



Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 9, 2021

10:30 AM-11:30 AM

Via Zoom

Attendees: Bethany Franz, Shannah Varon, Jenna Ogundipe, Beth Newhall, Rachel Langer, Paul Gordon, Ali Nuger, James Savarese

The meeting began with introductions of staff and Board members. Bethany then shared slides outlining goals and accomplishments from FY21 (July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021). The organization exceeded its goal of raising \$1M in new gifts and pledges, raising a total of \$1.67M. The organization also exceeded its goal for individual giving and developed a more robust stewardship program. Bethany noted that tailoring specific asks to individuals and making asks via phone or Zoom (versus email) helped to boost individual giving. Donors also gave generously in response to our COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund. Reflecting on their involvement with the Development Committee, Board members noted that meetings felt productive, that they enjoyed writing thank-you notes, and that they would be happy to help with stewardship in the future.

Bethany gave an update on the Annual Celebration, scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2021, at 7 PM. Against an overall goal of \$475K, \$282K has been raised to date. Sponsorship is particularly strong, with \$246K raised against a goal of \$269K. Bethany emphasized that with a goal of raising \$175K the night of the event, we need Board members to pledge in advance and to reach out to their networks to encourage people to attend. Shannah underscored the importance of reaching our fundraising goals.

Jenna shared details about a property for sale that could potentially serve as an outdoor playspace for the Lower School. Shannah noted that she and Jenna were seeking input from the Development Committee because they are smart and effective thought partners and because there would be a fundraising component to the purchase, potentially a small campaign. Board members asked about the most recent campaign and wondered if a “playspace” would be sufficiently motivating to donors. Board members discussed the possibility of a community playground, of in-kind donations, and of the importance of considering cost-benefit (number of students using the playground vs. cost), and in this context, the importance of having a broader message and frame.

Bethany shared goals for FY22, including the overall fundraising goal of \$1.05M. She noted that this goal is lower than last year’s revenue due to our conservative approach, several substantial multiyear commitments that will not recur in FY22, and because it was unclear to what degree COVID-19 motivated giving. Ali asked how the Board can better support fundraising, and Bethany noted the importance of the upcoming Board Learning Series. Bethany also noted that the development team could do some work around identifying first-time donors and converting them to ongoing supporters.

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