

# Fernwood Fund

## Board Meeting Minutes (1/14/2020)



Date: January 14th, 2019 at 6:30pm  
Location: Fernwood Montessori, Community Room, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Attendance: Mel Limas, Tara Baszler, David Eskra, Matt Ray, Eric van Schyndle, John Sanchez, Benjamin Stocks, Amy Joyce  
Absent: Lorinda Flores  
Guests: Molly Brown (music program), Kelly Rickman (MPS Foundation), student representatives from the water fountain grant  
Facilitator: Tara Baszler  
Note Taker: Benjamin Stocks

### Meeting Notes (actions are assumed due at the next meeting unless otherwise stated)

- Meeting called to order at 6:34 pm.
  
- Fernwood Music Boosters Program
  - Recommendation prior to the meeting was to manage funds raised by the music booster program through the MPS Foundation embodied at Fernwood Montessori in the Fernwood Fund to provide greater security of funds and prevent the need to create another school account.
  - Principal Sanchez reminded the board that one of the foundational goals for the Fernwood Fund was to support the arts at Fernwood.
  - In the MPS Foundation, the music program could be added as a “sub account” and the dollars would be separated and reported by the Foundation as two statements: one for the general Fernwood Fund and a second specific to the music program.
  - General guidance from the MPS Foundation is that the music program would not require the same oversight as Fernwood Fund, but recommend cooperation between the Fernwood Fund board and the music program to ensure both entities agree on the financial reporting.
  - This type of arrangement with a “sub account” has worked at both Rufus King and Vincent High Schools previously.
  - Board continuing discussion ended with questions on the long term plan (objectives, costs, fundraising plans, long term viability) and would like to see a written description of the long term plan before recommending a path.
  - **Action:** Principal Sanchez will reach out to Molly with a request for a long term plan using board input for questions, board members should submit any questions to Principal Sanchez.
  
- Adolescent Water Fountain Project
  - Representatives from the adolescent passion project presented the plan for installation of the second bottle filling station and commitment to raise \$2,000, half the estimated total installed cost, themselves.
  - To date, the group has raised \$423 in a single fundraising events with follow on events planned.
  - If the amount is not raised by the end of the school year, this program and the Fernwood Fund commitment will continue into next year.
  - The board tentatively approved the grant for the \$2,000 requested in December and reaffirmed that commitment after the presentation.
  
- Standing agenda topics:
  - Minutes from last meeting (12/10/19) approved.

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- The drums for the in school music program have already arrived.
- The financial conditions show an approximate liquidity of \$41,000 after accounting for an approximate \$8,000 to cover Urban Ecology and Schlitz Audubon in 2019/2020.
- The approximate receivables for 2017 United Way and 2018 United Way will be removed from the financial planning going forward. With the expectation of locating these funds being low, financial decisions should not be made assuming those funds are in hand.
- The fund received a gift grant from Northwestern Mutual Life on behalf of the Eames family.
  
- Landscaping Projects:
  - West Playground still has corrections that have yet to be made which the contractor has responded to, but cannot be made until Spring.
  - Spring landscaping project will target next phase of the West Playground with planting beds, more seating and other enhancements. A rough quote will be needed for the board to vote on in February to go to bid on something that can be completed by the end of the school year.
  - **Action:** Ben will reach out to Lorinda to get some rough estimates on the enhancements that can be discussed at the February board meeting.
  - The cost estimates for replacing the south end of the west playground with turf appear to be quite high and more discussion will be required for that. The idea of using turf was based on the difficulty in keeping grass growing in that area with all the student traffic.
  - **Action:** Mel will reach out to Sean to quote an aeration and proper seeding of the grass area on the south end of the west playground as an option to avoid putting turf down.
  
- Fundraising:
  - **Action:** Mel will reach out to Gesture / GiveSmart to understand cost of using that service for Beers and Cheers again.
  - The marquee fundraiser (presently Beers and Cheers) will use the 2020 event as a transition from the individuals who have managed the event previously to volunteers with younger students.
  - The February board meeting will be the “full on” kick off for Beers and Cheers. Through this year the existing volunteers will be working with any new parent volunteers to help hand off the work for future years.
  - **Action:** all board members are encouraged to recruit parents of younger students to join the board or at least help with Beers and Cheers and bring them to the February board meeting.
  
- Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.