

**Minutes**  
**Granite State Arts Academy Board Meeting**  
**May 6, 2014**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**16 Route 111, Building 4, Derry NH 03038**

---

**Meeting Come to Order:** 6:01pm

**Attendance:** Sarah Kelley, Amy Sevigny, Bianca Gynan, Shelley Fox, Erin Robinson, Carol Dawson, Melanie Holden, Don Erdbrink, Paul O'Neil, Wendie Leweck, Todd Abernathy via phone.

- 1.) **Comments/updates by Chairperson:** Wendie Leweck
  - a.) *Remodel update:* The Board room is decorated and furnished. It will be used for Board meetings, faculty and staff lounge, etc. Todd, Don, Wendie and Paul all worked on the Boardroom and it looks great. GSAA signage is done and Wendie is negotiating on where to hang it. The signs on the side of the road seem to be on state property but the management company does not like them. There are ten new chairs for computer lab, two new printers for Guidance Office and Business Manager. A Dell computer and printer have also been donated.
  - b.) *Management issues:* water leaks at the front door so new weather stripping will be added to the bottom of the door, path will be built, door swings need to be reversed, etc.
  - c.) *Book drive:* has been successful so far. Don recently picked up fourteen boxes of books and we will cull out what is useful. Todd will also be donating some books.
  - d.) *Marketing report:* Painting party will take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May (Wendie and Todd will be here for sure). Open House will take place on May 17. Wendie will continue to work on press releases, news articles and perhaps advertisements, and we all need to use Facebook, Twitter, and other media. Wendie is also hoping to give out totes to students on the first day of school, and order t-shirts and bracelets.
  - e.) *Financial report:* (changes: no nurse but we will have someone who is certified to hand out medications **{NB: need to add parental permission for OTC medications to registration forms}**, no lockers in the first year, P/T teachers will be employed due to enrollment numbers, after school programming). There have been challenges and delays with DOE funding and so we need to spend very carefully. The DOE is currently being audited so tensions are high there. There is currently a "buffer" in the

GSAA account, donated as a non-interest loan by the Erdbrink Family. The Board expressed its sincere and deep gratitude for this loan.

- f.) *Major fundraising underway:* Wendie has made up marketing kits and has a list of several possible donors who believe in the arts in education. She will be mailing those in the next two weeks and we hope to have responses four to six weeks later.
- g.) *Sherry –Kilgus Kramer resignation:* Wendie received Sherry’s resignation recently. She is quite involved in the Salem High School building project.
- h.) *Chair to step down:* Wendie was deeply thanked for her dedication and we all expressed our support for her in her new position.

**2.) Comments by Treasurer:** Paul O’Neil

- a.) *Comments on financial report:* Some costs have come in over-budget (propane) and others have come in under-budget (computers). Wendie will be putting together a balance sheet in the near future for the Board to review. She will also be sending financial reports to Board members each month ahead of Board meetings. Paul cautioned the Board to continue to watch financial issues very carefully and reconcile our spending with the state reports, our budget, and grant money.
- b.) *Treasurer to step down:* Paul will leave his post as Treasurer in order to move into the Chair position. This position will need to be filled quickly; there was some conversation about Don changing positions. There was also common opinion that the Board needs a CPA to join. The Board will continue to discuss this issue. Wendie will post an “ad” for a CPA to join the Board on Facebook and we will all plan to share that “ad” on our own pages.

**3.) Comments by Vice Chair:** Don Erdbrink

- a.) *Nomination of new Chair:* Don graciously nominated Paul O’Neil to be the Chair of the GSAA Board. Todd seconded the motion, the motion carried, and Paul accepted proudly and with a great sense of responsibility. Paul acknowledged his “full plate” and is grateful to have a strong Vice Chair in Don. He asked for tolerance and patience as he adjusts to his new position. He also gave kudos to Wendie for her leadership and her vision.
- b.) *Acknowledgment of new Business Manager start date (May 7, 2014):* Wendie will also be doing some marketing work in her position.
- c.) *Computer lab, brief update on auction:* GSAA was able to secure several pieces of office furniture at a significant discount, and thirteen iMac computers were purchased at auction at a deep discount. We will have a full computer lab and each administrative office has a computer.
- d.) *Phone lines installed:* New phone number is: **(603) 912-4944**. Don will continue to tap his personal contacts for technological support.
- e.) *Cost of intercom:* The approximate cost is \$650. It will be two-way and available for “all calls.”
- f.) *Bus hubs:* Don is playing phone tag with staff at First Student Transportation and will have more information at next month’s meeting.
- g.) *Music Room update:* The room needs one more coat of paint. Don is still working on instruments and equipment installation with Bob Beale. He is

working to stay under budget as much as possible. Todd and Don will also reach out as PR to local shops. Bianca is also reaching out to a harpist for possible donations and will invite her to a future Board meeting.

**4.) Comments by Secretary: Sarah Kelley**

a.) *IEP interviews, comments, concerns:* Sarah has been impressed with the students she has met. Most of the IEPs she has seen are not complicated, and she/Shelley have had honest conversation with the few students who have more significant needs. So far, all students have been a good “fit” for GSAA. She will continue to work with Shelley to interview other IEP/504 students.

b.) *Sarah to step down as secretary if replacement is available:* Amy has volunteered to become Secretary and will transition with Sarah in June.

**5.) Welcome Melanie Holden, Amy Sevigny, Erin Robinson**

**6.) Comments by Todd Abernathy**

a.) *Outreach, locations, successes, challenges:* Todd has reached out to a local entertainment attorney and he will hope to attend the June meeting. Todd will be speaking with a family member who is connected to VT Collegiate Outreach. The school year is ending so formal school visits will stop. He will also be making some college connections for future college admissions opportunities. Plymouth State, Berklee, Wheelock, and the other Boston colleges are among the schools he will contact.

b.) *Future planned outreach:* Hippo, Union Leader, NH Gazette are possible media outlets to approach. The Board needs to brainstorm ways to connect with the home-school community. Todd and Don also continue to explore afterschool opportunities. The cost benefits need to be weighed as do insurance needs. Todd, Don, and Wendie will bring some numbers to the next meeting.

**7.) Comments by Carol Dawson**

a.) *Student handbook and policy:* Carol, Sarah and Shelley worked on the family handbook and are satisfied with the product. It needs to include a disclaimer that the information and policies can change and will be reviewed yearly at a minimum. It also needs to include the school’s anti-discrimination policy. Carol made a motion to accept the handbook with a disclaimer to be written and an anti-discrimination statement to be attached. Todd seconded the motion and the motion carried with no opposition or abstentions.

**8.) Comments by Director: Shelley Fox**

a.) *Outreach, locations, successes, challenges:* Shelley visited Hood Middle School, was not allowed to visit Running Brook. She tried to visit Londonderry Middle School but was not allowed there either. She will continue to try. She also visited Salem Christian Academy, spoke to Hampstead Academy staff, Derry rec staff, and other town of Derry staff, Boys and Girls Club, Salem Library staff, Dr. Laura Nelson (superintendent of Derry) and she put flyers up.

- b.) *Future planned outreach:* She will visit the Rotary Club in the future, and explore joining the Chamber of Commerce. It was suggested to contact realtors, youth group ministers, secondary school fairs, social workers and look into the Memorial Day parade as well as local farmers' markets. The Outreach Committee will also meet to explore opportunities. Memories ice cream stand could be another venue for art exhibits.
  - c.) *Official school calendar:* First day of school will be August 28, 2014 -- that is the day Derry schools will begin. There will also be a few social gatherings this summer.
  - d.) *Formal student kits forthcoming:* They will be mailed by the end of the month.
  - e.) *Teacher interviews begin:* Shelley has begun to interview for teachers. She'd like to have a teacher leader and asked the Board to consider the possibility. Carol and Bianca have volunteered to assist Shelley with interviews. **NB:** *We need to consider how to deal with the substitute need/issue.*
  - f.) *Dance floor compare and contrast:* Shelley demonstrated the floor options and their prices and differences. The cost overage could be covered by renting out dance space and will be explored by the Board members who are working on after-school possibilities (Note: Dance lessons typically cost \$12-\$15/hour). Sarah made the motion to accept Shelley's recommendation for the dance floor choice. Don seconded the motion and the motion passed with no opposition or abstentions.
  - g.) *VLACS meeting update:* Shelley met with VLACS staff (Scott Peterson) and learned a lot about the school.
- 9.) **Comments:** Melanie Holden
- a.) *Fundraising:* After much planning, the golf tournament has been postponed until next year. This will allow for the GSAA community to solidify over the next year. She will be working with a group to implement the tournament beginning in January. In January 2015 Melanie hopes to have a Gala event (perhaps with a masquerade theme), which will include raffles, performances, dinner, and a silent auction. The Fundraising Committee (Wendie, Melanie, Paul, and Todd) will meet to begin to plan these events. A summer BBQ is in the works (July 19) that will be for students and their families and is designed to create community. There could be vendors, demonstrations, food, etc. and we could offer bricks for our walkways as well as school merchandise.
- 10.) **Comments:** Erin Robinson (Teen Librarian, Derry Public Library)
- a.) *Services offered by Derry Library, possible partnerships, ways we can increase awareness:* see attached notes. Wendie will create a poster for the teen area. In the future, GSAA could sponsor/host events like poetry slams, art exhibits, flash mobs, etc. Wendie will also look into an event in the near future.
- 11.) **Comments by Amy Sevigny**
- a.) Amy is a nurse by trade and continuing her education in nursing. She has two daughters who attend Seacoast Charter School – one will attend GSAA

next year. Amy has experience in organizing galas and has offered her help to the Fundraising Committee. Amy suggested looking into the SAD Café, an open mic venue for middle and high school students. She has passed out several cards locally, and thinks church youth ministers might be a good resource. She will provide us with medical information and can be available for field trips. She suggested we call the American Heart Association or American Red Cross for teacher training, and would recommend we look into an AED.

- 12.) **Nominations of new board members:** *Melanie Holden and Amy Sevigny* were both nominated and accepted. Amy will step in as Secretary as Sarah steps down.
- 13.) **New Business:** *Calendar items:* In June both the Music room and Dance room will be complete. In July the Visual Arts room and Theater will be complete.
- a.) Guidance, Office Manager and teachers will begin in August
- b.) Other: Shelley asked permission to hire teachers to do summer curriculum work and the Board agreed that would be important. **The next GSAA Board meeting will take place June 10, 2014 @ GSAA at 6pm.**

Paul O'Neil, Chair

Don Erdbrink, Vice Chair

Carol Dawson, Assistant Treasurer

Amy Sevigny, Secretary

Melanie Holden (offering to be part of Curriculum Committee), Bianca Gynan, and Sarah Kelley are additional Board members

**Adjournment:** 9:00pm