

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES
STELLA MARIS ACADEMY
April 2, 2020**

Present: Bob Lisi, Paul Fitzgerald, John Kenney, Fr. Peter Muhich, Fr. Drew Braun, Fr. Rich Kunst, Nick Minardi, Sharon Mollerus, Barry Bigelow, Karen Newstrom, Cynthia Zook (Director of Schools, ex officio), Hilaire Hauer (President, ex officio)

Absent: John Matthews, Fr. Jim Bissonette

Guests: Julianne Blazevic, Peggy Frederickson, Jesse Murray, Mike Mazzio

Due to the COVID pandemic, the meeting was a teleconference.

Opening: The meeting began at 3:06 pm with a prayer.

Agenda approved.

Mission Moments:

- The faculty, staff and leadership team are doing an amazing job of coping with the mandated closure of our school buildings. Online lessons are being taught with a comprehensive approach and a creative and joyful attitude centered in Christ.

Approval of February 6, 2020 board minutes moved by Fr. Rich Kunst, seconded and carried.

Approval of March 5, 2020 board minutes moved by Fr. Rich Kunst, seconded and carried.

Response to COVID-19 forced school building closure and impacts:

- **Tuition:** Tuition revenue has been challenged. The business office has a running list of families who have communicated a financial hardship due to the pandemic. Requested action includes financial aid, deferred payments, and forgiveness of remaining balance. Tuition revenue from outstanding accounts amounts to \$375,000.
- **Hourly staff:** The hourly staff consists of fifteen employees, of which two are full-time. Currently, some are deployed in various meaningful work while others have chosen not to work. Stella Maris Academy, consistent with Diocesan direction, does not participate in unemployment insurance for staff. The finance committee and President, working with knowledgeable board members, will make a recommendation to the Board on how to move forward with this issue.
- **Stimulus Package:** Possible financial aid may come through a variety of programs, including the Small Business Administration, Payroll Protection Program and Employee Retention Credit. The business office is trying to keep abreast of this information while it is rapidly being revised. SMA is a unique entity, not fitting a typical category.
- **Remote learning costs:** The Zoom license needed to be renewed at a cost of \$250 per month. Smore, a newsletter application, costs \$1,200 a year.
- **Development revenue:** Following the NCEA's advice to continue fundraising with creativity, the Stellabration will be held online on April 18. The key goal is to nurture the

SMA community, with a secondary goal of fundraising. Given the current climate, the revenue goal of \$100,000 seems unrealistic. Plans for the 5K for God have not yet been communicated by its organizer. The board is grateful for financial relief afforded by the major donation received in December.

Facilities Committee update:

- A long-term schedule for facilities improvements with a five to ten-year projection has been created, and includes lighting upgrades, estimated at \$30,000-45,000 per building, and boilers for each campus. The Holy Rosary campus anticipates a \$160,000 project including tuck-pointing, resealing of windows and stabilization of retaining walls. Heating issues in individual classrooms are also being addressed. The committee encourages ideas for funding from the Board given the current parameters outlined in the lease agreements.
- With schools closed, campus playgrounds are seeing congregations of teens. Laminated signs will be posted indicating that these areas are now closed due to the statewide stay-at-home order.

Finance Committee update:

- Information for an audit quote has been requested from a St. Cloud firm.
- The committee is in the process of creating an investment model as well as a teacher compensation model.
- The endowment committee needs to fill two seats, one of which has been identified; Fr. Jim Bissonette will serve as administrator.

Principals update:

- Vision statements for both students and teachers are completed.
- All subject areas are aggressively being addressed for implementation within three years.

School Strategic Plan:

- Progress updates to the existing SSP are being completed for reporting to MNSAA by June 15. A plan to develop new initiatives will be pursued with an updated provided at the May Board meeting.

Revenue Enhancement:

- The advertising campaign is active, however, expectations need to change with the current pandemic. Phone calls will replace tours, with the possibility of future virtual tours.

Executive Session entered at 5:08 pm.

Adjourned with closing prayers at 5:43.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Newstrom
Secretary