

Steamboat Springs Education Fund Board  
January 11, 2017  
5:30 PM  
Human Service Center Board Room

Education Fund Board Directors present included Sam Jones, Kandise Gilbertson, Jay O'Hare, Norbert Turek, Jeanne Mackowski, Cristina Magill, Alissa Merage, Kristin Wilson and Chuck Mitchell (via conference call). Summer Johnson and Jill Brabec were absent. Also present were Linda Thomas (SSEF accountant); advisor Brian Hoza; Emily Barnhart and Kristen Rockford (MVMCS); Brad Meeks (SSSD); Bob Logan; Phil Kasper (HSD); Diane Maltby (SSSD) and Teresa Ristow (*Steamboat Pilot & Today*). Sarah Katherman prepared the minutes from a recording of the meeting.

- **Call to Order:**

Sam Jones called the joint meeting of the Steamboat Springs Education Fund Board and Grant Commission to order at 5:30 PM.

- **Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

- **Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2016:**

**MOTION**

*Jay moved to approve the EFB meeting minutes of December 7, 2016 as written. Alissa seconded. **The motion carried unanimously.***

- **Financial Report**

Linda reviewed the financial statements as included in the meeting materials. She highlighted that sale tax revenues have come in 11.47% higher than forecasted, averaged over the first six months of the fiscal year. She stated that the money currently expected to be available for granting is \$3,391,736, after taking out the \$450,000 for the cash flow cushion.

- **Montessori Charter School**

Sam advised that the discussion should be limited to the question of eligibility for SSEF funding, not how any new allocation would be accommodated within the allocation model. He noted that Summer and Jill, both of whom had expressed concerns regarding the eligibility of MVMCS, were absent.

Kristen Rockford presented an information sheet with facts about charter schools in general and MVMCS specifically. She stated that a charter school is a tuition-free publicly funded school that has entered into a contract with an administrative body pursuant to the Charter School Act (CRS §22-30.5-103). MVMCS operates under the Charter School Institute (CSI) administrative unit. Kristen stated that the per pupil revenue allocation for MVMCS is the same as for SSSD, but that SSSD also receives funding from mil levies that charter schools do not receive. Emily Barnhart, a member of the MVMCS Board, noted that SSSD is the administrative unit for the North Routt Community Charter School, just as CSI is the administrative unit for MVMCS. Kristen stated that charter schools are held to the same testing, accountability standards and laws as other public schools. She said that they are prohibited from charging tuition for ½ day K, but do charge for full-day K, just as SSSD did. Kristen stated that MVMCS cannot turn away any student, and that enrollment is based on capacity. When applications go beyond capacity,

enrollment is determined by a lottery system, except for returning students. Preference in the lottery is granted to siblings of returning students.

Kristen stated that the per pupil funding of MVMCS is approximately 30% less than that of SSSD, and noted the MVMCS must also pay rent on their facility. She stated that there are a few grants, such as a capital construction grant, that is open to charter schools that is not open to other public schools.

Emily stated that MVMCS is a public school, and noted that all but a few MVMVCS students come from the SSSD. She stated that the current enrollment of K-5 students is 110, with a projected enrollment next year of 130 K-6 students. She described the mixed age classrooms that are run by a one lead teacher, who is Montessori certified, state licensed and highly qualified, and one lead assistant, who is also licensed. Phil Kasper noted that Montessori certification is quite rigorous. Kristen confirmed that charter schools are required to supply all para-professional services, IEPs, GEPs, etc., just as other public schools are, but that they contract with independent providers for these services because they are not part of BOCES.

In response to a question from Kandise, Cristina reviewed the ballot language that specifies that SSEF funds are for public school students in Routt County. There was a discussion of the impact of the negative factor in state funding and post-October count enrollment on both SSSD and MVMCS. Kandise noted that the charter school is able to cap its enrollment and SSSD schools cannot. Sam stated that although a motion on eligibility is not necessary, it would settle what has been a controversial discussion.

#### **MOTION**

Norbert moved to confirm that MVMCS is eligible to apply for SSEF grant funding as a school district, based on conformance with the ballot language and the contract between SSEF and the City of Steamboat Springs. Alissa seconded the motion. **The motion carried 8 – 1, with Kandise voting in dissent.**

It was noted that eligibility to apply does not guarantee that funds will be granted.

- **Communications Report**

Jeanne presented the new website, which is still in development, and compared it to the old site. She noted that changes to the website can be made very easily. She demonstrated the tabs, asked for input on content and navigation, and discussed the use of photos. She noted that the SSEF may not use photos from the districts under their permission forms. Sam suggested that SSEF may need to take its own pictures.

Jeanne reviewed the other elements of the communications plan, including the outreach done at the schools for the Innovation Grants and media generation. She reported that she and Sam would meet with Teresa to discuss the development of SSEF-related news stories. Sam noted that all of this is laying the foundation for educating the community about the SSEF in preparation for the sales tax renewal in 2018.

- **Accountability Reports**

Sam said that after reviewing the accountability reports in detail he continued to be impressed with the reports submitted by the community groups and underwhelmed by those submitted by the districts. He asked that the districts put more time and effort into these reports. Kandise stressed the importance of looking at the big picture purpose and benefit of projects rather than focusing on the individual line items that make up each grant request. There was a discussion of outcomes vs. outputs. Sam asked that the accountability reports in the future include the name of the person completing the report.

- **2018 Ballot measure timeline**

Sarah reviewed the handout provided by City on the schedule of deadlines related to putting the sales tax renewal on the 2018 ballot. She stated that the dates are set by statute and vary little from year to year. The most significant deadlines for SSEF are highlighted on the handout. Sarah said that she has yet to get confirmation regarding which party actually drafts the ballot language. Jeanne noted the possibility of several funding measures scheduled to be on the 2017 ballot that may be delayed to 2018.

- **Grant review process**

Sarah reviewed the grant review process. Questions about the applications should be asked of the applicants via the comments function within google docs.

- **Governance: By-laws and Policies & Procedures**

Norbert reviewed the function of the Policies & Procedures document. He noted that this document will have to be created from scratch. He asked everyone to submit to him ideas or information that should be included in the document to enable future boards to understand SSEF's processes.

- **Agenda for the February meeting**

- Allocation model
- Preliminary discussion of grant applications

- **Adjourn**

**MOTION**

*Jay moved to adjourn the meeting; Kandise seconded. The EFB meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.*