

implement schooling at both campuses. They are looking into a system within the HVAC to filter out and kill any germs while pushing out clean air. They are discussing challenges with social distancing and mask wearing. MA is looking at how these plans fit with its philosophy that focuses on in-person, teacher to student education. The group is also discussing what to do if the governor needs to close schools for an extended

time and how to ensure things run more smoothly. They are discussing whether closures could be done on a regional or district basis rather than statewide.

Herrera noted there are still funding challenges that range from a 5% to a 15% decrease. There is talk of charter-specific funding being cut. MA is working with the 10% decreased budget passed by the board at the previous meeting and ensuring that it has 22 students per class before hiring new teachers. MA has added a fifth-grade class and looks likely to add another third- and fourth-grade classes. Their current rules allow 24 students per class, but that number can be exceeded by two with board approval. She cautioned that MA should be careful as it goes into a strict budget year. MA is unable to add hoped-for support positions but is considering having existing staff intern in positions as they gain experience.

Increased marketing

President Mark McWilliams said he was thrilled to hear that MA has growth in third through fifth grade and said they had been hoping and planning to add classes nine months ago.

Amy Torrance, communication and marketing specialist for MA, reported that social media marketing in January and February drove traffic to the website but then lost communication after that. MA started looking at how to convert website visits to a more meaningful conversion and found a New York company called Enrollhand to help them with lead captures. MA provided information for Enrollhand to put together a promotional video. The company will have access to certain web pages and be able to chat directly with people who land on those pages. Their employees will be trained on what to say or ask about grade school children and will pass the leads onto Herrera or the deans, etc. This will provide engagement and the investment is small compared with the hoped-for return.

McWilliams noted that the bond holder on the new building requires a marketing program and that board members and principals will be asked to help handle the leads that come in. Torrance noted that this is important since interested parties cannot easily come and tour the buildings right now. McWilliams said marketing can continue into October, unlike other schools, and said they are targeting D20, Colorado Springs, and Douglas County.

Highlights

The following items were highlighted at the board meeting:

- President Mark McWilliams reported that Cornella Brothers have been hired to work on the road, two roundabouts and the interchanges at the new campus. Curbs, gutters, and asphalt are to be finished by mid-July.
- McWilliams and Herrera were on a call with the county to discuss the Highway 105 project which is intended to improve traffic flow in front of the current building by prohibiting left turns into the school from Highway 105 and installing a roundabout on Knollwood.
- MA is planning another fundraiser to continue funding their school resource officer.
- Board member Chris Dole reported that the School Accountability and Advisory Committee reviewed the end of the year survey and had an increased participation with parents wanting more extracurricular activities and increasing the lunch and recess times.
- Director of Exceptional Student Services (ESS) Jessica Coote recognized the MA Board of Directors for its work in meeting the needs of ESS students after the previous administration changes (when two top officials were ousted) by nominating them for a district Alorum De award, which recognizes people who make a significant difference in the lives of kids with disabilities.
- Board member Melanie Strop presented outgoing board members Mark McWilliams and Mike Molsen with a gift of appreciation, thanking them for their service.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, July 16 at 6 p.m. The MA School Board usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month but moved July's meeting due to the July 4 holiday.

Email board@monumentacademy.net to get a Zoom invitation to the next board meeting and/or to submit comments or ask questions. See <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board> for the latest information.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

Monument Board of Trustees, June 15

Local young marine receives national recognition

By Allison Robenstein

During the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) June 15 meeting, the board recognized a local award recipient. The board gave assurances of its commitment to the Police Department and approved a zoning change for The Village as well as a reenactment of an annexation, to the consternation of one resident. The annual audit submission time to the state was extended.

Trustee Jamy Unruh was present at the start of the meeting but left midway through.

National Young Marine of the Year Award
YM/Sgt.Maj. Abbigail Waters of Monument was named National Young Marine of the Year for 2020. The nation-

al youth organization began in 1959 and currently includes 264 units around the world. The young marines are encouraged to speak in schools about the dangers of illicit drugs as a way to reduce their use. Mayor Don Wilson, a fellow Marine, provided Waters with several challenge coins. These are typically carried by Marines to show their allegiance to America.

Waters said of the Young Marines program, "I love it with my heart and soul." See photo on the facing page.


Board pledges support for Police Department

Trustee Mitch LaKind began a discussion of the country's current situation involving calls for defunding the police. LaKind said, "Today the police departments around the country are under a lot of scrutiny because of a few bad apples. And because of these few bad apples federal and state legislatures are finding ways to make it harder for our police."

Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott said, "Thank you to

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