

<p style="text-align: center;">Vientiane international School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Annual General Meeting September 17, 2014</p>
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The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm.

Forty-seven people were in attendance, including Board members.

1. **Introduction** by Bobby Allen, Chair, Board of Trustees.

A. Declares the final minutes for voting on the two open Board of Trustees places. A quorum has already been achieved for this process to be official. Introduces the candidates and recognizes the contribution of outgoing Board Members, Grace Gnaegi and Jessica Oyugi.

B. Approval of last year's AGM minutes. Passed by show of hands.

2. **Director's report**, Greg Smith.

A. Praise for number of parents attending.

B. Reviews highlights of the report, which is available online. Identifies three themes:

Development: Number of students, national origin of students, IBDP results, standardized test results measured against OECD countries. Discussion of income (tuition vs. overall), expenditure, development of facilities.

Technology: Implementation of anywhere/anytime access to technology with 1:1 laptop from grade 5 and iPads plus netbooks in grade 4 and below. Addition of SMARTboards to all secondary classrooms.

Sustainability: Strategic Plan to be financially sound, characterized by being diverse and language-rich, recognizing needs and talents, strong language programmes, a community of learners, enriched curricular choices, comprehensive co-curricular activities.

3. **Results of election.** Felicity Doudou-Hagen and Orathai Hofmann gained the most votes and are duly elected as new Board Members.

<p style="text-align: center;">Question and Answer Session</p>

Q1. How are Board of Trustees positions decided?

A. The Board picks the four officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) at its first meeting following the AGM. Places are taken voluntarily.

Q2. How will the language and Mother Tongue programmes be supported by funding and implemented? Can timetables be structured so that a student participating in a Mother Tongue programme will also be able to study other languages?

A. Overview of theory behind planning provided. Process will continue to evolve over coming years, and has not been decided. Changes in policy and procedures may be needed to address challenges of languages within the IB context. This would happen through the Strategic Planning process. The school will look at how other schools cope with the issue, and what are the needs of the school community with regards to Mother Tongue, EAL and language programme. Solutions may involve technology, co-curricular programme and changes to the curriculum.

Q3. Need to clarify that the Strategic Planning Process allows for further evolution and parental participation is crucial. Changes can still be made, and that the school is not stuck with one approach.

- A. The Strategic Direction (following the formulation of the Strategic Plan) is where the real work now starts in terms of finding what the community wants. Action plans for each Direction to be developed with expert input through this year. Solutions and recommendations for action are the next phase of planning. The Strategic Direction is a framework for discussion, not a dictation of the steps to be taken. Director states that interested and experienced people need to come forward from the community to help drive this process and help to develop action plans.
- B. Considerations on the process going forward will include:
- a. Further invitation to the community to be involved
 - b. Possible direct contact to expertise within the community
 - c. Research into solutions being used in other locations
 - d. Exploration of such ideas as additional languages

Q4. Languages need not be such a big issue, but one requiring a practical approach. Is it possible for the school to schedule language lessons so students can take sufficient languages to match the requirements of their home countries?

A. There are many practical considerations for scheduling and staffing of language programme, and the answer is not as easy as it seems. Considerations include:

- Impact of additional funds for staffing on other areas of the school
- Different requirements from various home countries
- Subsidy or funding or facilitation?
- Requirements of IB for time allocations to subject areas
- Potential use of alternative delivery
- After regular school hours potential

Q5. There are many instances where international schools offer three languages, so there is a need to research how they accomplish this. Also, communication from the school to parents on the issue of languages needs to be improved.

A. Chair agrees that there needs to be improved communication effort to avoid confusion.

Q6. Could there be a return to the time when there was a dedicated Board communications committee to fill gaps in communication? It should be possible for parents to get a direct answer to questions from the Board. There is a perception that there is an active effort to prevent proper communication.

A. Chair replies there is already a clear process for communication, and does not share perception of an effort to prevent clear communication. Recommendations from the committee have been implemented.

Q7. The timeline for change is very long. Can some issues be isolated and acted upon quickly?

A. When an issue that is important to the school is brought up, the management and Board act upon it. The Board does pay attention to the issues but it is not always possible for the Board to make decisions alone.

Q8. It would be useful to see a more detailed budget in the Annual Report document.

A. The full budget can be found online on the school website.

Q9. Nobody seems satisfied with the current situation regarding access to and use of the pool. For example, it seems to be unused for significant periods, teachers are allowed to use the pool unsupervised while parents are not, a lack of sufficient communication and transparency. The school does not seem to be using the help on offer from members of the community

A. Administration will be reviewing this subject and looking for new ways to address the issue and maximize pool use and family access. The present arrangement for family access has not worked well enough and so a new approach is required.

Q10. Are there any specific plans / priorities for facilities improvements?

A. There are no immediate plans for large-scale development, but a lot of smaller issues will be addressed. Each year the management creates a list of needs that require Board approval before money is spent.

Q11. Is it possible to make the capital fee a one-time, rather than annual payment?

A. This is the last year for the increases to the capital fee planned and agreed in 2009, so now is the time to look at the way it is charged. Issues to be taken into consideration include the fact that the school needs to build up a reserve fund.

Q12. What is the school situation with regard to outstanding debt and the timescale for repayment?

A. The school took out a \$2 million over 10 years at a very favourable fixed rate, and is now in the second year of repayment.

Q13. Is it possible to complement the Board election process by including a short presentation / introduction by each candidate shortly before the vote? At the moment it is not easy for new parents and candidates who are not yet well known around the school.

A. This is something that can be looked at. The process must be fair and efficient, without being 'political'.

It is important to remember that trustees are elected to act in the best interests of the whole school, rather than on behalf of a particular constituency within the school community.

The meeting was concluded at 8:30