

Steamboat Springs Education Fund Board
April 12, 2023
5:30PM
Human Services Board Room

Education Fund Board Directors present included: Adam Alspach, Mary Johnston, Mandy Maass, Amanda Koziar, Kipp Rillos, Jon Wade, Jim Beers, Lauren Hughes, and Kandise Gilbertson. Lisa Ruff was absent. Also in attendance were Linda Thomas (SSEF accountant); Celine Wicks and Stephanie Juneau (SSSD); Stuart Handloff; Cristina Magill; Christy Sinner; Joe Haines; Kim Schultz; and Jeff Steck. Sarah Katherman prepared the minutes.

- **Call to Order:**

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

- **Public and Advisory Board Comment**

Mr. Stuart Handloff noted that he had submitted an email asking the EFB to reconsider the total budget that was approved in March. He stated that regardless of that, the decision that the EFB makes tonight with respect to the Piknik Theatre application will have a profound impact on the outcome of the project. He urged the EFB to approve the requested one-time capital allocation and noted that the requested amount would equal only 1.5% of the total budget approved.

Don Moss stated that he is on the Board of Piknik Theatre. He urged EFB to support this proposed project, adding that it is the best project proposal he has seen. He said that the proposed location is ideal and that the proposal has the support of the schools and the community.

Robin Stone asked the EFB to support the Piknik Theatre proposal and noted the significant benefit that the theatre would have on kids in the community. She cited the importance of what can be learned through the performing arts.

Larry Moore urged the EFB to approve the grant for the Piknik Theatre. He reviewed his involvement with Piknik Theatre programs and stated that the project is very worthwhile. He said that the proposed theatre would benefit both school kids and the community as a whole.

Bill Tring (?) stated his support for the Piknik Theatre proposal.

Celia Dunham stated that the Piknik Theatre would be very beneficial to the kids of the community. She cited the many skills that can be learned and developed through the performing arts. She noted that lack of performing arts facilities in Routt County. She added that the project is very well thought-out and presents a great opportunity to improve the community and arts education.

Nick Handloff cited his own experience with Piknik Theatre and performing arts education in Steamboat. He urged the EFB to fund the grant for the theatre and offered that the project would have a huge impact on kids. He stated that while the community has facilities and programming for many other activities, the facilities for the performing arts are lacking. He stated that he has kids in the school district and wants them to benefit from this project.

Kirk Aigner reviewed his involvement in several arts-related organizations in the community and stated that the facilities available for performing arts are very limited. He stated that there is a great deal of passion for the arts in the community and this project would have a significant impact.

Joe Haines, the Executive Director of Perry-Mansfield, noted that this is the first time Perry-Mansfield has applied for a SSEF grant. He reviewed the application and stated that the intention is to start a partnership to develop the drama program at the Steamboat Springs High School. He cited the huge benefits that studying performing arts has on kids, including making them better students.

An unidentified speaker stated his support for the Piknik Theatre project, citing its importance for community programs as well as arts education. He stated that the Piknik Theatre programming is fun and educational.

An unidentified speaker stated his support for the Piknik Theater project. He said that participation in the performing arts instills confidence in children, and offered that the community is lacking a facility where the productions of the Piknik Theatre can be heard by all attendees.

Karolyn Lestrud reviewed her experience with arts organizations in Steamboat and stated that the existing facilities for performing arts are often fully booked. She said that the Piknik Theatre would provide a needed resource for locals.

An unidentified person stated his agreement with all the previous comments and offered that the project is at a tipping point and needs the support of the EFB. He offered that this is a once in a generation opportunity.

An unidentified speaker added her support for the Piknik Theatre proposal, noting that whole community, as well as the school district, is behind this project. She noted that this is a one-time request that will not need recurring support in the future.

Kim Schulz, representing Steamboat Reading, said that her organization is applying for SSEF grant funding for the first time and that she wanted to attend to better understand the process.

Hearing no further comment, Adam closed public comment.

- **Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2023:**

Amanda stated that she was not at the meeting.

MOTION

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

- **Financial Report**

Linda reviewed the financial report, as included in the meeting materials. She said that the current cash on hand is \$3.39M and that outstanding liabilities are \$3.5M. She said that the gap was not a concern because the balance would be covered by the May and June deposits. Linda reviewed the estimated 2023 – 2024 budget and noted that the EFB had approved a preliminary budget for grants and expenses in March of \$7,105,219. In March the EFB had also approved the cash flow cushion, the administrative budget, the grant writer grants for a balance to allocate to grants of \$6,239,969. All remaining revenues

for the 2022 – 2023 fiscal year will be carried over to next year. There were no questions regarding the financial reports.

- **School District Categorical Grants**

Adam stated that the school district representatives had mistakenly not been notified that they would be given the opportunity to discuss their categorical grant applications at this meeting, as they had last year. There were no questions from the EFB regarding the school district grant applications. Adam noted that the details of how the money was spent within each category would be provided when the accountability reports for the 2023 – 2024 school year are completed in the fall of 2024.

- **Community Group Grants**

Mary provided a synopsis of each grant application prior to its being discussed. Sarah presented the spreadsheet showing each Board member’s recommendation for how the money allocated to the community groups should be awarded. Both the average (mean) and the median recommendation for each grant was also included in the spreadsheet. There was little or no discussion of applications for which the Board was in general agreement regarding funding level. The Board decided to start with the average recommendation for Yampatika, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Partners, Integrated Community, Junior Achievement, NW Colorado Health and Steamboat Springs Orchestra. The following summarizes the comments regarding the applications that were discussed in more detail:

Yampa Valley Autism - Mary reviewed that the funds awarded for this program last year had been rescinded. Jim asked if a qualified provider for the programming had been found. Mary said that this question was asked on the application and that a provider had been identified.

Steamboat Opera – Mandy noted the success of this program. There was discussion of the reasons behind the large increase in the requested level of funding.

Steamboat Dance Theatre – Mandy stated that even the 13 year-old boys participated.

STARS – There was discussion of the large increase in the request. Following discussion, it was decided to go with an amount similar to what was requested and granted last year.

Steamboat Reading – Adam reported that he had asked around about the value of this program and had received great reports. Mary reviewed how kids are referred to the program.

Oak Creek Childcare Center – Mary expressed concern with the lack of direct connection to the schools or alignment with the school curriculum. Others agreed. Kipp acknowledged the need in the community but offered that it is essentially an afterschool program. Adam added that the application was not very clear on how the money would be spent. It was decided that this program does not align with the SSEF mission statement. The applicant will be notified of the reason that the grant was not funded with the hope that they will address the concern and reapply next year.

Perry-Mansfield – Several EFB members said that while they were at first uncertain about whether the program was in alignment with the SSEF mission, they were convinced it was when they found out that the pilot drama program would be in conjunction with SSHS. There was discussion of how partial funding would be used. Amanda offered that the EFB lacks clear direction regarding how to evaluate community group applications. Kipp offered that he relied heavily on the last clause of the mission statement: “...made available through the public schools.” This issue will be discussed in the summer work sessions.

Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts – There was consensus that this program is not in alignment with the SSEF mission statement.

Routt County Riders – Several EFB members expressed support for this program. Jon offered that in addition to helping kids stay safe, it teaches them good thought processes and decision making.

Strings Music Festival – Kandise noted the impact of this program on middle school students. Kipp stated that his reservations were related to the lack of specificity in the budget.

Colorado Crane Coalition – There was a discussion of what the grant funds would pay for. Amanda offered that the program would reach a lot of students for a small amount of money.

Piknik Theatre – Adam acknowledged the many comments and emails that had been received in support of this application. He offered that despite the support, the project is too far out of the SSEF purview and was more about a benefit to the community than to the students in the public schools. Several others agreed. Kipp stated that the project would have tremendous value to the community but lacks a direct connection to the district. Jon offered that the project does not align with the mission statement. Mandy noted that the support seems to be from community members outside of the schools, and added that she had not heard comments from teachers supporting the grant or expressing interest in using the facility. There was a discussion of whether partial funding would be of any use. Mary read the response on the application to the question regarding partial funding. Mandy noted that while the request was for 1.5% of the total approved budget, it was for 41% of the allocation to all community groups.

The EFB distributed the remaining funds to programs with proven records of success. After reviewing the total community group grant awards as recommended, the EFB reviewed the total budget, including the school district grant allocations, the cash flow cushion, the grant writer grants and the administrative budget.

MOTION

*Jon moved to approve the following total grants budget for the 2023 – 2024 school year. Kipp seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.***

HD Student-Facing Staff	\$176,747
HD Technology	\$61,058
HD Curriculum/Materials	\$83,553
total Hayden	\$321,358
SR Student-Facing Staff	\$98,250
SR Technology	\$158,837
total South Routt	\$257,087
SSSD Student-Facing Staff	\$3,796,102
SSSD Technology	\$1,100,000
SSSD Curriculum/Materials	\$250,000
total Steamboat Springs	\$5,146,102
SM Student-Facing Staff	\$257,087
total Steamboat Montessori	\$257,087
Yampatika	\$28,000
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps	\$45,000

Partners in Routt County	\$51,835
Integrated Community	\$20,000
Yampa Valley Autism Program	\$4,000
Junior Achievement	\$7,000
Opera Steamboat	\$6,000
Northwest Colorado Health	\$25,000
Steamboat Symphony Orchestra	\$10,000
Steamboat Dance Theater	\$2,500
STARS	\$29,000
Steamboat Reading	\$9,000
Town of Oak Creek	\$0
Perry Mansfield	\$5,000
Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts	\$0
Routt County Riders	\$5,000
Strings Music Festival	\$10,000
Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition	\$1,000
Piknik Theatre	\$0
total Community Groups	\$258,335
Grant Writers (SSSD, HD, SR)	\$198,500
Grant Writer Montessori	\$36,750
total Grant Writers	\$235,250
Administrative Expenses	\$30,000
total Admin Expenses	\$30,000
Cash Cushion	\$600,000
total Cash Cushion	\$600,000
TOTAL GRANT BUDGET (w/o cash cushion)	\$6,505,219
TOTAL BUDGET (with cash cushion)	\$7,105,219

- **Consideration of EFB candidate – Jeff Steck**

Adam reviewed Jeff Steck’s application for a position on the EFB. There were no questions.

MOTION

*Mary moved to accept the application from Jeff Steck to join the EFB. Jim seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.***

- **May meeting?**

Following discussion, it was decided that because there were no questions regarding the school district categorical grant applications, it was unnecessary to schedule a meeting for May.

- **Agenda for Summer Sessions**

- Review SSEF mission statement
- Develop guidelines/policy for the evaluation of community group grant applications
- Consider funding pre-school programs
- Evaluation of allocation model

The EFB meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.