

MCHE Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2021

10am to Noon - Virtual

Members Present: Michele Anderson, Scott Durham, Nadine Hall, Anne-Lise Halvorsen, Dave Johnson, Brenda Mayes, Jim McConnell, Nick Orlowski, Jana Pisani, Brianne Pitts, Tamara Shreiner, Bill Wareen, David Zwart

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Scott made his **Secretary's Report** by asking for approval of the June 19, 2021 and September 11, 2021 meeting minutes. He mentioned that we have had 174 unique visits to our website in the last 30 days and 585 visits the last 90 days. He reported the top two pages on our site have been the Senate Youth Program and the Online Learning Resources page. Finally, he said that about 1/3 of our visitors come from Google and another 1/3 come from a direct link which he suggested that this is indicative of the number of people who read and use our E-Notes. That motion was made by Jim and seconded by Jana. The motion passed unanimously.

David Zwart gave his **Treasurer's Report**. We have \$23,446.75 in our bank account which is a \$10 increase from last meeting. He reported that we have \$76.58 in our PayPal account from memberships which is partly represented of our 25 dues paying members. The only expense recently was the \$20 fee for Michigan Non-profit registration and we are waiting on the invoice for the Michigan Historical Commission to pay our \$1000 sponsorship of their conference that was previously approved by the Board. Jim made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and that motion was seconded by Nick. The motion was approved unanimously.

Nick said we will be able to announce our **Senate Youth Program** winners on Monday. We had 8 outstanding finalists with 2 delegates and 2 alternates. Nick proposed using the \$1000 we receive from the Hearst Foundation to go to the other 6 finalists that won't go Washington Week. This will mean \$300 to our alternates and \$100 to each of the other four finalists. The motion was seconded by Jim and passed unanimously.

Nick mentioned that we should think of ways to include more non-metro Detroit applicants next year.

Anne-Lise thanked Nick for coordinated all the interviews and applications for the USSYP. And said that the interviews were really hopeful and positive to think about. Nick too thanked Anne-Lise, Nadine, and Scott for being part of that process.

Michele reported from the **Nominating Committee**. She said the next steps will be to ensure that everyone is still active and a member and we will send out final ballot by the end of May. She asked if anyone wants to be on the Nominating Committee to let her know.

Nick asked if there were any openings on the Board, Michele replied that she didn't think so. But they will work to see if everyone currently on the Board wants to return.

Dave said the **E-Notes** seem to be going very well. Dick gets the template going and the writers like Nadine are putting in great content. Things seem to have settled down and Dave thanked everyone for doing the hard work.

Nick said he had talked with a loyal E-Notes reader and might want to help provide content. He will connect him to Dave.

Jim said that we need to do a better job of covering our own stuff and that he gets a lot of emails about interesting content. Maybe this new person could be the point of contact for Jim to send potential additional content too. Nick will include Jim on the introduction email and Dave said he too would welcome Jim's email suggestions. Nadine too said she doesn't mind curating content and Brenda too said she is willing to do that work.

Jim said that the **Re-Districting Commission** is a great way to include history, citizenship, geography and other aspects of social studies. Jim gave a brief history of Re-Districting Commission. Now the Commission has agreed on three maps for Congress, three maps for MI State Senate, and three maps for MI House of Representatives plus individual maps. There have been public hearings around these options. They met in November and picked the three best maps for each level plus two individual maps. They have had recent hearings and more schedule. Dec. 28-30 will be their final decision. They must pick one that has gone through public hearing. If they make any changes, they must again go through the 45-day public hearing process. They have to attempt to maintain communities of interest while following all laws and procedures at the federal level. They also must maintain political fairness in each district. He suggested every student should watch at least an hour of these proceedings. He said some areas are complaining but that the entire process seems to be working in the intentional ways in which it was designed.

Nick said he had linked the **Mt. Vernon** website in the agenda and since there was a concern about the reflection question, if members could take a minute to look at that question and offer suggestions before our next meeting, he then can take that to the Mt. Vernon people to make sure we are all on the same page.

Jim said we have a strong continued connection with Mt. Vernon and that we continue to promote them through the E-Notes. Nick mentioned that they also have shown an interest in our McConnell and Gilder-Lehrman winners as possible summer fellows.

Nick said that **NCHE** is doing a pretty comprehensive series on rural social studies and we got SCHECH approval for this. In other words, any teacher who participates in this series, they can get MCHE SCHECH credits. NCHE is working with the Right Question organization in Boston on this and that group (Right Question) offers additional training that we might be able to offer SCHECHs for. Nick will let Scott know once those details are developed to post on the website.

We do have an on-going relationship with Gilder-Lehrman too that allows teachers receive SCECH credit for their professional development.

Nick suggested that if there any other organizations or events, we can also offer SCECH credit for those events and organizations.

Tammy said following the presidential election and the storming of the Capitol, people at Grand Valley have put together a Civics Learning network. They are pulling together resources but also would like to put together a conference on Civics Learning for teaching. While they know there are extra-curricular activities (Project Citizen, Mock trials, etc.) there are not a lot of coaches to help do this. The **Michigan Center for Civics Education** have some resources that help bring this about and get these programs started in schools in Michigan. This might be a way to partner with MCCE for a conference but the plans are on-going. Tammy will email the Board as details emerge.

Nick said there is a way to set up multiple Zoom sessions on a website that Zoom kind of builds for you. This might be an option for us to do because the prices have reduced considerably. Nick suggested a motion perhaps for MCHC to set up a Zoom account and use our infrastructure that way. Tammy said they are thinking about using perhaps the downtown campus of Grand Valley to also take advantage of the Ford Museum.

Jim mentioned that MCSS does their Civics Olympiad and we do (mostly Sean) History Day programs also include civic literacy. These could part of this as well.

The other opportunity Tammy offered deals with OER project. We offered SCECH professional development that Tammy and Nick led last year using the OER video. They wanted us to offer a larger spring conference with more sessions in 2021. They asking us to do it again and are offering \$2,000.00 to our organization to host and organize this conference. They seem to want to move quickly on that. Tammy suggested we could accept the funds and offer honoraria for speakers and to buy the Zoom platform Nick talked about above. Any unused funds would be put into our general fund.

Jim made a motion to put on this spring conference and accept these funds as outlined by Tammy. Brenda seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The last agenda Nick brought up was a reminder of the **upcoming meeting dates** – February 26, 2022 which will be virtual and that our June 4, 2022 which hopefully will be in person at River Raisin Battlefield.

Jim mentioned the Michigan Department of Education has a new Social Studies Coordinator and wondered what relationship we have with them. Nick will be meeting with him in weeks to come. Nick will invite him to our next meeting to introduce himself and further developing that

relationship. Nick suggested we might offer an open agenda spot in the future for the new Coordinator.

Nick asked for any new business, Michele asked from those that work in schools how teachers are reacting to the Oxford shooting. She said her student teachers are concerned and even re-considering going into education. Brenda said in elementary they don't usually bring it up unless students bring it up. She said there is a lot of sadness and parents seem anxious. Nick said that several of his schools closed this week, some with credible threats and attendance concerns. He said the stress is real and perhaps we should look at supports beyond days off, looking at mental health supports. Nadine mentioned that they talked with their students. At the middle school, there was a lighter take on it. She said that their neighboring school district in Ann Arbor closed so that resulted in greater pressure to close her schools, questioning how much they care about their schools. She said this might discourage more away from teaching careers and even early retirements. Michele said that when it initially occurred that perhaps we should close all schools to re-assess instead of schools here and there closings.

Nick suggested we put something in the January E-Notes we address this issue in some way, highlighting resources of school safety. Nadine added that after they talked to the high school kids, a student knew they were going to have an active shooter drill and surfaced concerns by students of color of having armed police walking through the halls. She said this kind of caught the adults off guard and is something for us to think about.

Tammy added that there are organizations out there helping to work on the problem and to consider joining them in their work.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Durham
Secretary