



Our Mission: We disrupt generational poverty through a primary focus on children & young adults and the specific challenges they face at distinct stages of life.

Northwestern University Settlement Association
Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

1400 W Augusta Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60642
Guild Hall
In-Person Meeting – Mask Wearing Required

Call to order

Amy O’Donnell

Present:
Amy O’Donnell
Bob Best
Bill Welnhofer
Sami ElSaden

Kathy Elliott
Staff:
Carole Wood
Jen Allman

Called to order at 12:06pm. First in-person executive committee meeting since Amy has been serving as chair.

Agenda Item 1. Public comment

Amy O’Donnell

No public comment.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of Executive Committee meeting minutes

Amy O’Donnell

- a) [Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting on May 23, 2022](#)
- b) [Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting on June 29, 2022](#)

Bob suggested the following revision to the June 29 minutes: "The Board and Joe Laverty discussed pending litigation concerning Jessica Flores." should be edited to read: "The committee and attorney Joe Laverty discussed the terms on which the case will be settled. At the conclusion of the discussion, Joe agreed to contact Ms. Flores’ attorney again and attempt to finalize the terms of a settlement agreement."

Pending those changes, Bob made a motion to approve. Kathy seconded. All in favor none opposed. Minutes approved.

Agenda Item 3. Board Chair’s Report

Amy O’Donnell

- a) Thank you for Board Day at Camp at HITW
- b) Email addresses for Board Members
 - [Email Use Instructions](#)

Amy thanked everyone for attending Board Day at Camp. She shared it was a fun today including a presentation on the history of camp, lunch, a tour, and everyone had a wonderful time.

The public is welcome to attend the meeting.

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Amy shared that we have new email addresses for board members. Jen has instructions on how to use them. Jen can do a screen recording to show how to add an additional Google profile. Amy said that ideally all communication for the settlement will go to the Nush.org. After the next board meeting, we will roll out the email addresses.

Amy shared that looking at the results to the board interest survey, a few people wanted a board refresh on orientation and we're looking at holding that sometime in the Fall.

Amy reminded everyone that Oct 22 is the in-person gala of the North Shore Board, and they are excited to return to their pre-COVID level of fundraising.

Agenda Item 4. Governance Committee Updates

Kathy Elliott

- a) Board Recruitment, Vetting Process
- b) CEO Compensation Process
- c) Number of Board Members per the By-Laws (27 need 28)
- d) Council of Advisors & Right Sizing the Board

Kathy shared that these items are things that the committee will be working on this year. We will continue recruiting board members and working on the vetting process. Kathy shared that we need to look at candidates coming forward and will look to see if they will be a good fit. Kathy said that we want to commit to paper the CEO compensation process. Amy shared that she made a draft and Bill approved it. Bob will look at it next. Kathy said that there have been historic trends, but it is good to commit the process and document it on paper.

The committee discussed possibilities for board size.

Kathy shared that she and Carole met and that they are considering what is the right size for our board. We can change the By-laws to match the ideal size. Bob said that there are 2 provisions per the state: we must have at least 3 members. The second provision is that your By-laws must state the number of members and a range is acceptable if the range is 5 or less.

Amy shared that we used to draw a lot from donors and auxiliary board members to join our board. We do still have that trend, but we are looking towards having more corporate seats on the board as well as folks who live in the city and we may not have the board be as big. We could have a council of advisors and give them a mandate and a mission, but they would not have to be present in order to do business. Some non-profits have 5 members, and some have 75 members. Bob shared that the current council of advisors serve as individuals rather than as a group. Amy suggested that perhaps we could send them questions that we could use their guidance on and connect with them each quarter.

Bob mentioned that the state General Assembly may make new protocols or provisions regarding hybrid and/or in-person meetings as we come out of COVID-19. We will pay attention to their mandates. Bob shared that when he joined the Board in the 1990's, the Board was not as large of a percentage of funds raised as it has now become. Kathy said that many people now have multiple locations, and we should consider how that affects our ability to recruit people with the skill sets that we want, if we have to meet in-person. Amy agreed.

Carole added that CPS is against hybrid meetings, and they want to lobby against the General Assembly to allow hybrid meetings. CPS can take over meetings if local school councils cannot garner a quorum at meetings. It is to their benefit to have more control and to require in-person meetings.

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Bill shared his thoughts concerning the number of Board members. He is leaning towards a smaller working board but on the other hand, a larger board is a benefit for fundraising. It is helpful to keep the board big and to have a small executive committee to really do the main business. Amy agreed a big board would be helpful if everyone shows up to the meetings. Bill shared that he agrees that we need them to vote on the consent agenda and the budget, but the committees are really the ones doing the work. The board meetings were more ceremonial and informative historically. Kathy shared that some members didn't like the ceremonial aspect.

Sami shared that many board members aren't sure what their purpose or roles are on the board. There are many people on the board who want to participate on it as a working board. Bill shared that historically it was a bit different, around 7-8 years ago we had a shift where there were financial expectations but that hasn't been directly implemented.

Kathy shared that there used to be a central committee of Auxiliary Board presidents and people who had been involved for a long time and it was a meeting to stay informed. Then Ron moved towards working committees and dissolved the central committee. Bill said if the Board isn't fundraising focused, maybe we should consider a smaller board. Amy shared that the corporate seats would be here to help with their skills, like a treasurer for example.

Carole clarified, should we restate the purpose of the Board at the next board meeting. Amy agreed and said that most members on the board are here because they care about the work and the mission; they are not just here to write a check. Everyone agreed. Bob mentioned that Carole should consider what kind of governing board would be most helpful. Amy and Sami agreed, and that should extend to the committees as well. Amy also mentioned that Carole has a good deal of experience working at other places and serving on other boards. Carole shared that she and the governance committee will work together to make a plan. Carole mentioned that the other committees meet almost too much—some meet monthly. Amy agreed that takes extra staff hours and time. Bob agreed that we can take a critical look at that and the meeting schedules of those committees.

Carole shared that at the first meeting she attended, Ron had stated that there was no stated give/get financially. That will inherently affect the board size. Carole said that some boards have an explicit give/get and some boards also have a policy of "give to your capacity." Amy said a mix would be helpful: corporate seats, new people who live in the city, auxiliary board members, and members who can donate. Sami agreed we need people who can contribute skillfully and financially.

Bob shared one trend we have lost is the socializing pre and post-meeting that we used to do. We need to assimilate and reassimilate our board members into the organization. Kathy mentioned that she has missed the in-person good will projects like Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas bag packing for the neighbors.

Kathy said that we also need to start talking about succession planning for the Board and for officers. Amy agreed and said we should also look at Vice Chair for the next potential Board Chair to move up into place.

Agenda Item 5. Education Committee Updates

Alice Schaff

- a) New School Year
- b) New Principal: Jason Smith

Carole shared that today is the first day of school. Arrival at both buildings went well, more smoothly than the past few years. Jason shared that it felt like Christmas morning and there were lots of happy parents. Carole said that there are two new Assistant Principals in both buildings, and they seem off to a strong start: Diana Smith at RMS and Akesha McLean at RES.

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Carole shared that she connected with John and Jean Rowe about an update with the progress made at Rowe. They seemed happy with the news. John committed to send a check for \$50K to support. Amy said that is wonderful news, especially since John has been in and out of the hospital since April.

Agenda Item 6. Mental Health Committee Updates

Amy O'Donnell

Amy shared that they had their anniversary event in June and there is a new grant and a congressional earmark that we are hoping to get in order hire new therapists. We are now not currently fully staffed as Children's Home & Aid promoted some of our therapists and moved them from these positions. Camp Mariposa and Camp Eluna will also be starting soon for this school year and Rowe students have priority to enroll. Carole shared that the partnership with Hearts to Art this summer went very well.

Agenda Item 7. Financials

Bill Weinhofer

- a) [FY22: NUSA Pre Audit Interim Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2022](#)
- b) [FY22: NUSA Pre Audit Interim Overall Budget Report as of June 30, 2022](#)
- c) [FY23: NUSA Balance Sheet as of July 31, 2022](#)
- d) [FY23: NUSA Overall Budget Report as of July 31, 2022](#)
- e) Endowment Reports
 - i. [NUSA Portfolio Overview Report as of July 31, 2022](#)
 - ii. [NUSA Endowment Portfolio with William Blair as of July 31, 2022](#)

Bill shared that we just closed out the last fiscal year. At first glance it looks like we are way ahead of our projections. Bill spoke with Edison. CPS overcompensated us via check. Carole shared that the expected enrollment number sent to CPS was supposed to be 850 and the number submitted was 950, so the funding over 880 will have to be returned.

Bill shared that we really need to get ahead of this issue and try to figure this out before next year. Bill asked can we recruit 50 more students? Carole shared that 850 is the goal across the school. We report our numbers on the 20th day, Sep 19.

Carole mentioned that this morning we had parents trying to enroll their scholars and parents were also trying to withdraw their scholars. We are actively promoting our After School programs and many other schools are struggling to find staffing for After School care. We are hoping that will boost our enrollment. Carole said that Bill Gerstein mentioned that 750 is a strong number considering the drop in CPS enrollment across the board. Sami and Amy asked what percentage are we down and how do we compare to other schools? Carole said she will look at that and can report back.

Amy mentioned that many families withdrew 8th graders due to discipline issues and many families felt that the education level of Rowe was lacking. A third issue that Carole mentioned was a lax policy around uniforms. Jason has done lots of good work so far to connect with families.

Kathy asked about when is the new scorecard coming out? Carole shared that the new score card is still being put together. Charter schools are supposed to use ISBE summative data. We are focused on improving that, all leading up towards charter renewal. In 2025 we are up for renewal. We have about one year to get ourselves where we need to be.

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Carole and Danielle are going to the CPS board meeting on Wednesday to see what those meetings are like and what their interests are in schools. CPS is focused on ESL, Special Education, and Operational health and each of these will be a factor in charter renewal. Carole said we will start to invite CPS board members to events such as the fall festival to build those connections. Carole shared that CPS has low enrollment struggles and they are making charter renewals more difficult in order to help their own enrollment levels. We will have to answer the question: Why do you need Rowe and why is our school special? Carole shared that we have to prove that we are innovative and do show that we can provide a great education in addition to our wrap around services. Jason is also focused on STEAM and STEM enhancement. One idea is: Can we do 4 traditional school days and one unique day of enrichment? Carole shared a large struggle has been staff turnover and that our administrators are brand new.

Bill shared that Sami and Bill met with William Blair, as our accounts are down around 10%, this is due to the downward trending market and we're hoping things will turn around. Amy asked are they aware that we are unhappy with this? Bill shared yes, they are aware, and they aren't happy with the downward trend either. We will watch the market.

Kathy requested to see a copy of the school budget for the next meeting. Amy agreed, it would be nice to see that monthly or quarterly at the regular meetings. Bill shared that there is some wiggle room about how funds can get allocated, and it would be nice to look closely at them with the school. Kathy shared that it would be good to have a policy of regular funding oversight for the school.

Agenda Item 8. CEO's Report

Carole Wood

- a) [CEO's Report](#)
- b) Questions & Discussion

Carole reviewed her report including program updates. She said that we are really hoping to get the \$325K congressional earmark from Senator Durbin's office. We need another therapist as well as someone who can manage billing to serve more scholars and families.

Carole mentioned that we have eliminated the AmeriCorps program and have slimmed down the Emergency Services budget. We are focused now on referrals for the neighbors who need assistant for rent or utility assistance. We are looking to expand our partnership with the Chicago Food Depository. They want to help us expand which may include a refrigerated truck starting in February.

Carole said that we won't be giving away meal boxes for Thanksgiving. She shared that Catering by Michael's had a poor experience. Apparently, they were promised that they would be featured in a gala and that promise never came to fruition. Carole is working to repair that relationship. But we are looking to other Thanksgiving meal opportunities.

Camp has been going well this year. Val's last day is Sep 21 and then we will start looking at restructuring and replacing that role. We should probably have a camp director here onsite to build relationships with Rowe scholars and families. We need staff who are bilingual, and we need culturally relevant food—we are looking at how we can integrate that moving forward.

Carole spoke to the Rowe updates. We are trying to revamp our high school readiness program. Many 8th grade parents did not feel that their students were ready for high school. We are speaking with Noble to try to prepare to see what scholars need to feel prepared. We need Algebra and Pre-algebra teachers, so we are looking into that. We have 15 new teachers but there is always high turnover at Rowe.

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Carole share that we are understaffed in Special Education teachers. We also offered a bonus to our current teachers to get certified to teach special education and ESL. We are now out of compliance with ESL. Many teachers want to increase their endorsements and are offering tuition reimbursements to get us back in compliance. We need to have 75% of our teachers certified to get back in compliance before we are up for charter renewal.

Sami asked about indicators and measurement of scholars and growth. Carole shared that from what we can see right now the data doesn't look promising. She said that in 2019 or 2020 we bought Salesforce to track and measure. It was never configured appropriately so it is not usable. Edison and Carole carved out money to look at how much will it cost us to configure Salesforce correctly. We need to look at how we can measure across programs and how can we collect that data and compile it in Salesforce. We historically have not been focused enough on collecting data.

Carole shared that now we are starting to focus on the metrics and the measurements. Sami suggested we just get a handful of credible measurements to share with CPS to showcase the effects of our wrap around services. Carole said yes, CPS knows about us, but we have not done a great job of building relationships with CPS. We should utilize them as a partner, and we have invited their head of community engagement to take a tour next week to learn about Settlement services.

Amy asked, can we compare which scholars are receiving mental health care vs. those who are not? Carole shared right now we only have the capacity to serve around 25 scholars. We need a larger staff to serve more of our scholars. CPS was wanting us to come in as contractors and serve their kids. However, we don't have the capacity to serve all of our kids yet.

Carole said that we had partnered with Provisio to build out Salesforce originally. We have to reconfigure salesforce to collect more data. There is also a benchmarking collaborative, and they are measuring data for students. We can connect with them and ask them how they are using salesforce. Carole mentioned that Bain will help us as well. We need to know, what data should we be collecting? And how can we use this technology? Sami mentioned that Salesforce as a company may have a pro bono option to help us, as a non-profit. We have to know what we want so that they can help us configure it.

Amy mentioned we should break down the data by age and requirements. I.e. are our Early Head Start and Head Start children hitting their benchmarks? Carole shared that those two programs are probably the strongest in their data collection and in the percentage of children hitting their benchmarks.

Bill asked who was responsible for the Salesforce implementation? Carole said it was a bit unclear. It seems like Jessica, Max, and Edon worked on setting it up.

Carole also shared that the Afterschool program currently has kids at age 12 age out. It historically has not had smart goals and metrics. Rowe has its own After School clubs, but they are not integrated with the After School program. We need to get focused on what we offer regardless of staff capacity and capability. We want to hire someone to run After School and Clubs to help integrate the programming with House in the Wood and with the teen program.

Amy mentioned that we used to have a girl scout troupe at the school, and they had their own budget. Amy can look back into setting that up with Megan.

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Carole shared that every 7th and 8th grader needs help with Mathematics as their scores are so low. They need extra support. How do we integrate that into after school? How do we integrate outdoor education here in the city? The Field Museum is going to meet with us to help revamp that curriculum. We want to be intentional. What is the outcome we want and how do we accomplish that? Sami agreed and reiterated we need to know how to measure what we do.

Carole mentioned that we advertised after school programming, but parents looked at it like baby-sitting and would pull their scholars out whenever they were ready to pick them up. We need to set up the expectation that scholars need to attend for the entirety of a program instead of leaving early when their parents arrive.

Amy mentioned that Northwestern University has some resources and programming to partner with. Carole agreed and mentioned that there are a few potential partnerships that we are looking into, including one with City Colleges of Chicago. We have reinstated homework this year. This partnership will let families who need it access ESL classes to help families be able to support scholars with their homework. Sami asked about a peer-to-peer mentorship program. Carole shared that Jason is open to that and looking into it. There are also external vendors that can provide us the support we need.

Amy mentioned that the food pantry is currently our only portal for volunteers, but if we could re-open tutoring options it could be helpful for engagement. Carole mentioned that once we gained some additional funds, we have built a role for Victoria Allen as the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator to build out that program. Carole said that for example, Bain donated \$8,000 worth of school supplies and are looking for more engagement opportunities. They did that after they came through to volunteer. Sami agreed that his company had similar engagement and it helped build relationships after volunteering here onsite.

Carole spoke to the Development fundraising goal. They have raised a little over \$200K in hard cash with a 2-million-dollar goal. There are more pending funds coming in. Leslie is focused on telling our story, updating funders, and raising funds. Carole is confident about the department meeting the 2million dollar goal.

Carole mentioned the discussion question for the day. Are we a School with wrap around services? Or are we a settlement house that has a school as one of its programs? This is a cultural question across the staff. Bill agreed. This is an important issue that we have never really resolved. Bill shared that Ron thought that we were a settlement house first. John Rowe only wanted focus on the school. Carole mentioned that House in the Wood predates Rowe elementary. We should have been intentional from the beginning about building that partnership with camp enrollment.

Sami mentioned that if you look at the mission, we are an organization focused on breaking the cycle of poverty. You can't do that with just a settlement house or with just a school, you need both. A school alone can't do that. We are an organization who has those programs—a school is just one of them, maybe the most important, but you need more than a school to accomplish the mission.

Bill said that there are nuances, the mental health program, for example. The strategy of the mental health program—is it to support the scholars in the school to help them thrive there? Or is it an outward program for the neighborhood in general? It changes the look of the program and the clients of each program.

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Sami mentioned that Ron wanted to be a thinktank for other organizations and municipalities. However, in order to do that we needed to measure our impact which we never really did effectively. We have an opportunity to measure the progress of the scholars and families at the school. Amy mentioned that if we look at ourselves as a Settlement organization, we open ourselves to expansion to other neighborhoods and other locations. Sami agreed and mentioned that we could expand to other neighborhoods such as the Network 11 schools. However, historically Ron thought that we needed control of a school in order to get the participation and enrollment in the programming. Sami disagreed with this.

Carole agreed with Sami and said that in some ways running the school becomes a distraction from our other programs. We could bring our programming to any high-needs school, regardless of our ability to measure what we do, and they would be excited about our wrap around services. Sami asked how different would it feel if the school was managed externally, how much more could we focus on the mission? Carole agreed it would be quite different.

Carole mentioned that this is also a resource question. As we grow or enroll more students, we need more staff and more resources. Carole is hopeful that with the new administrative staff she will have more time to focus on the Settlement and our programs outside of the school. Carole shared that the school is the most difficult program to raise money for, because of the government funding and reimbursements. The easiest program to raise money for is Family CARES, everyone wants to support mental health services. Amy asked about the earmark. Carole mentioned that we should get it this calendar year, we're just not sure when. We do know we were approved to receive the funds. Carole shared that hiring is difficult right now. Those are difficult jobs and there is a shortage of those staff right now. Currently Children's Home & Aid and Family CARES do not offer competitive wages so it will continue for us to be difficult to hire therapists.

Sami asked about enrollment at Rowe. If we did 0 recruiting, what is trending in concerns to enrollment, housing, and population loss? Carole shared that the initial model of 1,008 students is no longer a reachable goal with the ongoing decline in population growth and with families moving to the suburbs. Amy agreed, when Bain helped build the initial model it was based on one building and one Principal. We need a new economy of scale, what is the right number with our current model and two buildings.

Amy mentioned that our ratings online when you search for Charter Schools online are low. We need to increase the education quality. Carole agreed and also mentioned that the change in leadership across the school has been a challenge historically. Families choose schools based on quality and based on leadership. We are hopeful with this new leadership.

Agenda Item 10. Closed Session Closed Session pursuant to: Section 2(c)(1) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of one or more specific employees

Amy O'Donnell

Amy asked for a motion to move to closed session. Kathy motioned, and Bob seconded. Closed session began at 2:02 pm.

Kathy motioned to move from the closed session to open session. Bob seconded. All in favor. None opposed. The meeting moved back into open session at 2:17pm.

The public is welcome to attend the meeting.

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Agenda Item 11. Questions / Other

Amy O'Donnell

- a. Next meeting: Monday, November 14, Noon | In-person | Guild Hall

Bill asked about an update on the Teen Program. Carole shared that it has shifted to revamping After School programming to provide structured and intentional programming for our current scholars and to expand to serve our 8th graders as well.

Bill asked for clarification about the funding restricted to the overhead for the staff member to run the program. How will we raise funds to continue to provide for that person's salary and the other program expenses? Carole shared that we have applied for a \$220K grant youth enrichment grant from the city of Chicago, for example. However, there is lots of funding for this exact kind of program, so we are hopeful about finding that funding easily.

Bob shared that we should involve Ron and ask him if he has a vision for the future programming. Bob mentioned that there was an older committee to plan for the teen programming but there doesn't seem to be much tangible planning happening for this program. The Board and Ron should both have transparency about what is happening with the funds. Amy agreed, we should provide regular reports to the donors about updates on the teen program. Carole said yes, we can provide reports and updates of the metrics and a narrative of where we are. Bob agreed. We want people to be happy about the updates on the program so that they might continue to support.

Sami mentioned that Bill Hall and his committee had drafted a charter for the program. Tim Cawley was on the committee too. Sami will look for a copy of that charter so we can look at what the original vision was. Jen can look for a copy of this as well.

Amy mentioned our outward and external appearance. We would like to clean up the Settlement House and make it more welcoming to children and families. We need a bit of more contemporary look. Amy mentioned that our social media and the website does not look like us nor does it look like our photos. Carole shared that yes, we are trying to make more photos. Soon we will see that change on the website.

Carole shared that social media has not been a priority as our staff has not had capacity to focus on that recently. Carole shared that she wants to hire a communications person to oversee external and internal communications.

Amy shared that September 19 is the next Board Meeting. Jen will send reminder emails.

Jen will check to see if the Theatre is available on Sep 19. She will also check on Theatre availability for all 4 board meetings for the year.

Bob motioned to adjourn. Sami seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 2:26pm.

Minutes submitted by Jen Allman.

The public is welcome to attend the meeting.

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