

**Hill View Montessori Charter Public School  
Regular Board Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, August 10, 2006**

**Board Members Present:**

Shaw Rosen, Paul Accardi, Kelly Martin, Nandesh Palanisamy, Ed Maguire, Veronica O'Brien, Peg Roberts (Ex-officio).

**Board Members Not Present:**

John Michitson, David Kelley, Ross Povenmire

**Other Attendees:**

Stephen Boyle, Jr., Aimee Whitten, Melanie Wilson, Nancy Parshley, Heidi Steen-Johnsen, Alice Liu (note taker).

**I. Minutes/Schedule**

Meeting began at 6:35pm. Call to order by Shaw Rosen, Board Chair.

**Kelly motioned to approve July's meeting minutes.**

**Ed seconded.**

**All in favor 6. None opposed. Motion passed.**

Shaw announced that the next meeting will be on September 14, 2006.

**II. Public Agenda Comment**

"Nice job on meeting minutes, easy to follow," Stephen Boyle.

**III. Quarterly Report**

Paul explained that the Balance Sheet as of 6/30/06 is a snapshot of the financial status. Paul commented that HVM is in good financial shape. There was a planning grant that came in after the year end and was listed as "accounts receivable" at the time. Good bank balance as of 6/30/06.

Paul also mentioned that Profit and Loss statement is a reflection of the whole year activities. HVM is in good shape in comparison of the budget. Items to note: revenue from state sources, tuition received from state, allowing absences. We budgeted income based on 94% enrollment, while the actual enrollment was close to 100%, so extra money came in.

Facilities, budgeted some mortgage payments that not yet in effect, that's why over budget as far as net income goes.

Ed complimented "hats off" for the good work in details.

**Nandesh motioned to approve the Quarterly Report.**

**Veronica seconded.**

**All in favor 6. None opposed. Motion passed.**

**IV. Executive Director Report**

Peg stated that HVM has submitted to DOE in July a request to increase # of students for the year after next. HVM Board had approved this action in March, 2006.

Kelly Martin asked how exit interviews are being handled during the school year and summer. Peg commented we tried to obtain all the exit interviews.

Board members asked about the additional 3 children that left school. Peg commented 1 child needed additional services that HVM cannot provide and some others moved away.

Paul asked about the gap for % of population diversity. Peg mentioned receiving a small amount of Title I money for this school year.

Peg announced that the Spanish teacher just resigned today (8/10/06); she got full time job offer somewhere else.

Administrators spent lots of time this summer planning and hiring. Will have complete full year events calendar in September to give to Board and HVM community.

## **V. Old Business**

### **A. Retreat/ Goals**

Shaw stated that from the last Board meeting, it was determined that 8 people will assigned to a task force for the retreat resolution – two (2) each from Board, Teachers, Parents, and Administrators constituents. Group will meet before Sept 14<sup>th</sup>. Task is to take notes and develop other materials at from the retreat, and develop some “SMART” goals. Will have the final goals at the Oct meeting.

John M. and Ed are the board members appointed to the task force by Shaw, Board chair, as the facilitators of the process. Ed wanted to note that it will take at least 2 or more meetings to have a desired result. Discussion took place regarding how better get the result.

### **B. Confidentiality Policy**

Trustees’ Committee hasn’t had a chance to meet. So Peg provided a definition of confidentiality. There was discussion about the scope, topics and individual information for confidentiality. No changes were requested

As second read,

**Ed motion to accept the Confidentiality Policy.**

**Nandesh seconded.**

**All in favor 6. None opposed. Motion passed.**

### **C. Public Participation Policy revision**

Second read.

**Ed motioned to accept.**

**Paul seconded.**

Discussion on policy. No changes.

Put policy on website and explain to people the differences (new and old policy).

Send out on Wed folder to let people know that they can participate in Board meetings. Board members welcome this idea.

**All in favor 6. None opposed. Motion passed.**

### **D. Committee Assignments**

Shaw recommended that Veronica be reappointed to the Trustees’ Committee. Keep rolling forward to keep things going. John and Ed need to be on a permanent committee, but for now, work on the Board retreat meeting. Ed suggests having a posting of committees on the website. He liked the organizational chart on the current website.

## **VI. New Business**

### **A. Parent Teacher Communications**

Discussion of existing opportunities for formal communication about students’ progress between parents and teachers. Kelly commented that parent conferences had a big gap between September and January, given that communication is a big issue. What are the plans for additional communication?

Hand out passed out. Peg explained that the first parent conferences are near the end of September.

Between then and December, there are only 2 months. But if there are 3 months for teachers to work with children, there will be more solid progress to report.

Peg commented that HVM has started the process of putting “folders” online for work done. All HVM parents will have passwords to access the folders once the process is complete.

Peg commented that we do have a good turnout for conferences. Many Montessori schools have only 2 conferences per year, while we do have 3 conferences plus an end of the year report. So, level hasn't changed, but just the timing of it.

Ed suggested a task force on progress communication regarding what we tell the parents, when and how. Because last year, it was difficult to obtain level of progress for some classes vs. some other classes. Communication of progress is hard to standardize.

Nandesh suggested that just the ILA is not enough. He seconded the idea of being informed where the child should be, and where the child is. What needs to be communicated and how, needs to be standardized. What is being measured (same across the school).

Shaw 1) quantity sufficient? and 2) quality sufficient?

Melanie commented that there needs to be a central baseline for teachers' communication. She felt that in December many people are involved with their personal lives. The main concern is the child; what's best for the child.

Ed commented, given we have many new teachers who are still in training. Those are the times that we need to make sure there's more communication. Brand new teachers could "crash and burn" before the 1<sup>st</sup> teacher conference.

Shaw commented that the parent teacher conference is for the students' progress. More discussion ensued.

Peg reassured the board that the mechanisms are in place and it's the job of administrators to make sure that the teachers are successful. This year, interdepartmental meetings in addition to the same level meetings, plus mentors and consultants are in place for all teachers. Moreover, Melanie's background is in curriculum. With new teachers, it allows more experienced teachers to help set new course.

Ed recommends that progress reports be standardized, auditable, clear, frequent, and measurable outputs. Melanie commented that she'll read through the report cards of various classes and see what the differences are prior to making recommendations and changes. Analysis of what has been occurring.

Kelly mentioned that she wants to learn more about what the parents could do at home.

Shaw comment to put this as "old business" for next time.

## **B. Format for Executive Director's Report**

Ed M. would like to see what we are aiming for vs. where we are. Time to update the format, and maybe the task force could help. Where are the opportunities, threat, risk assessments... Peg commented that this ED report format was set up for the goals set by the Board and to address the accountability areas that DOE monitors.

Board member commented what information the Board wants to know on a monthly basis. E.g. do we have a certain date that as manager, a structure and general plan from the staff. As a Board, on a monthly basis be informed that the monthly plans are in place. Is there a plan? Executed? Driving the results (standardized progress report).

Per Peg, reiterated that currently the ED report is set up to monitor DOE requirements. Ed recommended including in the future ED reports, any risks and accomplishments that Peg sees relating to:

1. Staying open (finance related matters )
2. Quality of education being delivered.

## **C. Benchmark Information**

Sample Benchmark #6 handouts explained by Peg. Question and clarification session.  
See also "HVM Benchmarks and Assessments, where we are now, 8/10/06" handout.

Alignments - Per DOE request for the curriculum, curriculum standards need the specific Montessori lessons added that would cover all the standards. Melanie will meet with staff from each level once a week. Benchmark results will be entered into PowerSchool.

The first Parent Night of the year will be information on alignments, benchmark, and assessments. Kelly M complimented on how great the materials (benchmark and related criteria) are, and that the HVM parents should be informed. Interim benchmarks and curriculum mapping discussed by the Board members and Melanie.

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Shaw provided an opportunity for Ed to present his idea on a “Reach Out Program.” Per Ed, many big corporations have such “reach out” practices. It’s for the Board members to go visit the actual field to see how Board decisions impact the actual day to day operation. Suggesting opening a line of communication by having a Board member affiliated to a classroom, by observing few hours a year. Resulting in added credibility and communication. Paul, added that as founders they had experienced “governance vs. management” issues. The Boards’ role is to govern and not manage. Few more discussion on not crossing the fine line being board members and parents while observing in the classroom.

## **VII. Committees/ Task Forces**

### **A. Site Task Force Report**

Veronica needs volunteers for site improvement. Interior building permit is in hand. General contractor is overseeing this project. Electrician obtained. Interior renovation: need painters, movers, outside help. There will be a master plan of every room, which room needs what, what works needs to be done. Time frame: school starts on August 28<sup>th</sup>, want the interior corridor done by 20<sup>th</sup>, be painted. Can e-mail or share the plans with people. Downstairs painting also needs to be done. Modular Unit: currently getting foundation permit, running through the application process with the City. Modular won’t be here until after school starts.

### **B. PR/Development/Finance and HOPE Joint Meeting**

Peg stated that on August 17<sup>th</sup> there will be a joint meeting of the heads of all three groups. The goal of the meeting, is to bring all the people, chairs, who are involved together to look at what our financial needs are going to be. First time we have all 3 meetings together.

## **VIII. Public Comments and/or Correspondence**

**A.** Marie Dugan’s letter. As a part of Alice Liu’s training from Center for Montessori Teacher’s Education/New York (CMTE/NY)’s Montessori School Management course, Marie Dugan, a former American Montessori Society Executive Director, visited HVM as a consultant. Marie wrote a letter praising HVM for having so many things in place already as only 2<sup>nd</sup> year school.

**B.** Alice Liu expressed her thanks and farewell to the HVM community, and the superb jobs and extra work that she observed Heidi and Peg do last year while working with them. She expressed confidence for the school to go on with a dedicated team of administrators, faculty and staff, together with great Board and strong parental support.

**C.** Shaw announced that John Michitson and Ed M are officially acknowledged as board member by a formal letter sent out from MA Department of Education.

**D.** Stephen Boyle and Aimee Whitten commented on the biweekly report from last year’s teacher on what the students are covering, e.g. the general topics that the children are learning in the classroom for various subjects. This helped facilitate parents to ask the children what they have learned in the classrooms.

**E.** Stephen asked for Board members’ e-mails so that as the President of the CP (HVM’s PTA group) the CP could invite Board members for the upcoming HVM events.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Paul motioned for meeting to adjourn.  
Shaw seconded.

**All in favor. None opposed.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.