Nurturing Minds, Inc.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Nurturing Minds Mission: To provide financial and technical assistance to programs that improve access to quality education and life skills for girls in Tanzania, with a particular emphasis on girls who are poor and at-risk of becoming involved in exploitative forms of child labor.

# MINUTES

**May 21, 2015 11:30 AM EDT Conference Call Line**

**On the Call:** Julie Bourgoin, Laura DeDominicis, Tracey Dolan, Chris Hammarskjold, Polly Dolan, Sherri Floros, Lynda Spence, Clarke Blynn, Susan Hannah, Heidi Kane.

1. **Board Vote**
   1. Approval of Minutes from the April 16th Board Meeting – Tracey
      1. A motion by Julie Bourgoin, seconded by Susan Hannah to approve the minutes from the April 16th Board Meeting passed unanimously.
2. **SEGA’s Update from the Field – Polly**
   1. Security
      1. Through a PI that Polly hired, she discovered that a local NGO’s Brazilian volunteers were just robbed with the same MO as our break-in. The police found and placed the suspects in jail, but the suspects were later set free as the volunteers were scared to make an in-person identification. Polly stated that the police never thought to contact SEGA to see if we could identify, but she was able to get photos to see if anyone recognized them. Ellie has agreed to look at the photos.
      2. Polly is still in the process of hiring a security officer. She just received a reasonable quote which she will bring to the SEGA board.
      3. The new fence has helped with the security rotation.
   2. Volunteer Program
      1. Moving forward, SEGA will be handling all volunteers. There was discussion on if the volunteer program should stay NM managed, as it has been a successful program, with the exception of the most recent incident. Polly said that as we move for SEGA to be more independent, this is a step in the right direction. She has looked a similar programs, and the volunteer selection process is all done in-country. Other pros would be liability taken off of NM, and more buy-in for SEGA administrators and teachers. One con would be the initial burden to find a volunteer to oversee the program at SEGA.
   3. Well
      1. We still have not drilled, Polly has talked to the driller several times. He did not manage to come to Morogoro this week. He told Polly he thought it would be better to wait until the rains were finished, but Polly thinks he has been busy. Sending a draft contract before next week.
   4. Deputy Director Search & Polly’s Changing Role
      1. We have passed the deadline of getting all the CV’s, Polly is passing them to the 2 SEGA board members who are on the committee. Each will make a separate short list and come together to see who they want to interview with a deadline of June 15th. Polly said that the majority of applicants were education focused, with only a few worth interviewing.
   5. Poultry & Volunteer House
      1. The volunteer house is complete, leaving SEGA with 22 buildings now on campus. Poultry had a slight loss in April as compared to Jan/Feb/March where we made a profit. We hope that in May we will turn a profit again. One issue has been the market price of the eggs, as well as low production due to disease. SEGA hopes to have a new batch of higher quality chickens bought from Kenya within a month.
3. **Construction Update – Clarke**
   1. The volunteer house is now completed and will need furniture. Polly said that SEGA over ordered some furniture 2 years ago, so we won’t spend as much as we thought. But the furniture still needing to be purchase is not in the budget. We have been told by ASHA that we can reallocate based on our needs as long as we spell it out for them. The fence and small house for a milling machine are now finished.
4. **Review of Financials – Sherri**
   1. April Financials
      1. Donations – set a high bar for ourselves, 2015 projections vs actual. $47,500 raised to date in May. High goal of $399,000 to raise in the first half of the year. Still have about $200,000 we would like to raise before the end of June. We will be having an online matching campaign, and Kendall will be hosting an event in June. If we don’t make it up completely by the end of June we will have to do a bigger push in the 2nd half of the year. It was mentioned that we have been doing a lot of great fundraising, and to remember that we set the bar high.
      2. Sherley and Marion will use their annual giving as a match for an online campaign. We will be recreating the style campaign as we have done in the past with Global Giving. Communications will be sent to all of the email addresses on file.
   2. Audit (Developing Audit Committee)
      1. Finance committee had a call this morning with the auditor. We did get a clean opinion on our financials and we had to do an OMB-133 audit because of our ASHA threshold, also got a clean opinion on that. We have a few items left but we are done. We will also need to develop an audit committee which has 2 independent volunteers.
5. **Fundraising Update - Laura**
   1. San Francisco Trip
      1. Laura spent a week in the San Francisco area. April Kelly and Kendall hosted a party in Mill Valley. Heidi Kane hosted a party with a NM supporter Angela McManus, and Lynda Spence hosted a luncheon. There was a lot of great energy and enthusiasm between all 3 of the events, including about $7,500 in donations.
      2. While in the area, Laura also met with foundations. The first was the Peery foundation, which was not a good fit as they are interested in scale. She also met with Global Partners for Development. They were interested and want to visit the school. Funding from them would have the caveat that the project needs to have a connection with the community as a whole vs just the school.
      3. Finally, Laura met with John freeman, an individual donor who has given to us in the past and has recently set up a family foundation. Laura will touch base with him in a few months when his foundation is more established.
6. **SEGA Study Aboard Update – Laura**
   1. Based on the success of Nusura’s trip last year, we will be having 2 students visit this year during the month of November. Pledges for the funding of the program, as well as host families have already been secured in the Newton area. The students will go to the International House in downtown Boston and study in the mornings. Criteria for choosing the students will be decided at SEGA.
7. **Ester Mzena Update - Polly**
   1. Ester Mzena, a form I student has developed a tumor within the last 2 weeks. Polly has sent her to Dar with her mother. The tumor has grown at a rapid rate and is protruding through the eye. She has been diagnosed with a type of childhood cancer, which if caught early, the prognosis can be fairly good. Polly is working to secure documents to get Ester to India for treatment.
   2. Discussion was had about how NM can support her emergency medical costs. This included discussion about personal contributions from the board, or crowdfunding options. It was also mentioned that moving forward we should have a contingency line item built into the budget for emergency medical situations. This will help so we do not have to keep going back to our donors if the situation would occur again. The development committee will continue the discussion offline about how NM can raise the additional funds.
   3. Approval for Polly to analyze her budget to see if she can pull from line items to pay for the $6,000 treatment, and provide NM with a detailed breakdown of the costs, with a caveat that NM does everything they can to make up the additional funds.
      1. A motion by Sherri Floros, seconded by Lynda Spence to approve Polly to look into her budget to cover the treatment was passed unanimously.
   4. *\*Update\* as of the end of May, the Nurturing Minds board have raised $7,000 to support Ester’s emergency medical costs via a GoFundMe page.*