

Olympic Christian School
Board Meeting Minutes—May 15th, 2017

In attendance:

Board members: Ian Barclay, Betsy Flodstrom, Dan Hendrickson, Mitch Johnson, Mark Patton
Staff: Ms Novak, Mrs Oakes
Parents and others: Marsha Shamp, Mike Van Proyen, Pam Boyd, Mike Gillespie, Kristina Manning, Rachel Noel, (Ian Barclay)

Scripture and Opening Prayer: Mark Patton

Mark talked about Acts 6:1-15. He said the realization has hit him that we have been missing out on a lot of input from parents. There is also discontent and misinformation which is driving some people's decisions relating to OCS. We need to be focused on the fact that we must be working together for Christ's benefit, and not our own. He read from a written statement about teamwork. In Acts 6, Luke records how the need for teamwork first appears in the church. No one of the disciples could accomplish all that needed to be done on their own. A church body (or school) cannot function properly without everyone coming together. He then opened with prayer.

Finance Committee: Mark Patton

Finances are looking pretty good. We currently have about \$13,000 cash on hand. We have not projected how we are going to close out cash at the end of the year without knowing for certain what enrollment is now. Enrollment for next year looks pretty good thus far.

Principal's Report:

Mrs Rudzinski was not present due to illness, but provided a written report which Dan related to the group:

- The art festival and Grandparents' Day were a great success. George Wood was our special guest speaker [for chapel] up at Fairview Bible Church. Cookies and water were in the classrooms for grandparents to enjoy.
- We are focusing on the Young Author's books now, and preparing for 8th grade graduation and our annual field trip to Salt Creek.
- The fence work should be progressing this week (weather permitting).
- Teacher appreciation day is this Friday.
- The Crossing Church has communicated how appreciative they are with the current arrangements for using OCS' chapel for their Sunday services. It has been a very good change for their congregation.
- Mrs. Oakes' retirement ceremony (June 10th) is also being arranged and advertised.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes for the April OCS board meeting had been previously approved by email.

Staff Report: Ms Novak

- Young authors is going on right now. The due date [for students] is this Friday, and the

judges are lined up. There are different judges for each grade level.

- Students are doing well at the end of the year, but it's crunch time on everything. Staff is just trying to keep all those kids focused to the end, with summer break coming.

Betsy asked if staff have worked on a school calendar for next year. Ms Novak said no, they have not.

Dan asked if “Science on Wheels” went well. Ms Novak replied that it did, and the teacher did not talk about the rocks being millions of years old, so that was good.

Curriculum Committee: Betsy Flodstrom

Betsy said there is nothing to report, but she is waiting to hear back from teachers on whether anything specific needs to be addressed.

Development Committee: Dan Hendrickson

- We have an unusual fundraiser involving an older Cadillac with 89,000 miles on it. Dan is working on that.
- Our Fund-a-need letters went out a few weeks ago. We hope this will result in adequate funds for students who need tuition assistance.
- Ben and Raechel Allen will begin involvement on the Community Awareness Committee later this summer, when their fishing season is over.

Friends of OCS Committee: Dan Hendrickson

The annual golf tournament was close to being canceled due to the lack of help. A plea went out to get this help, and as a result we have seven new parents involved with the FOCS committee. We will meet again on June 2nd for more planning of the golf tournament. We also have some new sponsors, which is great. “Our favorite new sponsor” is King's Way Church. We may even do better than last year, and that is very exciting.

Infrastructure/Building Report: Dan Hendrickson (filling in for Ed Kaetzel)

We are “90% there” in the process of preparations to repaint the main building, replace the porch and fix flashing. We think that is a high priority and the plan is to get it done sometime this summer.

Parent Input:

Since we had advertised an open discussion about the 501(c)(3) status OCS hopes to pursue in which parents could share their concerns, Dan began with a brief introduction to the concept. He said we started this idea a little over a year ago, because OCS from its very beginning was intended to become a community school. When the school began, it was organized under IBC, because it was convenient at the time to “tag along” with their 501(c)(3). So last year Ed Kaetzel and Dan went around to some other churches to see how much interest and support in OCS might be found.

Another issue coming into this is that doing our accounting on PraxiSchool is easier if we are our own entity. So if we went “on our own with IBC's blessing” that could make things better for everyone. We plan to file our articles of incorporation with the state of Washington. This process can take up to a year. If this all goes through, we would sign a lease from IBC for the facilities we now use, with an option to buy everything once IBC and OCS agree that we can handle this on our own. Part of the agreement will be that IBC can stay involved spiritually, and we need

the involvement of other churches.

We will switch to PraxiSchool financial software on September 1st.

Dan then asked if anyone had questions.

Mike Van Proyen spoke, saying “we've” been a part of this school for a long time. He emphasized “We” are OCS, motioning to include himself and all present. He continued, that's not going to change and we're still enrolled here. This new model is not a hard sell to him. Mike expressed his gratitude to the school for all the years of the kids here. He loves the school and thinks we will end up somewhere good. He is an optimist and believes Jesus builds his kingdom. Speaking as a father, he does have some concerns. As a pastor of a church OCS was trying to recruit, he appreciates the challenges of getting other churches on board with this.

Kings Way's Council on Christian Education developed a philosophy whereby it is known that they support OCS, and they did a fundraiser. It was fun and was a success, and they view it as a good start. Mike wants to give it another shot next year. He sees his church as a market, because their church [demographic] is getting younger. He has discussed the possibility of an internal scholarship program. That is where their heart is.

So while he is in agreement with us about moving in this direction, he is concerned that the last couple years staff turnover has been not a healthy thing. It doesn't breed confidence for this change. There are a lot of factors involved, but in the end, it's hard to manage a Christian ministry. It's not a business. You have to have business management practices, but it is still ultimately a ministry. Our staff comes here as a sacrificial calling to serve for less than they could make on the open market. So the same practices as a business uses cannot function in this realm. We have been concerned about that for some time. You can only pay what you can pay, but you can make up what you can pay in a lot of different ways. So his concern is continuity in the principal's position in particular, and in the staff. That's one issue.

His second concern was that there is a collaborative relationship between teachers, the principal and the board. And that's not easy. He understands the board to a point because he “was on it when it really wasn't a board.” There were just a couple other people and [the administrator at the time] wanting us to rubber-stamp his ideas. But a conflict occurred, which resulted in him [Mike] leaving the board. He recognized the board needed to become much more involved at the time, which they did. He now wondered if perhaps the board has “swung a little too far the other way.”

He emphasized he was speaking as someone who loves the school and is not going anywhere. An intentional approach to collaboration and continuity is very important. Some parents have the attitude that they are paying for a product, and that is something you're always going to fight. But OCS needs good leadership consisting of mutual submission and accountability; that has to happen. We need to look at how we will move forward this next year. He is honestly concerned about what the future holds.

Dan replied that he is also concerned, and we are doing everything we can to achieve that continuity. We have made all our decisions in prayer. We want to connect with the teachers as much as possible to find out what their inputs are.

Mike said that as you move into your bylaws [under the new governance model], proper oversight is going to be needed. I love it when a parachurch ministry is tethered in some way. He loves that it has been tethered to IBC. Some tethering is still going to be crucial, perhaps from another church. He thinks five churches would be optimum but if we can even get three that would be great.

Dan said we might ask churches that are involved in the future to assist us in writing our bylaws. But we haven't gotten that far yet.

Mitch said we are working on a plan to include the teachers, principal and board to work together. We don't know just what it will look like but we are approaching a consensus. Our teachers/ministers are primarily the missionaries in the school. They are working with the kids directly and it is important we respect them enough input to gain their confidence.

Mike said that Mrs Van Proyen was discouraged following OCS' previous "town hall" meeting. And she is not easy to discourage, except he does a pretty good job of it. He doesn't know exactly how that meeting was but her feelings of discouragement came as a surprise. He thinks if we [OCS] were to get three years of consistency and unity, then we could double in size. That unity cannot be commanded, it has to be maintained as something built into our faith. He believes that with all his heart.

Dan agreed.

Mike said we will sponsor the golf tournament although he would make a lot of divots.

Mitch verified that, and Dan offered him golf lessons.

The board unanimously expressed appreciation for his input. Mark said it's sort of like a "vicious circle." If you're not getting a response from parents then we don't always know what to do, and if they don't like our decisions they won't be inclined to open up to us.

Mike said some feel as though the board is not listening, so people aren't going to show up at meetings.

Mitch said we as the board needs to say this is on us. If we are losing that many people we need to acknowledge that and look at ourselves first.

Dan says he feels that heavy responsibility, and he has done everything he can and prayed a lot. Many things have happened that are out of our control and we deal with them the best as we can. He will do anything he can for the teachers. He prays that what we're doing now will turn things around and get us "on an upward slope."

Dan asked if there was any additional parent input, but no other parents or staff had anything else to say. The feeling in the room was that Mike had spoken ("eloquently," Mrs Oakes said) pretty much what all other parents and OCS friends in attendance had on their mind.

New Business: None

Unfinished Business: None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Submitted on 5/22/17 by Ian Barclay