’t seen any negatives for not wanting to hire them.” He did express concern that there may be state requirements to seek bids, but recommends continuing to work with WTA as the project moves forward.
 - Walters also found them to be wonderful to work with saying they are very flexible, extremely well prepared, and surprisingly knowledgeable.
 - Vidovic echoed Walters’ assessment. He is 100% satisfied with everything they have done so far.
- iii. The board discussed the projected cost.
- Walters said the bid was lower than she’d expected.
 - Parikh and B. Weinberg clarified that this is a time and materials bid.
 - In an e-mail Walters received, the state is extending the grant allotment to September, moving the June deadline to spend the funds.
 - Vidovic pointed out that the current bid is for the second step and not the completed project.

Motion to allow Mary Walters, Raj Parikh, and Joel Vidovic, as a committee, to review bids and hire the company the committee finds to be the best, based on quality and cost:

1. Lisa Marsalek

2. Toni Gerber

Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, Rothschild, L. Weinberg

II. Welcome and Public Comments

- Danielle Stebli addressed the board stating that she intends to resign in the middle of her contract.
- B. Weinberg asked Stebli why she was leaving. She replied that she had spoken to a former colleague and

was offered another position. She also does not feel that she can work well in an understaffed school.

- B. Weinberg summarized the report Walters submitted to the board over BoardDocs. He expressed concern that allowing the resignation will set an unwanted precedent and recommended drafting a particular document allowing exceptions.
- The board agreed to discuss the matter in an executive session at the end of the regular board meeting. Stebli left the meeting and will await the outcome of the executive session.

III. Minutes

- i. From the February, 2020 board meeting. Discussion and approval.

Motion to approve the February 18, 2020 minutes as written:

1. Linell Weinberg

2. Raj Parikh

Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, Rothschild, L. Weinberg

IV. Standing Reports

a. Financial Report

- i. February, 2020 Financials—budget & variance reports.
 - The Board reviewed and discussed the February, 2020 budget & variance report.

Motion to approve the February, 2020 Financials:

1. James Rothschild

2. Isaac Demarest

Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, Rothschild, L. Weinberg

- ii. TeachTown renewal with enhancements

- Watlers informed the board that TeachTown is a very helpful online curriculum for our students.

- Cornell explained that purchasing the enhanced curriculum could benefit our population a great deal. The school trialed some products for our transition age students, including a “be safe” program when approaching authorities, social skills for middle schoolers, and another tool for independent living skills.
- L. Weinberg asked what we were paying previously. Walters said it was about \$3,800 and would now be \$11,000.

Motion to approve the TeachTown renewal with enhancements:

1. Mark Greenblatt

2. Lisa Marsalek

Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, Rothschild, L. Weinberg

iii. eRate quotes for IT services

- Walters described the eRate program, which provides an 80% reduction of rates for services. Representatives from North West Ohio Computer Association (NWOCA) came out to discuss our network requirements and the possibility of beginning a six year, category 2 “managed service” contract in FY21.
- B. Weinberg said he trusts the school to manage their own technical contracting.
- Reed assured the board that there was still time to review the options and recommendations before making a decision. The eRate program extended the filing deadline through April 29th, 2020 for category 2 funding to start in July (due to current events).

b. Sponsor Representative Report

- i. Bair reminded the board of BCI/FBI requirements; she is aware that the fingerprinting machine at the ESC is out of service currently.

- ii. No financial red flags were found during the monthly financial review.
- iii. The March site visit, conducted on Wednesday, the 11th, went well.
- iv. Bair also reminded the board of the Sunshine Laws training course on April 25th, but recommended the online training because everything is still due by the end of April.
 - The board conceded that the online training may be best in current climate; Parikh asked Bair to resend the link to the online training.

c. Policies and Procedures

- i. Policy changes associated with the calendar change/employee compensation changes
 - Walters recommended tabling this conversation at this time.
 - B. Weinberg suggested taking the end of 19-20 school year off of the proposed 20-21 calendar due to the current climate, to avoid confusion.
- ii. Suggested modification for newly hired staff during the government mandated shut down
 - See §IVd_{ii} below, in the Director's Report

d. Director's Report

- i. The Board reviewed and discussed the February, 2020 New Hires and Resignations.

Motion to approve the February, 2020 hires and resignations:

1. Toni Gerber

2. Linell Weinberg

Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, Rothschild, L. Weinberg

- ii. Suggested modification for newly hired staff during the government mandated shut down

- Walters recommended paying 5 new staff members, who would otherwise not be paid due to current holiday pay policy, during the state mandated shutdown; it would be unfair not to pay them under these circumstances.
- Rothschild confirmed that providing relief would not be unusual.
- Parikh asked if the school is going to be receiving the same funding from the state that we expect. Walters replied, “to my knowledge there’s been no indication that [we] won’t.” Bair added that they haven’t heard anything about cutting funding, but that could change in the next five minutes.
- B. Weinberg concluded that the money is uncertain, but so is the risk of losing people for treating them this way.

Motion to waive the 30 day requirement of five employees (hired after February 12, 2020) due to the extenuating circumstances of the state mandated school closure in response to coronavirus:

1. Raj Parikh

2. Lisa Marsalek

Vote – Yes – Unanimous: Demarest, Gerber, Greenblatt, Marsalek, Parikh, Rothschild, L. Weinberg

Greenblatt left the meeting at 6:58 to attend another Zoom meeting

- iii. After-School Program
 - Report available on BoardDocs website.
- iv. Calamity Days
 - Information on number of usable calamity days; may not be relevant.
- v. School Calendar for 2020-2021
 - See §IVc_i above, Policies and Procedures.
- vi. Teacher resignation
 - See §II above, Welcome and Public Comments.

- vii. Notes to parents and staff available for viewing at board meeting
 - Walters informed the board that notes were distributed to staff and students regarding the state mandated school closure. The staff was offered a chance to provide their personal contact information to parents who may want help at home; 11 staff members signed up. There was some confusion on Thursday, March 12th, due to the timing of the governor's announcement, but the Clinical Management Team came together to hit the high points. The CMT, with support from the front office staff, did a lot of unusual work Friday to serve our students and keep our families informed. The teamwork was really well done; everyone did a nice job.
 - Gerber said the letters to staff and students were comprehensive considering the short amount of time we had to write and distribute them.
 - B. Weinberg agreed, stating that this is a difficult situation and we are going to need to stay in touch. He also told the board to operate under the assumption that the governor is going to close the schools for the rest of the year. Marsalek said, "It is coming; he's been telegraphing his moves."
- e. Transportation Director's Report
 - i. The board reviewed and discussed the Transportation Director's Report.
 - Report available on BoardDocs website.
- f. Development Director's Report
 - i. Reed updated the board on current fundraising and grant projects.
 - a. Reed and Walters coordinated a site visit with Amy Clark of the Roach Family Foundation. She was impressed with the school and invited the school to apply for funding on April 1st. The foundation typically awards recipients \$5,000.
 - b. Reed and Besase attended a mandatory training on the grant renewal process earlier in the month and are working

together with the SuperSchade's Foundation on more partnership opportunities.

- ii. The staff lounge refurbishment project, funded through a grant from the Rotary Club, has received overwhelmingly positive feedback; Reed will conduct a formal survey closer to May.
- iii. Upcoming special events may not go on as planned due to the current situation.
 - The prom scheduled for March 27th has been postponed due to the state mandated school closure. Reed intends to reschedule and will contact those who have already committed to it about holding or refunding their money until we have more details.
 - The board discussed the probability of postponing the Autism Awareness Breakfast in April. It will most likely be postponed.

V. Old Business

- Subcommittee Reports – on hold.

VI. New Business

- Change of meeting location for June, 2020 – tabled until next month.

7:05PM

Motion to move to executive session to consider the discipline of a public employee or official, inviting Walters and Bair to join the discussion, with Walters recording the minutes of the session:

1. Rothschild

2. Gerber

Roll Call Vote -

Demarest - Yes

Gerber - Yes

Marsalek - Yes

Parikh - Yes

Rothschild - Yes

L. Weinberg – Yes

7:16 PM Motion to exit executive session:

1. Parikh

2. Rothschild

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to accept the resignation of Danielle Stebli without further course of action due to the extenuating circumstances of the Covid19 Virus.

1. Parikh

2. Rothschild

Vote: Demarest: Yea

Marsalek: Yea

Parikh: Yea

Rothschild: Yea

Gerber: Yea

L. Weinberg: Nay

The Yea's have it; the motion passes.

Motion to adjourn at 7:25 pm: Rothschild

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 5:30 pm, location TBA.