Brooke Governance Committee
Meeting Minutes: August 12, 2020
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members in Attendance: Merry Boak, Devita McConnell, Trevor Rozier-Byrd, LaTasha Sarpy, Jonathan Garland, Natasha Williams, Tom O’ Rourke

Brooke Staff in Attendance: Hagar Berlin, Jon Clark, Kimberly Steadman, David Jordan, Mark Loring, Yvette Philip

Meeting Minutes

- Open Meeting Protocol
  - Calling meeting to order and record attendance
  - Inviting public comment from any community members present; no members are present

- Board Business
  - Vote to approve the Board Minutes from May 14, 2020
    - Motion by Tom
    - Seconded by Devita
    - All in favor - motion passes
  - Update from Board Chair (Merry B.) and Vice Chair (Devita M.) on Board Member Check-ins, Committees, and new member orientation
    - Merry and Devita are in the process of having conversations with individual members about aspirations and goals for board engagement. Will plan to distill these thoughts and share with Kimberly and Jon on how to support Brooke within Board meetings and beyond.
  - Updates from Hagar B.
    - Regularly scheduled committee meetings will resume in advance of the September Board Meeting; New board members to choose and be brought on to committees.
    - Board orientation will take the form of 3, 1-hour long remote sessions to take place in the early fall

- Refinance Opportunities
  - Discuss options to refinance Brooke debt
    - Taking advantage of historically low rates, in order to set some interest aside and pay off the highest interest debt first
    - After many months of deliberation, landed at refinancing up old and current debts in order to repay our building debt within 16 years, while reducing both annual payments and interest expenses
    - Will allow added flexibility to take on additional debt in the future for the Athletic fields project
  - Questions
Lauren K. - is the ~ $2.5MM cost figure for the Athletic fields new?
- The number reflects an early estimate for the entire project, without a current design or breakout. We hope to have philanthropic and possibly CPA funds to help cover the project.
- 18 months to draw down up to $2.5MM

- Vote to approve plan proposed by the board’s finance committee (allowing for the Chair, Treasurer and Jon C. to sign off)
  - Tom motions
  - Jonathan seconds
  - All in favor, with exception of Lauren K. who opposes - she doesn’t feel the board was given ample time to understand the details of the proposal.

- Update on Remote Learning Plan
  - Update on plans for remote learning
  - Sent the announcement last Friday to staff and families
  - Reactions thus far:
    - Staff reacted mostly positive - felt their concerns around the challenges of hybrid learning were heard and addressed
    - Parents and families also feel heard; some will struggle to balance supporting remote instruction with working full time.
  - Sending a more detailed plan out tomorrow based on what we have to send to the state.
    - State guidelines came out yesterday on community infection rates, and which districts should and shouldn’t open up in person.
    - Areas w/ 8 or more positive cases per 100k should remain remote; areas with under 4 positive cases per 100k can move to in-person schooling
      - Chelsea, East Boston have a very high infection rate
      - We will continue to monitor, with specific attention to the positive cases in our biggest sending communities.
  - Questions from the Board
    - Tom - rationale on future changes to the plan over time?
      - We would survey staff and families again to understand community sentiments and input prior to proposing changes.
    - LaTasha - How will login requirements for students work?
      - K-2 will have live instruction in the mornings (not back to back); afternoons will be asynchronous; High School instruction will be synchronous (live) during the school day
    - How will students form communities virtually (8th grade and beyond?)
      - BHS clubs will proceed remotely - currently in the early stages of planning arts enrichment
      - Many parents shared a sentiment of wanting kids to get healthy peer interaction
- Discuss other local schools and districts’ plans this fall - Jonathan G. shares his children’s charter school has released news that the board voted to go 100% remote until mid-October and reevaluate then.
  - Vote on our plans to begin the school year remotely; and vote on changing the length of the school year to 180 days for 2020-2021
    - Latasha - motion
    - Jonathan - second
    - All in favor - motion passed unanimously