

AISB BOARD MEETING
Regular Session
AISB Library
March 17, 2009

Present: David Henry (DH, *Director*) Rob Van Doeselaar (RD, *Chair*), Omar Saibou (OS), Scott Reese (SR, *U.S. Ambassador's rep*), Christy Bennett (CB), Steve Lutterbeck (SL), Todd League (TL), Olivier Verstraeten (OV), and Magnus Bucht (MB)

Others present: Randy Brown (RB, project manager) and Lynn Robinson (LR, teacher's rep.)

1. Opening

a. Call to order, 7:15 PM

RD opened the meeting at 7:15pm and introduced Magnus Bucht (MB) who will replace Nico Barning (who resigned from the board during last meeting on February 24). A motion to have him sit on the board was then put forward and approved (by ALL).

b. Approval of minutes

The minutes of the Regular Session February 24, 2009 were approved –unanimously.

2. Teacher's report

LR reported on recently-concluded activities, namely:

- The Middle School field trip to Teriyabougou (March 12 – 15), which was a success. The students learned about biogas, community relations, played a soccer match against a local school, and even attended a balafon party on one of the nights.
- The afterschool activities for this quarter ended last week. About 40% of the AISB students participated in the 18 activities offered.
- The AISB faculty experienced the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) test firsthand by taking it themselves. Predictably, lots of questions and concerns arose, which will be answered/solved before the actual MAP test to the students.

LR also gave an overview of upcoming activities/events, such as:

- The AISB Middle School soccer team trip to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (March 20 – 22), where they will compete against other international schools in the region,
- High School Global Initiatives Network trip to Dakar, Senegal,
- The annual AISB Annual Festival scheduled for March 28. The organizing committee of the PTO is hard at work and still accepting donations.
- Francophone Week (March 17 – 20), currently underway. As part of that celebration, the whole middle school visited a local school in Bamako,
- AISB Annual Science Fair Week, March 23 – 27,
- Parent-Child Play Group at the Early Learning Center (ELC) every Wednesday afternoon, 2:30 – 3:30pm, starting on March 18. This activity is open to all children under 3 years old.
- The PTO's intends to transfer management of the school store to the school and has renewed its commitment to sponsor Earth Day and Africa Day as in the past.

3. Director's report (by DH)

(See handout 'Highlights of Director's Report' March 17, 2009).

In addition, DH provided the following information:

- The new 11th grader comes from the International School of Kenya (ISK) and should have no problem fitting into AISB
- In addition to Leota Haynes, the ad-hoc high school graduation committee will also include Gina Krause and Susan League,

Two discussions took place following the Director's report on two issues:

- **Number of students in the Pre-K class:** SL expressed concern about the Pre-K class exceeding our stated maximum class size of 20. This concern was quickly put to rest with the reminder that it was decided, during the January 21st meeting, to waive that restriction and in fact raise the number of students to 24 for that class, provided there was a teacher an assistant and two aides.
- **Admission test:** several board members expressed the concern that this does put additional stress on the parents, especially since no such test is required when moving from one school to another inside the US. DH explained that International School's use this test quite often for students coming from non-accredited schools.

4. Facilities committee report (by CB and Randy Brown)

See handout 'Facilities/Finance OPIC Meeting Minutes, March 2, 2009'.

- The Finance Committee is currently working hard to send the final loan application to OPIC by March 30. In the meantime, a first draft is done and should be out to OPIC by tomorrow morning (if the internet connection holds steady; it is a big document). March 31st is an absolute deadline for a June turn around (commitment) by OPIC. But, according to RB, what has been put together is of excellent quality.
- OPIC is now a very attractive possibility. More money for a much lower interest rate, resulting in almost equal payments over the same period of time, than a lower-amount loan from BOA + another bank.
- SR handed out two letters in support of the loan (in English and in French) by the US Embassy to the local banks. These may or may not be inserted into the files sent to the banks, as other such letters (by the previous ambassador) already exist.
- The construction bids will be unsealed on Friday, March 27, 2009.
- **RB:** There are still some problems related to demolition and prep work necessary before beginning work, as squatters and garden plots are still present on the school site. The school informed the mayor that it was open to the idea of compensating several farmers who have a few active garden plots within the roadway. The Mayor wrote a letter that grossly overstated the number of active garden plots. The school then sent a letter disputing that claim and offered instead to give the farmers 30 days to harvest their plots, after which time anything remaining on the land will be demolished.
- **RB** met with the US Embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO) to discuss a security grant for building the security wall around the school property. Basically, no grant will be considered as long as an "existing structure" is not present on the premises. The school could build a short wall (shoulder height, as mentioned in the handout) and then apply for the grant. After much discussion, it was decided to go along with the RSO's suggestion of doing nothing for now and waiting for next fall when the new budget is approved. Info: the grant amount that AISB originally submitted for our security needs is approximately \$2 million.

5. Finance Committee Report (by OV)

(See handouts 'Facilities/Finance Committee OPIC Meeting March 10, 2009' and 'Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, March 12, 2009')

- School Construction: the 64 million CFA paid to the architect represents about 40% of the total amount owed at the end of the project
- Tuition Status Report: a payment plan has been set up with the two families that have fallen behind on their tuition payment
- Monthly Income % Expense Report: OV offered the following information on the status of our Reserves: estimated at \$78,000 in April 2008, revised to \$98,000 in October 2008, they are now at \$220,000. This is mostly due to the fact that there the school is not paying interest on any loan as originally budgeted.
- Budget Work (see the three budget handouts): the revised 2008/2009 budget and the proposed 2009/2010 budget will be presented to the Board at its April meeting for a vote.
- School Construction Financing:
 - BIM promises an answer in 2 – 3 weeks, but OV not optimistic on the outcome
 - BOA part of the long-term loan only valid until April 30. Not much hope for another partner, so OV sent a letter to the bank requesting clarity on the terms and conditions of the short-term loan they are offering.
 - Ecobank is still a possibility for the short-term loan
 - OV is planning to request a two-year grace period from OPIC for the long-term loan (interest-only payment for the first two years, then regular payments for the next ten).
- Audit Company for 2007/2008: (see handout)
- 2009/2010 Sadiola Budget & Director Visit:
 - Mine will be in operation until at least 2013
 - The general manager has given a verbal approval to the proposed budget and to a new agreement between the school and the mine will be signed next September.
- Business Manual: this will be treated as priority as soon as loan issues are resolved
- Large Purchases: see handout (no additional information)

6. Policy committee report (by RD)

(See handouts 'Policy Committee Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2009 and RD presented the work of the Policy Committee, namely:

- Section 4 of the Policy Manual (see handout 'Section 4 Revision Proposal'): no dramatic policy changes made. The revision was put to the vote and was approved by ALL the Board members.
- Confidential Student Records (see handout 'Proposal on Confidential Student Records'): this new policy generated an animated discussion on whether or not the school should actually keep a copy all documents submitted by parents, even after the student has left the school, for legal purposes (defense against an eventual future lawsuit). In the end, a motion was made (by RD) to approve the policy and seconded by OV. Six Board members voted for it and one against.
- Agreement US Embassy – Mali Government: SR informed the Board that the draft document approved by the Policy Committee is being sent back to the Legal Department of the US State Department for translation by one of the official translators. After that, negotiations will begin with the Malian Government. The resulting document (once agreed upon by the Government of Mali,

the US Embassy, and the School Board) will then go back to the US State Department for final approval.

7. General Meeting & Board Elections (by RD)

- The agenda for that meeting will be the same as last year's, except for the Facilities Committee part
- CB suggested coming up with an award/certificate for Gautham for the enormous help he has provided the Board for many years, during critical phases of the construction project. This was approved by everyone present.

8. Director's Evaluation

This process has to be completed by May 1st, according to the Policy Manual. RD proposed a Board meeting on April 16th to evaluate the Director's performance, based on the contents of the forms filled out forms by everyone. The Board chairman will then sum it all up in a letter (formally, the Director's Evaluation) to the Director before April 21st, which is the next regular Board meeting. The evaluation will then be discussed during the April meeting in the presence of the Director.

9. Board Self-Evaluation

RD will email the forms to all, to be filled out and returned by March 31st.

10. Other Business

OV invited all interested Board members to join him during his meetings with various bank officials.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50pm