

Morningstar Mystery School

Board of Directors

May 2023 Meeting

Minutes

May 13, 2023

Present: Jenn, Laura, Sandra, Ealasaid, and Breven (for Teaching Pillar)

Facilitator: Jenn

Called to Order at 10:03am

- Facilitator leads everyone in taking a breath together and reciting the Holy Mother prayer
- Brief checkin
- Approve minutes from previous meeting - Unanimous
- Pillar and other standing reports
 - Teaching & Curriculum Pillar (Breven)
 - Self-Possession entering 5th month, one month to go. Will end mid-July. Then everybody in the school will have done all the lessons!
 - One class still pending
 - Discussing Elements and the best way to teach it going forward, will be meeting with the teachers from the last round.
 - Will get liaisons list
 - Laura: she and Tony are working on email to suggest teaching Elements, will have that out this weekend.
 - Sandra: If no liaison can make it, can always send an email report
 - Breven: yes, but also he likes to see everybody
 - Sandra: we like to see you too! But it's an option when needed.
 - Research & Alumni Pillar (Jenn)
 - No update. No projects right now, either.
 - Temple & Tech Pillar (Laura)
 - Met last week, Ealasaid tagged people to get folks to talk about Knowledge Base.
 - Will be pinging Ken to contribute info to the KB.
 - Working on bringing other people in
 - Scheduled everything for the June Newsletter

- Discussed Board elections (but that's a Board thing so we'll be talking about it in this meeting)
 - Discussed helping out with the registrar stuff, communication w/John.
 - Next New Moon should be set, All-School Chat arc Jenn is facilitating
- Retreat Committee (Laura)
 - Did a survey, not a ton of replies but will be pulling results soon.
 - Discussion, 7 responses so far, not sure we'll get more.
- IRS/Business Stuff (Sandra)
 - Taxes filed on time.
 - Not timely to file the bylaws this year, will file next year because of how you're supposed to submit them.
- Registrar - Louise isn't on the Board anymore
 - Jenn offered to take it over, will ping Louise to follow up.
- Treasurer – via email
 - Jan-April went out via email. Can discuss next month
- Updates on action items from the previous meeting
 - Jenn
 - Ask around about art for the front page – forgot! Will do this month.
 - Laura
 - Send retreat survey link around to board and post another reminder in the forum - done
 - Reach out to teaching pillar about teachers/info to put on the website – done, will follow up with email.
 - Sandra
 - Send bylaws to DOJ – see above
 - Putting accounting stuff together for The D&O Insurance – not yet
 - Cheat sheet of what we can/can't do with school money – done, see email!
 - The question that comes up the most is whether we can give scholarships to students in need. Read a bunch about it – Oregon statutes, IRS, etc. It's a little ambiguous.
 - Looks like small one-offs shouldn't pose a problem as long as it's not a substantial amount of funds.
 - Creating a scholarship – need an application process and to have it approved by the IRS.
 - One-offs are within our mission statement – supporting members.
 - But if we want to formally make it available we have to do paperwork.
 - The safest thing to do is create a fund whose purpose is to provide scholarships to students. There's still a process to make sure it's fair but it's simpler. Don't have to worry about becoming a taxed entity.
 - Will need to have criteria, people can't get it every single year. Can't be an ongoing thing with the same person over time.

- Jenn: Scholarships and needs-based funds are two things?
- Sandra: it's kind of fuzzy but as long as it's a one off that's not huge it's probably fine. A recurring grant that's available on an ongoing basis, that's a different thing. They're both grants, but the recurring one has to have a process in place and should play it safe and have it approved by the IRS.
- Jenn: scholarship fund and having a process and an application is better – it's in the open, tracked formally, can set limits for the fiscal year, etc. Would be willing to dig in and work on that if we want to do that. Envisions not just scholarships for an in-person retreat again but maybe if we have teachers that want to go take classes at an event but can't afford that. Wants to facilitate that so they can bring the knowledge back to us.
- Sandra: yeah, that is definitely something we can do, but to fund someone going to a different school would have to be done carefully. Would need a very clear process and it'd have to be approved.
- Jenn: happy to work that, she writes grants for the nonprofit where she works. Thinks this would be great, we're sitting on a pot of money that could be really helpful
- Sandra: grants are pretty no-strings attached. Also could be a thing where we are sending someone, where they're going under our auspices, we could fund someone going.
- Jenn: if they were teaching as an mstar teacher, we could use the money to send them.
- Sandra: we really should put together an actual budget. In that, we can say "this much money is a promotional budget" and one of the things we do with that is sending people to teach at cons. Can tell our membership that we'll help fund them going to teach as an Mstar teacher. Could pay travel, lodgings, and even a stipend
- Laura: really likes this idea! Having it in writing helps make it transparent and clear to everyone.

- New Business

- Board elections? All-school meeting?
 - E: we should do them!
 - Sandra: we should at least schedule them
 - Laura: we need elections because Louise has stepped down
 - Sandra: When was our last annual meeting? Last time we talked about it, a couple months ago, we'd just had the annual meeting recently. We could just appoint a new board member if we had the annual meeting recent enough that it doesn't make sense to have it now.
 - Laura: what are the steps?
 - Sandra: need to announce the meeting 30+ days in advance.
 - Laura: could do it in the June all school chat? Do we have enough time for that?

- Sandra: seems like enough time, sure (general assent)
- Laura to find the last annual meeting post and send an updated post around calling for volunteers.
- Sandra: This works, The final call for volunteers to run for the board will be at the meeting itself.
- Discussion
- Sandra: we could draft a budget and present it at the meeting, propose it
- Discussion about budgeting
- Jenn: doesn't think we can get a budget together by June. We need to give the pillars time to let us know what their needs are.
- Discussion – we could present the budget at the July all-school chat
- general assent
- Sandra: it'd be good to talk with teaching and what direction we want to head in now that everyone has finished the curriculum, help support the teaching pillar
 - Laura: like we have a meeting about it? Or Teaching does?
 - Sandra: it'd be up to them, we're here to support, not dictate.
 - Discussion
 - Sandra: an agenda item for us - what are our abilities? Scope? Ideas?
- Jenn: the school ritual at the end of this month is coming up. It all started with us as a board envisioning and doing readings and suggesting arcs. Encourages everyone to check out the google doc and participate in the ritual.
- Action Items
 - Everybody
 - Look at the annual reports and the reports John sent out
 - Jenn
 - Research the whole scholarship thing
 - Laura
 - Will draft call for board volunteers and announce meeting in June
 - Sandra
 - Draft agenda for the all-school meetings
 - Putting accounting stuff together for The D&O Insurance
- Confirm next month's call – June 10, 2023 10am Pacific time
- Facilitator leads everyone in taking a breath together and reciting the Holy Mother prayer.

Adjourned at