

**Abilene Education Foundation**  
**Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting**  
**Thursday, October 21, 2017**

Attending Board Members: Mike Breckenridge, Mike Dudley, Susan Mouser, Marilyn Long, Candy Scarborough, Kim Osborne, EB Dotson, Terry Bull, Ryan Gibson, Barbara McLeod

Advisory Board: Kay Hartgraves, Melody Hunt, Nita Slaton, Marianne Wood

Guests: Dr. Abigayle Barton, Brady Sloane, Richard Green, Linda Sissell, Paige Sproles

President Mike Breckenridge called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

**Consent Agenda**

- Terry Bull moved to approve the Consent Agenda (minutes from the August 24, 2017 meeting).
- Motion was seconded by Ryan Gibson and the motion passed.

**Financial Report - E.B. Dotson, Treasurer**

- E.B. Dotson presented the financial highlights. He told the Board that currently there was \$72,000 in unrestricted funds.
- Mike Breckenridge asked if the donations from the Payroll Deduction campaign were reflected in the financial report. Mr. Dotson said yes with the exception of one time giving donations, which should be reflected in the October financials. We should know for certain by the next board meeting what our average monthly donation amount will be for the remainder of the year.
- Ryan Gibson asked about donations received from Shelton and Dian Graves Owen Foundations for the COOL program. Mrs. Curtis-Carr explained how these were reflected in the financials. She told Ryan she would get the exact date of when the funds were received/deposited from both Foundations for COOL for this fiscal year to him after the meeting.
- Barbara McLeod made a motion to accept the financials. Candy Scarborough seconded and the motion passed.

## **STAR Grant Presentation**

Mike Breckenridge introduced to the Board, Brady Sloane from Madison Middle School and Richard Green from Jackson Elementary. He informed the Board these were two of the recipients of this year's STAR Teacher Grants.

- Brady Sloane told the Board this was her second year serving as a teacher. Her background is in museum education, but she decided to make the change to the classroom. She initially learned of the STAR Grants when she received her GIFT Grant. Ms. Sloane signed up for the STAR Seminar during the LOL (Lead Out Loud) Conference that was held by Abilene ISD at the beginning of the school year, led by advisory board member Mike Thomesen.
  - Ms. Sloane was excited to tell the Board she was the recipient of two grants. She currently works with approximately 300 seventh graders and has 2 Pre-Advanced Placement classes. Her first grant was to implement digital documentation of students work, thereby allowing students to catalog all of their art, and to take work with them throughout their school career including post-secondary education. This also reflects what a digital archivist does with art work at the museum level. She has expressed the need for this program to expand to all middle schools and high schools. A bonus is that she is able to look at a student's complete portfolio and make well-informed and more appropriate choices on Advanced Placement coursework based on individual student need and progression.
  - Ms. Sloane's second grant was titled "Artists' ask me to read." She told the Board that as an experiment she chose to read a book to her art classes highlighting a particular type of art from Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). She explained that her students so enjoyed it, and have continued to ask her to read to them. She wrote the grant with hopes to expand her art library with books on illustrated art history. With the grant, she has been able to purchase 20 books to read to her students. Ms. Sloane expressed her gratitude for the grant.
- Richard Green addressed the Board and explained his grant, titled "Flocabulary." Mr. Green teaches 4<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts. He discovered Flocabulary, a web-based learning program, and wanted to be able to share it with his students. The program is a collaboration between educators and Hip-Hop artists. The program includes all content areas, including life skills. The program is based on repetition, with the rhymes and beats/patterns being easy to learn for students. The program has

videos and quizzes for each lesson. Mr. Green then showed the Board one of the videos in the series, and thanked the Board for the opportunity to purchase the program with the STAR Grant.

Mike Breckenridge thanked each of the teachers, and then introduced Dr. Barton.

### **Superintendent's Report – Dr. Abigayle Barton, Associate Superintendent**

Dr. Barton reported the District is doing well.

- AISD administration is working with the AISD Board of Trustees on making the district a “District of Innovation.” If achieved, this could impact the starting dates and ending dates of school and could allow AISD to hire staff outside of a specific teaching certification. This would give more options for hiring especially in a trade based class. More information is needed and at this time it is just being explored as an option.
- Dr. Barton informed the Board it is a technology and curriculum adoption year. The curriculum department is working closely with the Board of Trustees to find the best materials for our classrooms. During the last adoption process the idea was to have a 1 to 1 technology ratio for our students. This has been a slow process. We are currently in year 4 of an 8 year cycle for materials, so the district is evaluating what path to take in curriculum and technology.
- Attendance in the district looks higher than in past years at this same time, but still more work to be done.
- The attendance exemption policy has been revamped this year. The district is looking at incentives with exemptions. This could be based on grades and attendance. They are hoping this will encourage students to be more involved, especially in our high school population which has the largest problem with student attendance.
- Mike Breckenridge asked when the “snapshot” would be for attendance for reporting to the State. Dr. Barton answered that takes place in late October.
- Kay Hartgraves asked for current enrollment numbers. Dr. Barton answered that currently (10-21), AISD is barely below 17,000 students.

Mike Breckenridge thanked Dr. Barton for her report.

### **Payroll Deduction Campaign**

Candy Scarborough informed the Board that the Payroll Deduction campaign was going well.

- One time giving donations were approximately \$6,500, and monthly donations were approximately \$5,100 in September. *(Note: This information was reported from the deposit record and preliminary info from AISD payroll deduction.)*
- Mrs. Scarborough then told the Board which campuses had reached incentive levels. She explained to the Board that middle school campuses were not really participating, Mrs. Curtis-Carr told the Board, Craig Middle School had reached an incentive level last year, but that was the first time for a middle school to do so, and this year there were none.
- New incentives were discussed. Mrs. Curtis-Carr thanked everyone who made that possible and told the Board that teachers seemed excited about the kindles, gift cards and TV's. She thanked Jason and Leila Darby for their additional assistance as a sponsor as well as everyone else who gave to the incentives.

### **Young Masters Juried Art Exhibition**

Marianne Wood started her report by telling the Board she, Christine Curtis-Carr and Judy Godfrey had met with the Advance Placement Art teachers. The teachers were enthusiastic and were looking forward to a successful year.

- Mrs. Wood announced the three jurors for the show: Linda Strickland, Mike Jones and Patti Welborne. The judge for the show will be Lagina Fairbetter, an Abilene High School graduate. Mrs. Wood said that the committee was hoping to keep the format from last year with some minimal tweaks.
- Mrs. Wood said at the meeting with teachers, the question was asked if the teachers would like to have a writing workshop for their students. The answer was a resounding yes.
- March 29<sup>th</sup> is the date for the show opening/reception. Melody Hunt asked if the mayor was attending, and said the students appreciated him coming. Mrs. Wood stated that she would call the mayor's office and get the event on his calendar.
- Melody Hunt thanked Marianne for all of her hard work.

### **Annual Fund-Retired Teacher Letter**

Mike Dudley told the Board that approximately 1500 letters were mailed out to retired teachers. He informed the Board the decision to mail the letters early (in September) was to align more closely with back to school. Mr. Dudley described the letter that was sent out, and showed the handout that honors Mr. Dudley's late wife Judy. He told the Board that he and Christine Curtis-Carr had attended the Abilene Retired Teachers

monthly luncheon and were able to talk to retired teachers. Mr. Dudley told the group that currently AEF had received 16 gifts totaling \$720.

### **Cajun Festival**

Christine Curtis-Carr gave the Cajun Fest committee report in Jason Darby's absence. She started by thanking everyone who attended the meeting. She told the Board the tone of the meeting was very positive and possible changes were discussed.

- The committee agreed the added Sponsor Dinner was a success and would be held again this year.
- Vendors are going to be part of the event this year, and should hopefully help increase participation.
- Mrs. Curtis-Carr said she had submitted the H-E-B sponsor grant and should know if we receive the funds by the December board meeting.
- Mrs. Curtis-Carr informed the Board the next Cajun Fest meeting will be November 2, 2017 in the Federal Programs conference room, and encouraged everyone to attend. Sandwiches will be provided.
- Mike Breckenridge discussed the future of the event. He told the Board about a few concerns from the committee. When the event started, AEF held the only Cajun Festival in town. Now, there are several crawfish boils and we have lost some of our allure, and are one of the most expensive. He informed the Board that discussion was held concerning changing the event to the fall of 2018 or 2019 or even perhaps what type of food we serve. There will be more reported on this in future meetings.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Christine Curtis-Carr thanked everyone with small bags of candy corn. She then thanked everyone who came out for the Prize Parade and helped award STAR Grants.

- 170 STAR Grant applications were submitted. Mrs. Curtis-Carr was pleased to tell the Board that 75 grants were awarded to 96 teachers. Kay Hartgraves mentions she would like to see winners of STAR Grants share with other teachers their grant proposals. Mrs. Curtis-Carr said some of that was done during the LOL conference at the beginning of school, but perhaps next year we could have a panel or even a way for teachers to share on an open online forum.
- Mrs. Curtis-Carr reminded the Board that at the December board meeting we will take a board/advisory board combined photo.
- The Annual Fund Letter will be ready November 6<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> for board members to sign. She encouraged everyone to come and stated that

personal notes do make all a difference. The letters will be mailed Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>.

- The Community Foundation Annual Luncheon will be Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are 35.00 and if board members would like to attend they need to let the office know, so reservations can be made.
- Mrs. Curtis-Carr told the Board that we are in the middle of our audit, and should have the preliminary report by December.
- Christine Curtis-Carr informed the Board that we had received a grant from the Community Foundation of Abilene for Network for Good (new giving and fundraising/marketing software). Network for Good is designed to help with marketing, outreach, donor retention and tracking. The grant saved AEF \$3,000.
- Abilene Realtors Association is having their Harvest Festival, with all proceeds going to AEF. Everyone was encouraged to attend if possible and support this organization.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tiffany Lamb (via Paige Sproles)