BEAVER COUNTY EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 14, 2025

Trustees Present:Roger Davis, Michael Jones, Lincoln Kretchmar, Joe Rubino, Dave Wytiaz, Beth Dewhurst, Dan Donnelly, Yvonne Connor, Christine Kroger and Executive Director, Jamie Connelly

Trustees Absent: Joe Guarino

President, Joe Rubino called the meeting to order at 11:51.

**Introduction of new trustee, Christine Kroger:**

The trustees introduced themselves. Christine shared her background and stated that she feels a synergy between what she does with Neighborhood North and the BCET Board.

**Huntington investment account presentation:**

Casey Crytzer, the BCET investment account advisor, introduced Damien Gottschalk, the new BCET investment account manager. Damien introduced himself and provided the following insights:

1. Federal Reserve Bank is expected to have 2 rate reductions this year instead of 4 due to uncertainty with tariffs.
2. Inflation rate up to 3%.
3. BCET currently has a moderate growth/balanced portfolio. Suggestion is to stay the course. Three goals of the portfolio are to grow the assets, protect the assets and spin off some income. Best way to achieve this is a 65/35 split; 65% investment stocks and 35% investment bonds.
4. Tariffs and DOGE impact on the market is unknown. If the situation deteriorates, suggest move some of 65% in stocks to bonds and implement more commodities in the portfolio
5. Portfolio returned 17.9% in 2024.
6. Investments are within policy guidelines. They have no recommendations for policy change.
7. Per Casey Crytzer, Huntington has everything they need. Clarified check signers, Joe Rubino, Lincoln Kretchmar and Yvonne Connor.
8. Account balance 12/31/2024 was $1,142,577.72.

**Procedural Actions:**

Minutes from the November 15, 2024 meeting were presented for approval. Motions to accept the minutes made by Mike Jones, seconded by Yvonne Connor. Motion carried.

The treasurer’s report was presented for approval. There was a question about the change in donations for the Growing with Books Program ($70,816.99 in 2023, $30,100 in 2024) After review it was noted the 2023 donation included the book donation from LLS. Motion to accept the report was made by Yvonne Connor, seconded by Dan Donnelly. Motion carried. The 2025 budget will be reviewed by the BCET Executive Committee at their March meeting and then approved by the BCET Board via email.

A motion was presented to engage with Ken Herrmann for the 990 and review by Roger Davis, second by Lincoln Kretchmar. Motion approved.

**Committee Reports:**

Marketing Committee – Lincoln Kretchmar reported BCET is partnering with an energy company, Veregy on a golf outing on June 30th at Seven Oaks Country Club. There was a discussion about BCET being the acting non-profit, collecting sponsorship money and participant fees. The board feels it is prudent to keep track of time invested by Lincoln and Jamie.

Lincoln presented that BCET has 675 likes on Face Book and teacher’s group is up to 159 members

Lincoln presented the newsletter. All thought it looked great. There was a discussion about the distribution of the newsletter. Should we print some to put at the BC libraries, school districts?

Beth gave an overview of a potential teacher event she would like to see BCET develop. Beth described a countywide event she had participated in when she lived in DC. She has spoken with Eric Rosendale, BVIU ED. Beth also connected with Carol Sprinker, Wright Promise ED who had a similar idea but with professional credits. Joe Guarino has spoken with Carol Sprinker and gave insight to a teacher event taking place on Colombus Day 2025. Perhaps BCET could be a vendor or partner on this event.

Programs Committee - Jamie Connelly reported the programs committee will be trying to increase participation in the STEAM Walk program by demonstrating to schools how many already do STEAM Walks they just are not aware of it.

Joe Guarino and Jamie are going to work on a voluntary session about how to complete a grant application in the hopes that this will improve the mini-grant applications we receive.

Jamie expressed the desire of the programs committee to put IMPACT Grants on hold for the time being until BCET has some funds to support this program. The programs committee will revisit the IMPACT grant application and improve the verbiage to be clearer on the process of applying and BCET looking for funding. All agreed. This led to a discussion about BCET needing to find diversified sources of funding.

The programs committee will be designing a new process for the BCET Teacher of the year. It will be a nomination, narrowed down to 3-4 who will then submit an application that will be evaluated over the summer to be awarded at the BCET donor event in the fall. Jamie also suggested the possibility of 2 teachers of the Year, maybe high school and elementary and potentially a monetary award. Joe Guarino will work on this with Jamie.

There was a discussion about how does BCET get information to the teachers. Joe Guarino explained a hot chocolate bar he had at New Brighton. It was mentioned that BCET has delivered pies on PI Day and cookies with information about BCET. The Marketing committee discussed delivering chocolate bars.

The programs committee will be reviewing the MUTJ scholarship applications again this year.

Events and Fundraising Committee – Jamie Connelly discussed the donation request mailing she and Yvonne Connor have been working on. The letters are ready to be mailed but we need to figure out how to mail them as a non-profit. Once we have the system down, we hope to do several more mailing this year.

Joe Rubino discussed the Education Hall of Fame to be held May 6th at Seven Oaks. We are still accepting nominations. Selections will be made at the meeting on February 27th.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Joe Rubino reviewed the class list, the contact information sheet, the committee list and the trustee donation request letter.

Lincoln Kretchmar motioned to merge the fundraising committee and the marketing committee. Yvonne Connor second. Motion approved.

There was a discussion about the Wright Promise and potential overlap with BCET. The feeling is BCET is more educator classroom support, program focused, Growing with Books to mini-grants. The Wright Promise seems to be more development and resource focused. BCET should look to partner with the Wright Promise when able to.

Joe Rubino acknowledged receipt $10,000 EITC donation from The Buncher Company and receipt of $5,000 EITC donation from Huntington.

**UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

Executive Committee Board of Trustees

March 6, 2025 (Thursday) May 16, 2025 (Friday)

Zoom Wooden Angel

**ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING**

Lincoln Kretchmar motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:12. Second by Beth Dewhurst. Motion carried.