

Morningstar Mystery School Board of Directors August 2024 Meeting Minutes

August 10, 2024

Present: Jenn, Laura, Sandra, Ealasaid, Doneby

Facilitator: Sandra

Called to Order at 10:00am

- Facilitator leads everyone in taking a breath together and reciting the Holy Mother prayer, inviting Lux
- Brief checkin
- Approve minutes from previous meeting – approved
- Doneby's first meeting!
- Pillar and other standing reports
 - Teaching & Curriculum Pillar (nobody came as liaison)
 - Research & Alumni Pillar (Jenn)
 - Nothing to report
 - Temple & Tech Pillar (Laura)
 - Pretty efficient meeting last weekend
 - Made schedule for the newsletter
 - Retreat Committee (Jenn)
 - Will put out a poll to get a date to meet on Zoom in September for everyone who's going.
 - Doneby: how many people are signed up?
 - Jenn: 10 or 11
 - IRS/Business Stuff (Sandra)
 - Something is up with registered agent and the bylaws, will be looking into it. Due on the 24th. John said he sent them in but agent says they haven't been sent.
 - A student John was told left the class is still paying. Laura has taken ownership and will sort it out.
 - John and Laura can sort it out and handle a refund of any overpayment
 - Doneby: saw D&O on the agenda, what's that about?
 - Explanation about D&O process so far
 - Registrar (Jenn)

- Nothing new to report
- Treasurer – via email
- Updates on action items from the previous meeting
 - Ealasaid
 - Email John to certify - done
 - Once election is certified, email Doneby and post to forum - done
 - Sandra
 - Follow up with John about sending bylaws in – done but needs more followup
 - Ping D&O agent again
- SPECIAL MEETING: What We've Accomplished

Meeting immediately after Summer Solstice

Put in New Business the month before as a heads-up

 - What have we accomplished since last summer?
 - Laura: New board member! Also a lot more arcs and magic in the all-school chats
 - Sandra: likes that as a school we're talking more deeply around what we want the school to be
 - Making a retreat happen!
 - Jenn: also all the things we're talking about around resources
 - Doneby: talking with folks about the temple, Jen being temple buddy. Also working through Keys to Perception with Ealasaid. An openness and welcoming to do stuff, initiate things. Not necessarily classes but to reach out to other folks in the school.
 - What could we have done better?
 - Sandra: difficult to untangle from own work, inner critic noisy about things she'd say about herself rather than what could the school do better
 - E: schedule for election – we didn't really have a formal schedule? It didn't come together
 - Sandra: we do have a schedule but didn't stick to it. we didn't have the annual meeting for fiscal year 2022-2023 until really late, so when it came time for the 2023-2024 one it felt like we just had it. Also we didn't manage to do the election for 2022-2023, so things were a bit unsure. For the next annual meeting can get back on schedule. We have a full board! That will help. But also how can we make sure that doesn't happen again?
 - Laura: highlights how interdependent things are. Also we need to communicate that with the school, that will help. Like, this is what we need from y'all to accomplish the following...
 - Doneby: how is it supposed to work?
 - Sandra: we amended the bylaws in late 2023 (November?). Board members are elected to two-year terms but can of course leave whenever they want. So every two years either you cycle off or you stay. The hope is that eventually we wouldn't have the whole board up for re-election. Meant to have a minimum of 5 board

members, max of 9. Next year we'll put out a call to see if anybody wants to join. If nobody wants to join, there won't be an election. The Following year, we'll put out a call and will have 9 open seats. No term limits.

- Doneby: does each pillar have a lead?
- Sandra: yeah, each pillar has an anchor and in theory they are also on the board, or come report to the board
- Laura: different people own some thing, like E owns the knowledge base
- Jenn: Research & Alumni pillar is just her, would like Registrar to be under the pillar officially.
- Laura: Teaching rotates who comes to the meetings
- Doneby: has just come from board of church, there if you were head of a committee you're also on the board
- Sandra: looked at that when we set things up, but wound up with what we have now – each pillar has a liaison, and they are either on the board or they come and report to the board. Teaching and Curriculum doesn't have a member on the board and they rotate who comes. It's usually Breven. Right now our pillars are very small, which is concerning. They're self-governed and however they want to handle leadership. But if there were more people on the pillars what could they be doing? Much more than with tiny pillars.
- Laura: would really like there to be more people on the rolls who are active. When you have a smaller group of people, there are always folks who want to be part of it but don't actually show up. We're seeing a ripple effect where people aren't showing up on the forum or to the chats, and so they don't sign up for pillars. If they're not participating they won't even see the asks.
- Jenn: feels like we need a cheat sheet – like, here's what we've been doing to help the school, to create and hold the container. Not in a blaming way, but like, this is what it takes, can you help? Not sure we've ever put it out like that before, could be really helpful
- Laura: loves that! There's a power in naming things. If that's something we could get into the newsletter, that would be amazing. We're doing a lot of work for the school and that's important
- Doneby: pull the curtain aside. There's doubtless a lot that goes on she doesn't know about. That was the case at her church, she didn't know everything that went on until joined the board
- Sandra: we need a quorum of 9 for the annual meeting, and had trouble getting it a while ago, that isn't enough people to cover all the committees and the board
- Laura: if we got new people signing up to do a two-year term and then rotating off it would be great. Some folks can only show up for a while and that's fine. En we're thinking about sustainability as a school, we need to encourage people to plug in – but that doesn't mean you have to sign up for all the committees forever and ever.

- Discussion around creating the bylaws
- Laura: also a lot of engagement stuff is probably connected to Thorn leaving. It's different showing up for a school that's just us vs a school with Thorn at the head.
- Jenn: might be off topic, but: had a thought recently about basically what if we put out a call to everyone who has ever been part of Morningstar and said, we're a school run by the students, here's who's in, if anybody wants to come back and recommit, we're going to have an open period where you can do that. Doesn't know if people would be open to that, but is curious about what that might do.
- Sandra: has thought about that. Still in touch with a couple people, also has been approached by former members. There's a level of intrigue, like "what is this" and a resonance around Thorn being a huge part of their life and now not in it, is Morningstar a place full of people I can relate to? Can also recognize we have students who didn't have a lot of involvement with Thorn, and bringing people who went through initial Feri training and were here as part of early Morningstar, they'll have a lot of ideas more strongly connected to Thorn, may be alienating for people who didn't have Thorn as that big a part of their lives
- Jenn: yeah, we're not asking people to come talk about Thorn, more like, we have these resources, are you also doing the kind of witchcraft we're doing and would you like to join. Doesn't want to bring people back to rehash old stuff, more like a re-entry class or something for folks who are interested. Would take a lot more discussion than this right now. But if we're not getting new people from elements, curious what would happen if we talked about opening an invite like that
- Laura: two thoughts: doesn't address low participation, also discussing the re-entry approach makes her less anxious. Wants to be mindful of old patterns. Loves the idea of bringing old people in, but there have been times felt friction with how other people experienced entry into the school vs her own, has her own work to do but worries about an old narrative coming in that alienates her and the other folks who entered late.
- Jenn: if we did this, I'd want to do something to sort of weed this out. Like, "you know we're not this anymore" and then people can say "OK, I'm not interested"
- Sandra: has talked with folks, hard to untangle wanting friends to come back. Perspective where a whole mess of Morningstar people lived in driving distance and we got together a lot. Every single one has moved away. Misses friends! Thinks there's interest, though. "If you build it they will come" comes to mind. As former students are aware we're still here, they're interested. Not ready to re-engage so far, but she's gotten tentative "can we come back?" questions. Maybe we're not getting a lot of re-engagement from former students for the same reason we're not getting new students – there's not enough *there* there yet. We're getting it, but not there yet. Maybe we need to let the school grow at its natural pace.
- Laura: need to let the magic simmer and bloom

- Sandra: but not neglect it! Seed must be kept moist and warm to germinate, seedling needs a lot of care to grow. There's work to be done.
- Laura: if we work on our own magic and own things can maybe make offerings that are more public, are there things we could invite old members to? Meditations, class, etc. Do need to nurture the seed. Feels like we're rediscover³ring our own magic as a school. It's been virtual for a while now, our retreat is the first in a while
- Doneby: on the mundane level, internal engagement, has found that if people can have clarity about what they're being asked to do, they're more likely to be willing to do it. Stepping into something amorphous is scary. Being clear can make it easier. Has stepped into the board herself, clearly okay with amorphous, but thinks "here's the boundaries of the thing" this task, role, whatever. People can say "that I can do". People are more confident/interested if they can see the boundaries.
- Laura: we started changing the mission statement and updating the website, not sure if that also fizzled.
- Sandra: thinks it got put on a back burner and hasn't been brought back up. Maybe someone turned the burner off, lol. Kind of forgot about it.
- Laura: would like us to get back to it. Sacred Space is next year, if we actually get things together and done we could market ourselves there without looking like a weird group with a website and nothing else.
- Sandra: OK we have 15 min left.
 - Laura: wants us to be impactful. Get things done rather than put off.
 - Sandra: what I'm seeing is a need to solidify, to make our containers and solidify. One is the election schedule for the year, another is roles.
 - Doneby: sounds like the big themes have been external and internal engagement – not just new students but re-engagement of students who have drifted away. Needs more discussion but can't be sorted immediately
 - Laura: knowing big discussion subjects ahead of time feels really good. We could put these things on the agenda.
 - Sandra: Shall we come up with a concrete list of what we want to discuss over coming months?
 - Discussion. The list!
 - Annual election schedule
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - School mission and cohesion of the school
 - Engagement of drifted-away-students and old students
 - Opportunities for wider engagement (lower priority)
 - Laura: also how can we meld magic into this? Sounds very administrative. Always wants to see how we can bring magic into our work here.
 - Sandra: yes, the schedules that work best for us tie in with seasons and magic.

- Laura: if E sends over notes from today will write a blurb for the newsletter
 - Sandra: we've been in the hard part of the cycle but energy is coming back up. There's a need for the board to actively report to the school. We could get a small board update to Lyssa for the newsletter every quarter
 - Laura: yes, scheduling for that will help hold us accountable
- Where are we spending tuition money, and what are students getting from it?(aka what are students getting for their dues?)
- Let's look at the goal of having annual all-school meeting in March and the steps working backward to make that happen. Budget report, election stuff, et al. (this was first added a couple of years ago but we still haven't managed it so let's look again)
- New Business
- Action Items
 - Doneby
 - Read more in the Knowledge Base about roles and responsibilities
 - Laura
 - Blurb for newsletter
 - Sandra
 - Follow up with John about sending bylaws in – done but needs more followup
 - Ping D&O agent again
- Confirm next month's call – September 14, 2024 10am Pacific
- Facilitator leads everyone in taking a breath together, thanking Lux, and reciting the Holy Mother prayer.

Adjourned at 11:33am