



CSJ Ministries Inc. Board of Directors
Thursday, December 19, 2024; 4:00-6 PM
Via Zoom

DRAFT

In Attendance: Kevin Berg; Marjie Blevins; Anita S. Duckor, CSJ-C; Karen Gervais; Steve Kenney; Mary Lydon; Brian Mallaro; Brian Mullen; Susan Oeffling, CSJ; Colleen O’Malley, CSJ; Adele O’Sullivan, CSJ; Joel Rainville; Mark Richards; Gabrielle Rohde; Angela Schreiber, CSJ; Kris Smyth; Jill Underdahl, CSJ; Anne Weyandt; Jean Wincek, CSJ

Staff: Cheryl Behrent; Matt Halley; Cindy Kaiser; Tiffany Melnik; Elisabeth O’Toole; Ralph Scorpio; Lacy Sietsema

Excused Absences: Comfort Dondo; Stacy Jacobson; Maya Missaghi; Fr. Larry Snyder

The Accola Board of Directors meeting convened in-person and on Zoom on Thursday, December 19, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m.

Modified DEI Statement: Read by Kevin.

Prayer: Kevin led the Board in prayer.

Agenda: Kevin reported that with respect to item 5, the Board does not approve the audit, it accepts the audit. These changes will be noted. The audit is for FY24.

Minutes: The October Board minutes were presented. Kevin noted that in the minutes section, October needs to be changed to August. Hearing no further changes, Mark moved to approve the October minutes and Susan seconded. All present Board members voted to approve.

Kevin noted that the Amended Bylaws have been approved and Lacy will meet with Jean to have her sign off on this.

President’s Report

Matt reported that this is a time of gratitude as he celebrates his 1st Anniversary with Accola. He expressed gratitude to the Board for all of its generous support of Accola.

Matt updated the Board on the Wisdom Ways sustainability project. He stated that this is an opportunity to dive deep, understand the advantages and vulnerabilities so that it can continue to have an impact within the community. Wisdom Ways has an incredible opportunity to meet unmet needs in the community and can provide a safe space to create connection. This project is coming together and will help with growth and sustainability.

Program Reports

Advancement: Ralph reported that the first Accola appeal went out recently. Donors have had some questions but the reception has been positive. There have been some questions about Accola's relationship with SMHC, but it has been a great opportunity to have conversations with people. Ralph thanked Kris Smyth and Mary Lydon for their help with donor initiatives and reaching out to their contacts to talk about Accola. Ralph reported that Accola has hired a part-time Volunteer Coordinator. Leslie Aktan has taken over the role and is in the process of organizing the volunteer office. There was a discussion about expected estate gifts and the Annual Fund. Ralph stated that while the current numbers are less than at this same time last year, it will catch up.

Learning In Style: Elisabeth reported that LIS currently has 134 student participants and recruitment is up. Many of the students have achieved a new level gain in their studies. She expressed gratitude to all who attended the LIS Open House. Three students spoke to those who attended, and it was a great reunion of teachers and staff from over 30 years. The Open House was also a great opportunity to highlight LIS and bring in community partners as well.

Elisabeth updated the Board on security measures LIS is implementing on school grounds to keep staff and students safe. There was a discussion about safety strategies, which Elisabeth and Cheryl are in the process of identifying and developing.

Sarah's... an Oasis for Women: Cheryl reported that Sarah's will be having a "Know Your Rights" presentation on January 8, 2025. This will help its residents when they are at work, school, and running errands. Cheryl shared a resident's story about how Sarah's has had an impact on her life.

Wisdom Ways: Cindy reported that the Programs and Opportunities Committee is very engaged and enthusiastic about the Wisdom Ways sustainability project. The committee continues to work to balance the legacy of Wisdom ways and its future. Staff has been kept apprised as the conversation moves forward. Programmatically, Wisdom ways will continue the status quo.

Committee Reports

Advancement: Joel reported that the Advancement and Marketing Committee has had a few meetings. He emphasized the importance of volunteers and the time they dedicate to Accola's mission. There is a strong partnership at LIS with Blake School, and the committee is looking at starting a pilot program that will develop and maintain relationships with them and their families.

Finance/Audit: Brian reported that the committee has reviewed the audit and financial statements. CLA has audited the financials. CLA did note a couple of things and Tiffany is reworking some of the processes, particularly with regards to fiscal control and documentation. Brian moved to approve the 2024 financial statements and Steve seconded. All present Board members voted to approve.

Accola is financially solvent, and all the programs are funded. However, there is a continued need to find new ways to fund the programs. The budget has been cleaned up and reorganized. It is now reflective of true costs going forward for FY25. Brian added that November reflects a good return on investments and Accola is on track to exceed investment expectations.

Investment: Mary reported that the Investment Committee met in October. She announced that the Endowment has now been transferred to Accola. Tiffany is cleaning up some reporting and streamlining it with regards to various funds and how they are earmarked. Spending policies are being updated. The

overall market trajectory has been good despite a bumpy December. The next meeting takes place in January.

Nomination and Governance: Anita has provided the Board with the resume and biography of Sandy Vargas. She reviewed these documents and the Nomination and Governance Committee would like to nominate her to the Board. All present Board members voted to approve the nomination. Sandy's service will begin 1-1-25 and will be a 2 ½ year term, with the possibility of being re-elected for one additional 3-year term.

Programs & Opportunities: Anne reported that the Programs and Opportunities Committee is reviewing and reflecting on the recommendations put forth by SISU Consulting. The committee will meet in January to further discuss these recommendations.

Mission & Education: Susan provided the Board an overview of the Mission Education Committee and its purpose. She added that the committee is organizing two Board events. The first will take place during the January Board Education Session. The session will feature a presentation from Marty Roers of the Justice Commission/Office and will focus on ways to partner and collaborate.

The second event will take place on May 22 from 3-7 p.m. The committee is organizing a bus tour and social. This tour will highlight important sites around St. Paul to the CSJ community and will end at the Celeste Hotel.

Discussion: Mission Education – What Do Board Members Want To Learn?

Susan opened up a discussion about what the Board would like to hear about, questions they have about the Sisters and the wider CSJ community, etc. This will help the Mission Education Committee curate future initiatives to help ground the Board in its mission.

Topics that came up include:

- The Impact of SMHC
- The evolution of healthcare within the CSJ community
- How the Sisters established schools
- A better understanding of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's
- Would like to hear individual stories (examples: McDonald Sisters, Joan Mitchell, Ansgar, etc.)
 - Stories of personal leadership
- How the Sisters get stuff done – leadership, decision making, conflict resolution, etc.
- The Sisters are committed to acts of services – how they created wealth to continue their mission in perpetuity
- The creation of the Consociate Program

Request From Marian Diaz: Transfer of GIFT Leadership Program

Matt reviewed the GIFT Institute, which was developed at Wisdom Ways. He explained that the previous director, Marian Diaz, developed this program using Wisdom Ways time and resources. This program is about aligning spirituality and leadership based on feminist theology and justice. Marian developed the class and curriculum. Currently, Matt does not have an assessment for how this program will fit into Accola. An investment of Wisdom Ways solicitations and PIM grants went into this project. Matt explained that he has recently been approached with the idea of Marian taking ownership of the GIFT

Institute for her own private practice.

The Board reviewed the proposal. It was stated that this program does belong to Accola and that Wisdom Ways staff would prefer to keep the Institute for now.

There was a discussion about how the GIFT Institute could fit into Accola and intellectual property. The Board decided to retain all intellectual property for now. Kevin stated that the Board will take responsibility for this decision and will provide a response to this proposal.

Executive Session: The Board went into Executive Session at **5:49 p.m.**

Board Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lacy Sietsema, Accola