

Steamboat Springs Education Fund Board
March 16, 2022
5:30PM
Human Services Board Room

Education Fund Board Directors participating included Sam Jones, Cristina Magill, Kipp Rillos, Mary Johnston, Amanda Koziar, Mandy Maass, Lisa Ruff, and Adam Alspach. Jon Wade, Jim Beers, and Kandise Gilbertson were absent. Also in attendance were Linda Thomas (SSEF accountant); Brad Meeks, Stephanie Juneau, Jay Hamric and Emily Beyer (SSSD); Christy Sinner (HSD); and Michael Girodo (MVMCS). Sarah Katherman prepared the minutes.

- **Call to Order:**

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

- **Public and Advisory Board Comment**

No comments.

- **Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2022:**

Mandy corrected the spelling of her name (again).

MOTION

Mary moved to approve the EFB meeting minutes cited above, as amended. Adam seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Financial Report**

Linda reviewed the financial report, as included the meeting materials. She noted the very high sales tax revenues received over the past several months. Overall for the year, revenues are up 29.89% over the prior year. At this time the projected total (before taking out the administrative costs, cash flow cushion, etc.) expected to be available as of June 30, 2022 is \$7,466,779. Linda noted that current available cash is just over \$3.5 million. Once current liabilities are paid, the expected cash to be available at the end of the fiscal year is approximately \$1.6 million.

- **Preliminary Budget**

- **Cash Flow Cushion**

Sam reviewed how the budget available for granting is determined, with non-percentage-based expenses, such as administration, the cash flow cushion, and grant writer grants taken out prior to applying the allocation model. There was a discussion of the cash flow cushion, which has been set at 10% for the past several years, and its purpose. Adam stated that the districts had asked that this amount be reduced. Linda offered that the amount could be reduced perhaps to as low as \$500,000 but noted that the payments being made would increase along with the total budget. She reviewed the current payment schedule. There was a discussion of increasing the number of payments made to the school districts. Following discussion, Sam proposed a cash flow cushion of \$600,000 with four equal payments of 25%. The target schedule for payments will be December, February, June and September.

- **Administration Budget**

Following discussion, the EFB decided to increase the budget for administration to \$30,000, citing the increase in insurance and audit-related expenses.

○ **Grant Writer Applications**

Emily Beyer explained that with the success of the grant writer securing funding to support all three districts, the administrators are proposing to add a full-time staff person (Grants Coordinator) and to restructure the position of grant writer (Director of Competitive Grants and Strategic Partnerships). Both positions would be paid through the SSSD payroll, funded by the SSEF, but would work to secure and manage funding for all three Routt County school districts. Emily added that she also regularly works with and shares information with Betsy, the part-time grant writer for Steamboat Montessori. Cristina asked if it would be feasible to include Steamboat Montessori in the collaborative work being done by the proposed new two-person structure. Michael offered that Betsy was unlikely to be interested in the new position and it would be difficult to make that level of personnel change at this point. He noted that Betsy works on many aspects of fundraising for Steamboat Montessori in addition to grant writing. It was decided that making a change was not appropriate at this time. There was consensus that the grant writer applications should be fully funded.

MOTION

*Cristina moved to approve a cash flow cushion of \$600,000, an administrative budget of \$30,000 and grant writer grants of \$187,5000 for fiscal year 2023. Kipp seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.***

MOTION

*Cristina moved to adjust the school district grant payments to four equal installments of 25% of the awarded grant. Mandy seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.***

Sam reviewed the allocation model, which is based on past spending history. He noted that it is only a guideline and can be adjusted at the discretion of the EFB.

MOTION

*Cristina moved to approve a total gross budget amount for fiscal year 2023 of \$7,466,799. Mary seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.***

● **Community Group Grant worksheet**

Cristina reviewed the spreadsheet through which each reviewer will fill in their recommended funding levels for the community groups, with the total to equal the amount allocated to all community groups. She reviewed how the amounts will be compiled and discussed to come up with the consensus funding amounts. Mary suggested that the discussion begin with the median recommended funding amount.

Cristina stated that two community group grant applications had been submitted by SSSD BOE members. She suggested that the policy of allowing the school districts to rank the community group applications be suspended for this reason. Adam explained that there is conflict of interest because the school board is effectively the employer of the district administrators. He offered that it was not appropriate for school board members to apply for SSEF grant funding due to potential perception of conflict of interest. He suggested that another member of the board of directors of an organization should be the applicant of record. Jay discussed the valuable information about the implementation and effectiveness that the schools can provide about community group programs. It was decided that the school rankings would be suspended for this year, and that going forward applications would not be accepted from school board members in order to avoid the perception of impropriety.

- **Contract Reviews**

The EFB reviewed the current contracts and decided to make no changes. The current contracts include Linda (accountant), Paul Sachs (lawyer), McMahan and Associates (auditor) and ??? (insurance).

- **EFB Vacancies and Committee leadership**

Sam stated that he and Cristina would both be stepping down from the EFBs next year. Adam will take over as President. Mary agreed to commit to another term and will remain as Grants Committee Chair. Someone with strong spreadsheet skills will be needed to fill the position of Treasurer, or the two functions currently performed by Cristina could be done by two different people. With regard to the Communications Committee, Sam reviewed the need for regular press releases. There was a discussion of posting the open EFB positions. Lisa volunteered to represent the SSEF in the schools to increase awareness among school staff. Amanda offered that public outreach was needed and suggested that a community survey might reveal what the changing and growing community wants to see in its schools. Brad and Stephanie described SSSD's current strategic planning efforts. There was discussion of the need for ongoing outreach on the part of the SSEF to ensure that the community is aware of what the SSEF is and does. Brad suggested that an annual report could be disseminated via SSSD.

- **Other business**

Sam reviewed his meeting with City Council President Robin Crossan. He said that her only comment was that it might be preferable for a third-party organization to appoint EFB members. No one could think of what third-party organization would do this.

- **Agenda for April meeting**

- Review community group funding recommendations
- Review school district categorical grant applications
- Consider final budget
- Communications: consider PR piece on upcoming grants

The EFB meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.