

the Ecology Learning Center

Board Agenda

October 15, 2025

5:30p.m.-7:30p.m.

In attendance: Josh Kercksmar, Tia Poulin, Leza Packard, Malcolm Campbell, Randy Fox, Margaret Micolichek

Mission Moment: Ouda Baxter, Clifford Arts and Student Center Co-Director

Ouda's class is focusing on going out to the dye garden and harvesting. They are doing a project next week of a plant of their choice. They will make a fire outside by the lodge and make dyes and then use the fabric for a future project. It is a wonderful opportunity for a hands-on experience.

Consent Agenda:

- Minutes: [9/17 Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- Executive Director's Report (see [10.15.25 Board Meeting Director's Report](#))
- Governance Committee (see [09/24/2025 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes](#) , [08/27/2025 Governance Committee Meeting Agenda](#))
- September Treasury Report (see [Finance Committee Report to the Board 25.10.08](#))

Motion to accept the consent agenda by, Randy Fox, seconded by Tia Poulin; Unanimous

Board Membership

- Discussion and vote on Ken Hahn's board status after absences from scheduled meetings since this summer.
 - Board Chair attempted to contact Ken
 - Board Secretary attempted to contact Ken via email on 9.18.2025
 - All attempts have been unsuccessful

Motion to terminate Ken Hahn from the ELC Board of Directors due to consecutive absences and lack of response to attempts to contact. By Josh Kercksmar, seconded by Randy Fox; Unanimous

Financial Strategies & Discussion:

- [September treasury report](#)
 - 3 of 4 metrics were acceptable. The one unacceptable category was due to the income being \$5,000 less than what was spent in September.
 - The finance committee feels comfortable with the report due to the normal flow of the year.
 - Cash on hand is acceptable.
 - The official student count for the state was 131 on October 1. This will be good for us financially in the future.
 - Enrollment and related budget are in a good place based on the 120 students budgeted for this year and 124 budgeted for next year.
 - Opportunity to purchase a 12 person van. \$7000 for the van and possibly some rust repair. The mechanic will survey it on 10/20/25.
 - The van is not in this year's budget but it is in next year's. The finance committee believes that this is a good purchase so far and we should consider completing the purchase.
 - Discussion about the importance of resilience, van repairs, family and student impact, attendance impact.

- Will improve the ability to do work and wellness Wednesday.
 - Group feels like the benefits outweigh the financial risk
 - We have cash on hand to purchase it, there will not need to be a loan.
 - Contact donors
- Monthly Focus: Business Partnerships. Brainstorm possibilities. See [Business Partnerships document](#).
 - Art & Culture
 - Farm Food Sustainability
 - Education, Apprenticeship, Workshops
 - Local Business Marketing

Discussion that the fostering of partnership relationships should be the responsibility of Cliff Leadership and Board members can make connections or recommendations or ideas.

Apprenticeship: Lowes possible business partner. Malcolm contacted Lowe's former employee in North Carolina where either corporate office is. who was in charge of awarding educational grants. Advised to invite the Manager, Building Supply Manager and Tools Manager to visit the school. Connect the ask to skilled workforce development. Also include that there are other buy-in or in-kind contributions.

Leza shared local hardware/lumber organizations that have committed to donating.

Possible partnership opportunity with Edwards Brothers, New Balance, LL Bean, Johnny's Selected Seeds, Poland Springs, Lake St. George Brewery.

Initiatives that need funding: Cliff, Yurt (\$50,000), Sprinklers (\$30,000)- not possible through business partnership.

Wish list: An electric van- A partnership with Darlings, Quirk, Central Maine Motors, Charlies, LL Beans for the purchase of their replacement electric van.

Partnership with the Strand theater in Rockland to discuss their strategy to improve their standings. The Waterville Opera House could also be an option for partnership. This can start with mentorship and lead to a collaboration of local theaters.

- Action Items:
 - Malcolm will send Leza the local Lowes manager's contact info and she will reach out.
 - Margaret will look into who we contact at LL Bean about their vehicles/ outdoor adventures. "Be an Outsider".
 - Donyse will contact Johnny's Selected Seeds for a business partnership for program sponsors at the Cliff. She will also contact Stonetree Farm and Cidery.
 - Carol McGovern former board member owns and possible partnership for the Cliff.
- See [Strategic Plan Narrative](#) and [Strategic Plan Spreadsheet](#).

Student Representative:

- Discussion on including two non-voting student representatives on board
- Board feels that they should not have voting power or be part of Executive Sessions
- Alec has a couple of students that might be interested when it was discussed in class
- Process for vetting and selecting- Make it similar to the regular board member vetting process.
- Students think:
 - 2 students
 - Sophomore-senior
 - Returning students
 - Not from the same grade
 - Submit an essay/application explaining why they want to apply
 - This process would be done through student government, The board chair and Leza will present the two selected to the board to vote in.
- Alec will begin the process.

Executive Director Update:

- Focused on enrollment. Oct 1st count of 131
- Discussed the intent to enroll vs enrollment differences
- Increased to 6 counties with students enrolled
- Discussed the relationship with Mt View and how it has improved and hope that it continues to go in that direction. Possibly by connecting for academic development. Reaching our cap will reduce the perceived threat as well as ELC diversifying where students are coming from and not just “poaching” from Mt View.
- Unenrolled- 2 students, 1 returned to homeschooling, 1 was a family decision based on fit. Both were returning students.
- Privacy & Protected information- being aware of what is linked in meeting minutes and agendas.

Motion to enter Executive Session for Board Matter under 1 MRSA 405.6A by Tia Poulin, Seconded by Randy Fox; Unanimous 7:12pm

Motion to exit Executive Session by Tia Poulin, Seconded Randy FOx by; Unanimous 7:33pm

Motion to review Cliff progress quarterly and at the end of the fiscal year review the plan and execution for FY26 by Tia Poulin, seconded by Randy Fox; unanimously

Wrap-up:

**Motion to adjourn by Randy Fox, seconded by Malcolm Campbell; Unanimous
Adjourned: 7:35 pm**