

WatersToday Board Meeting Minutes

July 14th, 2021

7 p.m. Open Meeting

WatersToday Mission Statement

WatersToday was created for the purpose of raising and administering money to support Waters Elementary School. Working collaboratively and respectfully with the Thomas J. Waters Elementary administration, faculty and Waters community, WatersToday strives to continually support, augment, and enhance the educational experience of Waters Elementary students. Our primary focus is to support the Waters ecology program and strategic school initiatives.

Attendance:

In-person: Jacqueline Gaines, Mary Gallery, Kortney Moore, Jennifer Davidson, Cara Sullivan, Sam Kaune, Leah Reiger

Via Zoom: Maripa Abella, Poppy Brandes, Amy Vecchioni, Mark Williams, Sandra Carlson, Allison MacDonald Ryan

Welcome & Introductions – Outgoing and incoming members introduced themselves.

Secretary

- K. Moore moved to approve the minutes; L. Reiger seconded

Waters Admin / Staff Updates S. Carlson: we've just given access to budget, so that is the primary focus right now. N. Alvarez: yes, budget issues are being worked out. In addition to that, making sure all is in place for opening. Kinder enrollment is growing. Please remind incoming families to register. Flyers will be going up soon, as well as banner. Jen Davidson will send info on incoming kindergarten meet-and-greet. Potentially coinciding with garden night. Nilsa agreed to collaborate on that and communicate through Aspen. Sometime in August.

Amy Vecchioni: Talked to Book Cellar and will hold off through the summer. Planning to do a parade for beginning of school year using recycled puppets. AV: shared update and pictures from Monarch Club Camp and thanked WT for the support. 3 students are attending on donated enrollments.

Waters LSC Update- Allison MacDonald Ryan: budget overview meeting happened last week (recording is up on website) and follow-up meeting will happen next Monday at 9am. The LSC is also working on principal selection. Entire LSC met last week, as an LSC the decision was made to not have a principal selection committee, but have the LSC run the process. We spoke to other LSCs, other district contacts and principals, and this was the suggestion from a timeline/expediency stand point. We will collect feedback from various stakeholders. Job posting has been finalized and is posted. Timeline: some folks are eager to move as quickly as possible, the reality is summer slows things down. Current timeline has us collecting resumes through August, first round interviews following and second round interviews will happen once the teachers are back in school. Final forums will be public with two finalists in September.

WatersToday Board Meeting Minutes

July 14th, 2021

7 p.m. Open Meeting

Community will be able to participate. Website will be set up with documents from candidates, should be up early next week. WT could be helpful by spreading the word for participation/feedback from community. The LSC will continue to meet weekly until this process is over (Mondays at 6:30). M. Williams reiterated that the focus is to have the right person in place, and timeline will be fluid as needed.

Fundraising / Numbers Update

Kortney Moore:

Pledge Drive and Maker Fair: ~\$50,000

Big Night, \$53,000

Other donations/sponsorships: \$15,000

Nature PlaySpace: Total of \$40,000 raised

LSC allocations/CoH/: \$111,000

Green Notes Teacher Features: 31, innumerable connections made. Kudos to comms team.

Ecology Program: numerous hours in online learning. Return to garden and field exploration!

Countless volunteer hours in community! Virtual events, meetings, and to support community

Thank you for pushing forward. It will be great for our school and community.

Treasurers – Sam Kaune

\$141,000 raised (gross) and ~\$121,000 (net)

Our budget which includes our own expenses (including ecology program) and discretionary funding for more urgent needs. Spent \$120,000 overall this year. At the beginning of the year we gave LSC figure of \$111,000 to spend, and about \$58,000 was spent (unsurprising since Right at School is part of that).

Bottom line: though fundraising was down this year, we do have some money rolling over.

Alison asked: are there other money or is this everything on the table?

SK: End of FY: what we have as of today is \$299809. It includes what we raised this year and what we didn't spend. Our proposed budget has us spending about \$117,000, and we can discuss what to do with the rest. We could allocate to the LSC and/or we could keep for reserves (planning for a down year).

AR: I have concerns about the budget going through as is.

KM: We typically vote on budget prior to incoming board being in place.

AR: Waters LSC has come across documentation that states that fundraising done in the name of Waters School should be turned over to internal accounts

SC: that is correct. CPS policy does state the money fundraised for the purpose of the school must be turned over to internal accounts. Because you are bringing in new principal, I can say from experience, they will follow CPS policy. Re: ecology director: he must be vetted by CPS as vendor to work with children. This policy is not new, but my guess is that new principal will operate by it.

WatersToday Board Meeting Minutes

July 14th, 2021

7 p.m. Open Meeting

VS: Is this other than the LSC handbook?

SC: This is CPS policy regarding outside fundraising sources

VS: I don't see this in the fundraising proposal and I don't see why we can't hold back a % for WatersToday expenses. We are not governed by CPS, I would like to seek legal advice on these documents.

KM: We are talking about funds raised in the past. Perhaps we discuss the process in the future for funds raised in the future. We appreciate you bringing this information forward. We want to do what is best for the school, and we need to be careful in terms how we operate, we can discuss changes moving forward. At this time (until we have clear instructions from CPS counsel), we will move forward. We don't want this to be contentious, we want to do the right thing moving forward. It would be great if CPS guidelines could be shared with the board so we can move forward.

SC: I will try to get a copy of the policy, but this is not a new policy. This same situation has come up at other schools. We can set up a meeting to discuss. Changes to how you operate do not have to be done tonight, but you likely are out of compliance. You should be aware because someone new coming out will be concerned about it. I will get you the policy, then we can set up a meeting, and you can figure out how you want to move forward.

SK: Moved to table the vote on the budget. LR seconded. In favor: MG, KM, PB, MA, JG, SK, CS, Abstain: LR, JD, Motion passes.

MG: We will have to change our process (get LSC to vote on specific use of funds we raise, before we raise them)

SK: it is find to delay this after we review policy and figure out the way to operate moving forward

SC: It won't preclude you from having the events you want, spending the money for particular program, but certain guidelines have to be followed. For example: ecology program director's qualifications/background checks need to happen .

KM: yes he is working on getting a vendor number

SC: no one is taking away your right to raise funds, but we should get the policy before us and make sure that we are in compliance. Legally you don't want to put anyone in jeopardy.

AR: we have the policy in the LSC hand book

SC: Let me see what I can get.

Communications & Marketing Team

MG: Moved to share summary of comments in open meeting. CS: seconded. All in favor

MG: Summary collected at end of June. 33 responded (7 did not donate). This is good information for us moving forward. Majority donated: to support teachers and staff: missing of WT, and ecology.

Of 7 who did not donate: 2 had extenuating circumstances this year; 3 had concerns with how administration was handling the funds; 1 person was unaware

WatersToday Board Meeting Minutes

July 14th, 2021

7 p.m. Open Meeting

2 consistent negative comments: a feeling of poor outreach to all the members of a diverse community; don't support the mission of WT (that we should be raising money and sending it to a different school)

More important initiatives: fine arts, ecology, CoH, Right at School (JD: perhaps they don't understand what Right at School is and its necessity due to the nature of this year). Music, library, community lab also mentioned Outdoor play equipment/extra recess; Spanish/foreign language.

Vast majority attended Big Night, most donated during Pledge Drive

17 or 33 said they planned to donate again

Green Notes was most popular form of community, next was the Community page on FB. One person mentioned we had not done an adequate job reaching out to new families. If people are mostly getting news from a closed Facebook group, that is a challenge.

KM: We were able to do so much more pre-pandemic. MG: Yes, there's a lot for us to think about in terms of how we start the year off and collaborate with LSC and incoming administration. How can we do a good job welcoming new families

JD: Maybe that's something the volunteer team, the ambassador team, to do. To get them to welcome new families, kinder and transfer.

MG: We should share the piece of feedback about the ecology video and the history of Waters with Mr Leki

KM: We should have a volunteer committee that is a collaborative effort with Waters Today and the administration/faculty/students

AV: Yes, the faculty and staff could put together a welcoming committee

Volunteer Team

MA: we will always be in tandem with the community calendar. The new volunteer co-chairs will be meeting with the communications team to figure out best process moving forward. One issue we've dealt with moving forward is that we have 100+ email address, so we have to send in batches. We have to figure out how comms is doing it and if we can piggy back on access.

MG: We now have a paid Mail Chimp account so we can have a volunteer list

Can JG send WT meeting info to the Waters Google account?

JG Yes

MG: send volunteer requests to Green Notes

Community & Events Team

LR: On the email list for the Friends of Friends, someone suggested if you do a walk-a-thon in the Fall, consider using a company to boost. JD will look into it.

JD: I am looking for a co-chair, if you know someone please put them in touch. It is posted on the WT community events page.

I put together a community and events calendar for next year, including school events from pre-pandemic (acknowledging that those may be tentative). Will share this

Big Night Next year: May 20, 2021, at 7:30

WatersToday Board Meeting Minutes

July 14th, 2021

7 p.m. Open Meeting

Presidential Team

KM incoming board nominations:

- LG: I would like to nominate Vanessa Summer for President. VS: I accept.
- KM: I nominate Sam Kaune for second term. SK: I accept
- No nominees for community and events co-chair
- JD: Nominate Mary Gallery for communications co-chair to second term. MG: I accept
- LR: I nominate Sarah Anderson for volunteer co-chair; SA: I accept

MG: I move to approve the slate of candidates for all nominees above. KM: Second. All in favor

New board goes into effect August 1

KM: Move to adjourn meeting. LR: second. All in favor