

**THETFORD ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Monthly Board Meeting — Mar 11, 2020

Via Zoom

**DRAFT MINUTES**

Gio Bosco (Board President) called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. In attendance (all virtually) were:

Trustees: Gio Bosco, Dana Grossman, Donna Steinberg, John Ziegler, Karl Furstenberg, Ann Bumpus, Harry Kinne, Robin Junker, Marisa Donovan, Lindsey Klecan (joined at 7:40 p.m.)

Absent: Melody Burkins, Shannon Darrah, Katie Saunders, Mary Dan Pomeroy

Employees: Carrie Brennan (Head of School), Linda Lanteigne Magoon (Chief Financial Officer), Molly Dugan-Sullivan (School Counselor and Enrollment Coordinator), Patty McIlvane (Director of Advancement), Deb Sanders-Dame (Director of Special Education)

Members of the public: Leif LaWhite (Recording Clerk), Tippi Oshoniyi, Jessica Tidman (Strafford School Board), Curtis Richardson, Therese Linehan, Shawn Harlow, Dan Grossman

**1. Welcome & President's Report (Gio Bosco)**

Gio welcomed everyone and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Consent Agenda**

- a. Meeting Minutes from February 11 BOT meeting
- b. Approval of FY20 Audited Financial Statements

Motion: To approve the Consent Agenda.

Moved: Dana

Seconded: Donna

Discussion: John noted a minor error in the Financial Statement's stated interest rate.

Vote: Passed unanimously, subject to correction of the minor error in the audited statements.

**4. Head of School Report (Carrie)**

Patty McIlvane reported on TA's branding and marketing efforts (report slides archived separately).

Molly Dugan-Sullivan reported on enrollment for the 2021-22 (report slides archived separately).

Carrie Brennan presented her Head of School Report (report slides archived separately).

Lindsey Klecan joined the meeting at about 7:40

## **5. New Business**

### **a. Approval of New Retirement Plan**

John described the desire to make a change to TA's retirement plan so the school can match all employees' contributions at the same level.

Motion: The TA Trustees authorize the Chief Financial Officer to establish a 457(b) retirement plan through the same companies that operate and administer TA's existing 403(b) plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide to "highly compensated employees," as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, a level playing field whereby TA may make contributions to the 457(b) plan in instances where regulations prohibit TA from making contributions to a highly compensated employee's 403(b) plan.

Moved: Dana

Seconded: Lindsey

Discussion: None

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

### **b. Continuation of TA Designation by the Town of Strafford**

Gio gave a brief history of the TA-Strafford designation relationship. He explained that Strafford has always functioned as though it is a choice town, even though it has designated Thetford Academy as its high school under the state designation process. He explained that a TA task force looked at the issue in depth and recommended we terminate the designation relationship so TA's relationship to Strafford is the same as to other choice towns the school serves.

Carrie presented a page from Strafford's Newton School handbook that lists the grounds for a waiver from attending TA and observed that the passage casts TA negatively—calling, for example, for descriptions of "dissatisfaction with the instruction provided at Thetford Academy."

Brief discussion ensued.

Karl asked whether the TA-Strafford Partnership Agreement has expired. Carrie confirmed that the most recent partnership has expired. Brief discussion ensued regarding how designation differs from a partnership agreement.

Motion: The TA Trustees decline to accept high school designation from the town of Strafford, VT, beyond June 30, 2021, but continue to welcome students from Strafford who wish to attend TA.

Moved: Donna

Seconded: Dana

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

## **6. Town Reports**

### **Thetford, VT**

In Shannon's absence, Gio noted that the school budget passed at Town Meeting by a margin of 692–347.

## **Lyme, NH (Karl)**

There has been some turnover on the Lyme School Board, with three new members elected. With the board membership now settled, Karl expects to be able to resume work on the TA-Lyme Partnership agreement.

## **7. Committee & Task Force Reports**

### **Resources (John)**

The IRS tax return is completed, but does not need to be submitted until May.

The committee will meet in April to go over the budget timeline and plans to bring the proposed budget to the board in May.

We're close to finalizing the transition of the TA endowment to Merrill Lynch.

### **Board Management (Donna)**

Recruitment of new board members is going well. BMC recently met with two potential new trustees.

### **Personnel (Harry)**

Dana and Harry will be meeting soon with the faculty reps to discuss potential language changes to streamline the contract, so those details can be worked out before salary negotiations for the next contract need to start.

### **Advancement (Karl)**

He had nothing to add beyond what Carrie, Molly, and Patty had already reported.

### **Anti-Racism Task Force (Donna)**

The Task Force has been working on three surveys—to go out to the community, faculty and staff, and students and recent alums.

Dana asked how the community one will be distributed. Donna explained that it will be shared on the town listservs and the school's social media outlets.

## **8. Other Business / Future Board Meeting Agenda Items**

Carrie asked whether the board would like, as time allows, to hear presentations like the ones that Molly and Patty did at this meeting; the response was positive.

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: John

Seconded: Dana

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48.

Drafted by Leif LaWhite (Recording Clerk).

Respectfully submitted by Dana Grossman (Clerk).