

Saratoga Central Catholic School
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on June 19, 2014

Attendees: Stan Weeks, Chairman
Jerry Leone, Vice Chairman
Lew Benton
Kathy Carson
Fran Dingemon
Tom Gould
Michael Naughton
Dan Shea
Principal Mr. Steven Lombard

Guest(s): Coach Alphonse Lambert, SCC Athletic Director

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Weeks.

- Dr. Weeks offered an opening prayer.
- Mr. Shea made a motion to approve the minutes of the March meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leone and unanimously approved.

Coach Lambert made an informal presentation about the potential for the school to field a girls' soccer team for the Fall 2014 competitive season. He stated that he has been asked by students for 20 years with increasing interest the last few years due to more children playing soccer. Coach Lambert described the current opportunities for students to participate in school sports, and reported that male students have four (4) Fall sports to choose from (soccer, golf, cross country and football), while the female students only have two (2) choices: volleyball and cross country. Coach Lambert was approached by the parent of students interested in playing (Mr. Patrick Maher), and after the recent success and demonstrated sportsmanship by the boys' soccer team, Coach Lambert felt it was time that the school supported the idea of fielding a team. Coach Lambert proposed to the board to have the girls' team play a 16 game schedule. Original estimates for the costs of the program was approximately \$8,000.00, but these costs have been reduced through cost cutting measures such as the use of previously purchased uniforms, and having multiple teams use bus transportation for away games. The total cost to the budget now is estimated to be \$4,000.00. It was noted that the Mann family donated \$2,500.00 in support of this team.

Mr. Lombard expressed concern about the impact the soccer team would have on the competitiveness of the school's volleyball program. He reported that there are approximately 189 students eligible to participate in the school sports teams, and roughly 124 students are expected to participate on at least one sports team during the Fall of 2014. The general consensus of comments expressed by board members at this point was that this participation rate was a positive reflection of what the school has to offer to students.

Coach Lambert reported that Dan Cogan has been identified as the new coach for the girls' team, and he also reported that the school will field a boys' varsity and modified team for this coming Fall. All games will be played at the North Side Field located near Skidmore College, and the boys' modified team is scheduled to practice at the South Side Recreation field which is located adjacent to the Saratoga Springs Recreation Center located on Vanderbilt Avenue, in Saratoga Springs.

A motion was made by Mr. Leone for the school to field a girls' soccer team for the upcoming season, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Benton. The board voted unanimously to approve the recommendation.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee Report was provided by Mr. Leone

- Mr. Leone introduced the newest member of the SC School Board, Ms. Fran Dingemon, a parent of students who graduated from SCC.
- Mr. Leone reported that Mrs. Jennifer Claeson has applied for and been interviewed for participation on the board. Based on that application and recommendation the committee presented her for acceptance to the board. Mr. Leone reported that she has completed all required paperwork.
- Mr. Shea moved that we accept Jennifer Claeson as a new board member, subject to the approval of the Superintendent and the Bishop. Ms. Carson seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.
- Mr. Leone presented to the board the nominations for the board members to serve in the various leadership positions of the board for the school year 2014-15, and they were as follows: Mrs. Mary Gavin to serve as Secretary; Mr. Jerry Leone to serve as Vice Chairman; and Dr. Stan Weeks to serve as Chairman. Mr. Gould made a motion to accept the nominations, and Mr. Benton seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the appointments.

The Capital Campaign report was given by Mr. Gould

- Mr. Gould reported the committee met to discuss the expenditures for the construction project of replacing the cement sidewalks and removal of the trees in the front lawn. The cost of the repair work is estimated to be \$35,000.00, and \$5,000.00 was budgeted for contingencies. The project is scheduled to commence the week of July 7.
- Mr. Gould reported that since the sidewalk repair is a priority, the roof and foundation repairs will not be done at the present time.
- Mr. Gould reports that Mr. Tom Roohan has been working with the city to have the necessary curb cuts completed, and the installation of street lighting and tree plantings.
- The work to be completed on the sidewalks will address concerns raised by the insurance company.

The Enrollment Committee report was given by Mr. Naughton

- Mr. Naughton reported that the enrollment committee met and has provided the board and Mr. Lombard with five (5) recommendations on tasks to improve the enrollment efforts at the school. The top 5 recommendations include: (1) establishment of a survey policy for the promulgation of various surveys including, among others, an exit survey, a new student survey, a survey for participants of school open houses, a survey of families with students currently enrolled, and a survey for students who participate in the student shadow program (A member of the enrollment committee will assist with the formation of the survey policy and applicable surveys); (2) identifying a person to act as a social media manager to increase the overall image of the school and who will also focus on the restructuring

of the school's web site; (3) development of the community service feeder school program to get SCC students into the classrooms of the feeder schools; (4) the need to update the outreach material such as lawn signs for open houses and a new school brochure; and (5) the programming of functions to provide staff with a protocol to follow, and the identification of a staff member who will be tasked with promoting the school.

- Mr. Lombard expressed some concerns about the use of SCC students by the feeder schools to do such tasks as selling Christmas trees, and would rather see the students participating in quality community service projects as well as getting them in the classrooms. Mr. Lombard also recommended that the enrollment committee reach out to Ms. Deb McHale to coordinate the assignment of students.

Advancement/Development Committee Report

- Low Benton presented the Advancement & development committee report.
- Mr. Benton reported that the net proceeds from the golf tournament was approximately twenty thousand dollars and that there were 101 golfers who participated in the event. There was a short discussion about future attempts to limit the costs associated with raising these funds.
- Mr. Benton also reported that the Annual Alumni Appeal had raised just under \$42,000.00 to date. He reported that there will be a second letter to approximately 150 alumni who pledged an amount but had yet to send in their donation.
- Mr. Benton spoke of the need to update the alumni list. He said that he invited Maria Izzo to become a member of the committee due to her extensive contacts with the alumni through various initiatives through the years. Right now there are 3,000 alumni that have been identified, but not all have updated contact information. One suggestion Mr. Benton made to enhance the alumni drive was to appoint a class coordinator for each class year, and to start with the class years in the 60's and 70's. Mr. Shea queried as to why the 80's would not also be solicited due to the fact that they would be in the prime years of income earning. Mr. Benton countered that the effort should start with opportunities that are more realistic and targeting just the 60's and 70's would meet that objective.
- Mr. Benton then spoke of the need to develop a Friends of Spa Catholic List built from other sources associated with the school. He spoke of expanding our current base of supporters beyond the "SCC Family" in order to nurture the alumni base.
- Mr. Benton said the "highest priority" for the Advancement & Development committee was to create an alumni newsletter. Right now the school has a list of 800 alumni with valid e-mail addresses that can be used to send out the newsletter. A discussion by board members then centered on ideas surrounding the generation of an electronic newsletter. An electronic newsletter would allow a message to get out to alumni in a cost-efficient manner. Dr. Weeks suggested that a mailbox version of the newsletter would be better. Mr. Benton said it would be best to get the newsletter out prior to the alumni picnic scheduled for Sunday, September 21. There was also a discussion about soliciting for a volunteer to act as the editor of the newsletter. Last, it was felt that the newsletter would be a good entrée into next year's alumni drive.
- Mr. Benton then discussed his ideas in regard to the development of a Strategic Development Plan. The plan would be brief and goal-oriented, and would be for a

short term, 2 to 3 years in duration. Mr. Benton said he will prepare a draft plan and then share it with the board.

- The last item raised for discussion by Mr. Benton was a Scholarship Fund Proposal that could possibly be tied to the Financial Aid Committee. Mr. Benton was reminded that there are already a few scholarships established to provide financial awards to students such as the Fr. Ingemie Scholarship, but Mr. Benton proposed having a direct solicitation of the parishioners of St Peter's parish. Mr. Lombard stated that he was aware that there was talk of the parishioners joining together to fund a scholarship to help support students at the school. He said it would be a merit-based scholarship and the figure mentioned was \$6,000.00.

The Facilities Committee

- Mr. Shea gave a detailed report on the current status of the sidewalk project.
- The sidewalk project was being funded primarily with proceeds from the Capital Campaign. Mr. Shea reported that the sidewalk project was no longer just repair work, and that through the coordination for the donation of certain goods and services the replacement of the sidewalk could proceed with an estimated cost of less than \$40,000.00. The original cost estimate received from a local contractor was \$107,263.32, so the school was able to realize financial net benefit of \$60,000.00 to \$70,000.00.
- Mr. Shea discussed the milestones of the work to be done, and time frames in which the work would be completed. The removal of the existing sidewalk was assisted by the work of Mr. D'Ambro and his staff of student volunteers who rented a blade saw from Allerdice Rent-all in order to prepare the existing sidewalk for removal. The removal will be done by Morris Excavating, and a parent, Tony Barone, has volunteered his time and that of his crew to perform the necessary concrete work.
- Mr. Shea also discussed the quote from the city to replace the existing street light with designer street lamps similar to the ones that are installed along Broadway in other sections of downtown.
- Finally, Mr. Shea discussed the need of the removal of the two trees in the front of the school. The city arborist made a recommendation to remove the trees based on his assessment. Mr. Shea provided an estimate that he received from a tree and stump removal company.
- Mr. Shea reported that the expected overall budget for the project would be \$35,558.63.

The Finance Committee report was presented by Mr. Gould

- Mr. Gould reported that the end of May financial data for the school projected a balance of the school's finances as being in the positive by \$135,000.00, and that the end of June 2014 projected balance would be a positive \$22,019.00. Mr. Gould reported that Mr. Lombard thought that the amount of the surplus in the budget could rise to \$35,000.00 based on projected revenue increases from the activity fees paid by families. Mr. Gould reported that Mr. Lombard was going to check with Joann Gamello to determine if this activity fee increase should be coded to this year's budget or next year's budget.
- Mr. Gould reported that tuition in arrears to date was at 5% compared to 13% at the same time last year.

- The end of May 2014 tuition revenue was \$33,829.00 more than projected, the end of May 2014 revenue was \$149,448.00 more than projected, and that the end of May 2014 expenditures were \$17,062.00 less than projected.
- Mr. Gould reported that the Finance Committee had the following recommendations for the board to consider:
 1. That the chimney repair be funded from this year's budget (approximately \$8,500.00);
 2. That Mr. Lombard use the remaining balance of the surplus for school program needs, but to maintain a positive end of year balance;
 3. That Mr. Barone be contacted to fill in the holes in the foundation, and volunteers be organized to pressure wash and paint the foundation.
 4. That the school board recognize that there will be three revenue sources in the budget for the upcoming school year that will be less than the figures in the current school year budget. The revenue sources are prior year tuition, mandated services and the proceeds from the golf tournament;
 5. That the 2014-15 school year budget be built on an enrollment of 225 students; and
 6. That Mr. Lombard contact Joann Gamello about how to code the activity fee revenue.
- Mr. Shea recommended that Mr. Lombard be given the discretion to make expenditures in support of the school without compromising a budget in the black.
- Mr. Gould reported that the next meeting of the Finance Committee be held on August 19.

The Financial Aid Committee report was presented by Mr. Gould

- Mr. Gould reported that we had \$100,000 to allocate in financial aid and that a detailed spreadsheet was developed to review subjective and objective measures in the award of aid. Mr. Gold shared a copy of the spreadsheet with the board and explained the various awards.
- Mr. Gould also reported that some families have requested additional aid after learning the amount of aid available to their child/children.
- Mr. Lombard will advise parents of awarded aid by mail.
- The balance of financial aid funds yet to be awarded is \$2,686.00.

School Liaison Reports:

- Mr. Leone reported that SMSA did not meet this past month.
- Mr. Gould reported that St. Clement's continues to consider reduction in tuition for each family with a child attending both St. Clement's and SCC. He said that the school reported the net proceeds from the annual gala as \$122,000.00 with approximately 250 in attendance. Mr. Gould also reported that St. Clement's is focused on STEM for their students.
- Mr. Shea reported that St. Mary's is in favor of the 5% discount with students at both schools. He also reported that there will be a new principal: Lynn Fitzgerald who is Bishop Hubbard's niece. He said that St. Mary's is ahead of fundraising from last year, and that their enrollment is strong. He said their pre-school program is full with slots being provided to families who have made a commitment to enroll their child in later grades at the school. Mr. Shea also said that their board meeting took only an hour.

Principal's Report; Mr. Lombard presented the State of the School Report

- **Mr. Lombard started by recognizing three SCC students who were award winners in the recent Saratoga County Arts Festival: Kerienne Fitzgerald, Liza Orsini and Zach Bell.**
- **Mr. Lombard recognized the assistance provided by Pat Douglas with the St. Clement's school play.**
- **Mr. Lombard then informed the board about the pending application to the City of Saratoga Springs by a developer to construct a multi-story parking garage across the street from the school building and immediately adjacent to the school playing field. Mr. Lombard detailed some of the on-going negotiations between St. Peter's parish, Albany Diocese, and the developer.**
- **Mr. Lombard expressed gratitude to a SCC family who graciously contributed the funds necessary to install security system cameras in additional locations in the school in order to fill-in the gaps of video coverage. The new cameras will be placed in the bottom of stairwells, at the entrance into the kitchen of the cafeteria, and at the rear of the building exiting from the gym.**
- **Mr. Lombard also provided an enrollment report. The school has received 54 applications, and Mr. Lombard highlighted the fact that the retention rate is higher than in previous years at 93.1%. The enrollment is now projected to be in the low 230 range, and it could be higher based on preliminary reports. He reported that 38 students have been accepted into the incoming class for 6th grade.**
- **Mr. Lombard then discussed the draft budget for the coming year.**

The meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 9:00 PM.

At 9:40 PM, the meeting was adjourned with a prayer.

Future Meeting dates:

August 21, 2014 at 6:30 PM