



Verdala
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Meeting of the Board of Directors

14 November 2022 - 17:16PM

In person

OPEN SESSION

Present:

<i>David Nyheim - BCH</i>	<i>The Chair</i>
<i>Ben Brown - BBR</i>	<i>Parent Director</i>
<i>Dr. Monika Wohlfeld - MWO</i>	<i>Parent Director (co-opted non-voting)</i>
<i>Totty Aris – HOS</i>	<i>Head of School (non-voting)</i>
<i>Ivan Camilleri - FC</i>	<i>Financial Controller (non-voting)</i>
<i>Richard Price - RPR</i>	<i>Staff Director</i>
<i>Daniel Shrewsbury - DSH</i>	<i>Staff Director</i>

<i>Apologies: Nick Borg - NBO</i>	<i>Parent Director</i>
<i>Paolo Catalfamo - PCA</i>	<i>Parent Director</i>
<i>Anthony Sammut- ASA</i>	<i>Board Director, Maltese Government Rep</i>
<i>Tim Cassel - TCA</i>	<i>Board Director, US Embassy Representative</i>

Guest: David Miles – DMI - Director of IT Integration

Observers: John Christmas, Elena Malanova, Devi Leiper O'Malley

Note to observers: The session cannot be recorded by observers for GDPR reasons. However, the call will be recorded for minute-taking purposes and then deleted once minutes are confirmed. Board members who have a conflict of interest should flag it now.

1. Approval of Open Minutes, 24th October, 2022

Open Minutes Approved by e-vote - **Approved**

2. Matters Arising – Action points

1.To clarify the date and wording of fee deadlines on 2.11 of the Finance Policy,
Completed

2. FCO to look into more environmentally friendly options and the cost of leasing or renting a hybrid vehicle. FCO to share his findings with the Board. **Completed and to be discussed in decision items.**

3. Information Items

1. Head of School Report

HoS highlighted points on the Head of School Report **Appx. 1**

1. We are now at full capacity with 545 students
2. VIS was runner-up for the Malta Business Inclusivity Award

2. Good news to report

New Build - Contractors couldn't continue digging until Enemalta removed cables. The build has been delayed for a month but should start again next week.

4. Decision Items

1. Van purchase or leasing options

The Finance Committee looked at 4 different leasing companies quotes. The cheapest one had no vans available. The next viable option was 17k a year. Buying a new van is very costly and a hybrid van is 47K with a delivery time of 9 to 12 months, and second hand hybrids are non-existent. The Finance Committee is recommending buying a second-hand van for 25K with a 3rd party to assess the road worthiness.

Motion - To buy a secondhand van for 25k.

Proposed - BBR

Seconded - DSH

Vote - Unanimous

2. Proposed amendment to B2 Finance Master Policy November 14 2022

2.11 School Fees

The total fee, as approved by the Board of Directors will be split into two parts:

- (a) The Tuition fee and
- (b) The Contribution toward Capital Projects, as advised by the Finance Committee.

School fees are invoiced twice a year as follows:

In July, tuition fees covering Semester 1: September to January and capital projects contribution (payable by 31 August)

In December / January tuition fees covering Semester 2: February to August (payable by 31 January)

Students joining the School mid-year will be required to pay the registration, tuition fees and total Capital contribution in full.

Motion - Amendment to B2 Finance Master Policy November 14 2022

Proposed - BBR

Seconded - DSH

Vote - Unanimous

5. Discussion Items

1. IT Budget 5-year plan (20 mins) Appx. 2

David Miles (Director of IT Integration) presented a 5-year plan that explains the rationale for budget requests over the next 5 years.

The Chair reminded the Board that it has committed to boost ICT investment to better offer our students the capability and advantages that come with ICT. DMI pointed out that the way we structure that investment needs to be reconceived and to centralize it into a specific IT expenditure budget.

DMI told the Board that it needs to significantly up the proportion of the school's finances that is spent on IT.

DSH asked whether the incoming VIS DIRIT has any information or guidance on how we use the money we have more effectively? DMI informed the Board that he had already spoken to the incoming VIS DIRIT and after reviewing in detail he advised that we actually need to increase the figures and the reasons why.

DSH asked whether we could use Second hand Ipads especially for the younger students. DMI explained that this is not ideal as Second hand ones could be from different generations and different operating systems. It would cause inconsistencies and be difficult for the IT

team to manage. We have looked into leasing but this isn't happening so much in Malta. There is a possibility that companies are leasing on an international level, for example in Italy, possibly might be able to operate here in Malta. Some International schools outsource their whole IT Network infrastructure. For now, this is not on our radar and it would be for the incoming VIS Dirit to look into.

BBR asked why I pads, as the cost is 40% more than a windows device ?

DMI explained that when you research what is on offer and what experience teachers have, it is with the I Pad devices. There is a lot of good educational stuff on the I Pad. They do cost more but they last longer than other devices.

BBR wasn't clear on how an early years child would benefit from an I pad when they need to learn other skills and shouldn't a child leaving school be knowledgeable in many systems and not just IOS?

DMI noted that we are presenting the ideas and not what we are going to do. We need to speak to the ES Principal in depth to see to what extent the staff see technology and its use across the whole of Elementary School.

The Chair summarized by saying that IT is a priority and what we want to invest in as a school. What would be useful in terms of financial planning would to say what is the gold standard and would look like in terms of percentage of budget and then what is the silver standard and what are the pros and cons and what are the options we need to consider in relation to those standards

HoS explained that the presentation is to show what the possibilities are. If we do not increase our budget we are going to end up behind the local schools, let alone the international schools. The next budget discussions need to be mindful of this presentation.

Action: DMI to work with the Finance Committee to give help with the breakdown of the IT budget .

2. Eco Code

DSH - The VIS Eco Committee sent out a VIS Green Flag 'Eco Code' - collaborative survey to the Staff, students and the Board with 87 responses . The data received validated points we have already raised with the responders agreeing with the sub categories and what should be added to the Eco Code. The responders also added some suggestions and the Eco Committee

will meet to put the ideas together and come up with a proposal code that will be presented to the Board.

Action: DSH to share with the Board the proposal of the Eco Code.

6. Consent Agenda

None

7. Information Items

7.2 Committee Reports

- **Executive Committee**

Nothing to report

- **Governance Committee**

Preparing for the 1st Statutes Revision Part 2 Community Meeting

- **Finance Committee**

1. **Renting of premises for storage.** NBO to meet with the Maintenance Manager and FCO to assess areas in the school that we could repurpose.
2. **Sub Station Meter Room Electrical works.** 2 companies in the running Cabling Megaline and MPI. Even though MPI is cheaper it is about the quality of work. The Engineer will assess and report back.
3. **Substation Ownership.** As a legal requirement VIS has to transfer ownership back to Enemalta at a cost of a few thousand Euro
4. **Tender for AC Works.** 2 companies in the running, Sound machine and Titan Cassar. Our original budget was 130k but the quotes are around 180K. The Finance Committee will look deeper into it and then make a recommendation to the Board in December.

Action: The Finance Committee to send their recommendations on the AC works tender.

- **Facilities Task Force**

No meeting. However, trenching for the access to the Elementary School was done on time with no disruptions to Elementary School's working day.

- **GDPR**

FCO - In the process of working with our lawyers to create a new Data Protection Agreement for our suppliers outside of the EU. Once this is ready the FCO will send a copy to the Board.

Action: FCO to share with the Board the new Data Protection Agreement.

- **HR Task force**

Nothing to report

8. Other Matters

BBR suggested to the Board that parents get more training on Schools buddy.

Action points:

1. DMI to work with the Finance Committee to give a breakdown of the budget.
2. DSH to share with the Board the proposal of the Eco Code.
- 3 The Finance Committee to send their recommendations on the AC works tender.
4. FCO to share with the Board the new Data Protection Agreement.

Meeting end: 17:58