

Minutes
Board of Director's Meeting
May 10th, 2021
Via WebEx Call

Attendees:	Steve Deutsch	Kevin Saunders
	Melinda Cirillo	Fred Destefano
	Michele Halstead	Matthew Kreuz
	Stephanie Blaisdell	Jessica Jewell
	Jeffrey Gant	Haley Hershenson
	Niza Cardona	Kevin Dicey

Others Present: Lisa Mitten, Logan Bross

Recording Secretary: Jacqueline Pascar

Call to order: 10:02am

Unanimous approval of the agenda and April 26, 2021 minutes.

Executive Director's Report

Steve highlighted that he and campus bookstore manager, Sean Mulloy, had “a very productive set of meetings with the sustainability ambassadors”. The ambassadors created a report, highlighting areas that the bookstore should focus on for the upcoming year. Sean planned to share the report with Follett for feedback. **Steve** stated, “Hopefully in the fall we'll have some strong direction about things we can do to make all practices in the bookstore better environmentally,” and asked if there were any questions or comments. **Lisa** added that the bookstore had begun carrying the new brand Alta Gracia, “which pays living wages to their workers, I believe, in the Dominican Republic”. Champion had also reported recycled content to be in their apparel. **Steve** thanked **Lisa** for the progress update.

Though campus circumstances and foot traffic patterns were very different from previous years, **Steve** stated that, “I think we had a huge success with the meal plans. We knew going into this year that it was not going to be perfect.” Dining dollars currently balanced to be under \$200,000, which included a \$350,000 rollover from the fall semester. With a week left for students to spend their balances, **Steve** thanked **Kevin** for promoting sales, especially at the Roost. **Steve** stated “At the end of the day, we want zero dollars left on people's meal plan balances. We want them to feel as though they've been able to spend every penny that they could, and certainly **Kevin's** made that available to folks should they want it.” Dining services were scheduled to shut down at the end of day on Friday while the Snack Shack would remain open through Monday. **Steve** asked for the board to encourage students to spend dining dollars, noting that in a normal year the goal is for remaining dining dollars to balance below \$100,000.

Originally projecting to lose \$1 million, **Steve** announced that the corporation had lost \$600,000. **Steve** stated, “Fortunately, we have the reserves to be able to pay for that, so we're still very healthy and in good shape and really excited about it.”

Noting an exclusion from the report, **Steve** announced that the corporation had become aware of a construction fund which “has a 2-for-1 match in terms of construction funds for projects on campus”. After reiterating that modernizing the dining hall had been a goal for some time, **Steve** explained “Given the fact that it's been a tough financial year and we'd like to be much more conservative with our

reserves than in the past, making sure that we always have enough money to stay in business should something like this year happen again. We don't want to put all of our reserves into a project like this, but we can put a chunk." With Sodexo agreeing to invest as well, CAS and Sodexo had discussed to provide a combined amount of \$7 million which would result in \$21 million in total with the construction fund. **Steve** emphasized, "We could do things like put in an elevator for folks who need elevators. We can completely fix the infrastructure of a really old and declining building and we can make the environment much more sustainable and attractive and welcoming for students." With Sodexo potentially investing \$5 million, their contract with the corporation would have to extend. **Steve** noted that once the proposal is solidified, he would present to the board or to the Executive Committee over the summer if needed.

Explaining that the 2-to-1 match was outside of the campus's "normal capital plan", **Michele** stated that "we originally were thinking of doing this renovation within our capital plan, but we have other priorities that we really need to get to on campus, and the dining hall kept slipping because of those emerging priorities. So, this takes it out of that priority mix and would enable us to move it to these other funds that wouldn't mess with those priorities." **Michele** further noted that the renovation would be a multi-year project which would involve the challenge of staging the work to still have use of the dining hall. **Michele** said "...it's going to take us a long time to get the design out and then construction would take place over several years. So, we're still looking at probably at least 4 years, but just to get it started is a huge win." Since New Paltz will have to compete with other campuses for the matching funds, **Michele** stated that it's beneficial to submit our application for the funds as quickly as possible. **Steve** asked **Michele** if she had a sense of the timeline for the approval from the construction fund. **Michele** responded no but noted that the approval process does take a long time. **Michele** shared that the funds were available last year, but campuses did not have the matching funds ready and then the pandemic hit so the construction fund was put on hold until now.

Steve asked if there were any additional questions. **Kevin S.** asked for a brief review of where the Sodexo contract currently stood and what was the most recent contract extension. **Steve** responded that "The last extension was essentially to get us through these couple of years, and I think we extended it to 2026." **Melinda** confirmed. **Steve** further explained, "When we did this and when we do this new contract, if we do this new extension and it may be another 5 or another 10 years, we have provisions to get out of the contract. The only issue that happens when we do that, is that we have to give them back their capital investment. So, each year that money will be amortized, taken away. So, if it's \$5 million over 10 years, we'll be liable for \$500,000 for every year that we don't allow them to stay on campus, and it will be a similar type of situation."

Regarding the Peregrine Hall renovations, **Lisa** asked "Is there a thought as to whether we would keep the existing square footage or with this capital funding we would increase the square footage?" **Michele** commented that "Lisa, I think your question is, is this strategic initiative money or is it critical maintenance money?" **Michele** explained, "In the capital world, critical maintenance money means you can just renovate an existing footprint of a building. Strategic initiative money means you can build new things and not just renovate old things. I do think that this falls under strategic initiative where we might be able to increase the footprint, which would be hugely beneficial for us." **Steve** asked if there were any more questions. There were none.

ED Review Process

Michele reminded the board that the review of the Executive Director had not been done in **Steve's** 17 years in the position. **Michele** asked **Steve** if he would like to proceed with the non-board members present. **Steve** responded yes.

Michele summarized the report, noting that “although **Steve's** been Executive Director for the past almost two decades, I have not been Vice President. So, I've not been in the capacity to be his supervisor for the whole time, but we have had a relationship both as members of the same division, we reported to the same Vice President for a number of years... and then I think in 2016, he became my direct report.” As the first official review of **Steve** as Executive Director, **Michele's** evaluation spanned “a couple of decades” and included comments from several of **Steve's** colleagues on campus that were chosen between him and **Michele**. Comments from colleagues were kept anonymous unless chosen otherwise. **Michele** stated that the Executive Director would continue to be evaluated on an annual basis and brought up a board member's response to the report regarding goals for the upcoming year. **Michele** explained, “I did not do that in the report, but basically to summarize, the report was good. **Steve's** done a lot of great things on campus together with his colleagues, some of whom are around this web table. Particularly in sustainability, we've made some real progress with the corporation and with the contractors that the corporation works with.”

Financially, **Michele** highlighted that CAS had been a “sound entity” throughout **Steve's** role as Executive Director with the help of “very talented” staff members. **Michele** explained “the staff at CAS have really been of great caliber and when they weren't, **Steve's** had to do the hard things and manage people out.” The corporation had also “right-sized” on several occasions. This year, the offices operated with reduced staffing, redistributing work, to save financial resources until campus returned to full capacity.

In terms of construction, **Michele** elaborated that prior to 2013, “the campus allowed CAS to make changes to our physical footprint on their own...Then in 2013, just as I became VP, the SUNY system said 'no more of this. These are state buildings and only the state can do the contracting construction on campus'.” With food service accustomed to making quick changes to reflect the changing wants of incoming classes, “the corporation had to navigate that. There were some bumps in the beginning, because the “just in time” changes to the venues couldn't happen anymore.” **Michele** clarified that new equipment or changes within the existing footprint could be managed by CAS but plans to move a wall or alter the structure of a space would need to pass through the “laborious processes on campus”. With this change in workflow, the corporation continued to make improvements in the past few years including the addition of The Roost to newly built Ridgeview Hall in 2015, the addition of Element 93 to Wooster Hall in 2016, the removal of Jazzman's Café in JFT, the renovation of Parker Theatre to include a full Starbucks, renovation in the library for The Truth Café, and updates to dining offerings in the SUB. **Michele** reiterated that these upgrades, invested by the corporation and Sodexo, all had to follow contracting and construction processes on campus. She further stated, “those venues as a whole have really, significantly impacted the offerings that we have for our students, but yet the meal plans didn't go up all that much in comparison to our sister campuses. So, that is a really huge accomplishment for the corporation and for **Steve** as the executive director.”

Michele returned to the point of setting goals for the Executive Director and asked, “What does the board want to see as far as performance goes for the corporation and for **Steve** as the executive director?” **Michele** welcomed members to share thoughts with the board or to reach out to her separately if anyone wanted to share more ideas after the meeting.

Matt responded, “One of the things that I think is really beneficial and might consider being expanded is actually the committees under Campus Auxiliary Service... maybe an expansion to not just board members and opening up to more students, because... I think it is really beneficial for helping us make executive decisions and just getting that student outreach.” **Matt** explained that the greater outreach would provide a “ground-level view” which could then be reported in board meetings as additional considerations. **Michele** thanked **Matt** for his input and asked if there were any other thoughts. There were none.

Steve thanked **Michele** for the review and updated the board on changes to the review process for next year. The Executive Committee would be “integrally involved” since the review process was now established. The full review would also be available in the CAS Office if a board member would like to read through the document. The evaluation would not be shared electronically. **Steve** noted, “I really appreciate all the kind things that were said about me and accomplishments that we have, and I just have to say for myself, I really have amazing people. Not just good people, but amazing people... and I just want to thank them because I think this evaluation is as much of a compliment to the quality of their work and their dedication as it is to me.”

Stephanie asked for a reminder of who served on the Executive board. The Executive Board consisted of **Steve, Michele, Stephanie** and **Matt**. **Steve** asked **Matt** if he would be available during the summer if the committee needed to meet. **Matt** said yes. **Steve** noted that committee members would be reelected at the Annual Meeting in October.

Housekeeping

Steve asked how the board felt about continuing to hold meetings via WebEx versus in-person.

Stephanie pointed out that the catering was missed. **Melinda** liked seeing everyone in person. **Michele** suggested a hybrid model with some meetings in-person and the remaining meetings would be held virtually. **Steve** agreed that the October meeting would be in-person and then the schedule could be determined from there. **Haley** agreed, noting that students may participate more in virtual meetings after meeting all members in-person at the first board meeting of the year.

Steve thanked members for serving on the board during the “very extraordinary” year and announced that **Jaca** would be reaching out via email regarding gifts that could be picked up or delivered on campus. **Steve** congratulated the seniors and wished everyone a great summer.

Meeting Adjourned 11:33am