

MITCH  
Charter School  
Board of Directors

Inspiring colorful acts of greatness

6.9.17

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**Administration:**

Melissa Meyer, *Executive Director*  
Shasta Maclean, *Dean of Student Affairs*  
Sandra Ottley, *Director of Curriculum and Instruction*

**Members:**

Donna Capodacqua, *Chair*  
Caitlin Blood, *Secretary*  
Karen Forman, *Treasurer*  
Jason Holland, *Vice Secretary*

Jeff Demland, *Vice Treasurer*  
Jody Blakely  
Brittany Leonard  
Jacqueline Fassett

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Board of Directors' response to Director Holland's requested apology document dated April 3, 2017.

At the March 16, 2017 regular session, a public meeting that was properly noticed, Director Holland raised concerns and questions to the Board with regard to MITCH's budget, and the fact that the school would close the academic year with a deficit. There was nothing unusual about this. Indeed, it is a Director's job to ask questions and act in a fiscally responsible manner.

There was cause for concern when the questioning evolved into a personal attack on our Executive Director, Melissa Meyer. On a couple of occasions, the fact that Holland was making such an attack was raised. His response was, "this is not an attack". Nine out of ten people present at the meeting (including the member of the public in attendance) found it to be an attack, not merely observation or appropriately diligent questioning.

Further the Board forecast and budgeted for the exact amount of the 2016-17 deficit when it voted on the 2016-17 budget at the properly noticed regular meeting on April 21, 2016 (a meeting at which Holland was not in attendance). Therefore, our budget deficit was not "worse than expected" as written in the April 3, 2017 statement.

The agenda for the regular Board meeting of April 16, 2017 included one minute for Holland to apologize to Meyer. The apology was to be for his behavior toward Meyer at the regular meeting on March 16 2017. Once the meeting convened, Holland asked to amend the agenda to allow 15 minutes for his apology. The majority of Directors present passed a motion to grant the request, believing an apology and solutions were forthcoming. There was no apology, only the statement. Some Directors feel like they were misled about the purpose of the request for more time to apologize and experienced it as time for Holland to justify his poor behavior.

As for putting words in Holland's mouth, there was no need and no effort to do so. His behavior spoke for itself. What the Directors found unacceptable were Holland's attacks. We wanted both an apology and to make sure such behavior was not



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repeated. The unacceptable behavior occurred in a public meeting, so it is not unreasonable to expect that accountability for such behavior would also occur in a public meeting.

There are some inaccuracies in the April 3, 2017 statement that need to be addressed. First is that Holland was the only Director not assigned any policies to update at the April 8, 2017 work session at which Directors Capodacqua, Fassett, Forman, Leonard, and Meyer were present. Directors Blood, and Leonard were not assigned any policy updates either as reflected in the notes from the session.

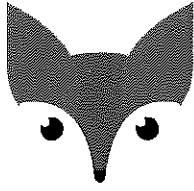
There were no targeted, repeated messages to Holland, nor was there any harassment of him. There were also no accusations. Capodacqua communicated in a phone conversation during the week of March 20, 2017 that the other Directors expected Holland to apologize for his behavior at the next regular session.

Holland's statement says that the Directors were given no budget assumptions. That is false. Treasurer Forman furnished 2017-18 budget assumptions and a final 2017-18 budget proposal that were distributed for Board review prior to the regular session on April 20, 2017.

This is the same process we used in 2016-17, when Directors were given assumptions and larger expenditure buckets for review.

Holland's statement says that the Board was not kept from the budgeting process prior to that year. This is questionable. Directors did see specific line items but budgets prior to 2016-17 were prepared solely by a prior MITCH office staff member and prior Treasurer. The Directors did not have input to the budget, nor did Meyer. They only saw drafts when presented at either a work session or regular session.

The rest of us do not believe we are being kept from any information we need to make responsible decisions. We use a zero-based budget because TTSD, our sponsoring district, requires it.



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We do not have two social media people at MITCH as presented in the April 3, 2017 statement. We do not have an employee whose sole responsibility is social media. We do have a part time hourly employee who helps with social media in addition to other responsibilities.

On April 3, 2017, Holland made a public records request. One of the items requested was the total payments made to this hourly employee for work performed for MITCH for the past two years. The information provided to Holland showed that through March 31, 2017 this person was paid less than \$1,337 for this year, not \$20,000 as noted in the statement.

According to Holland's statement of April 3, 2017, MITCH has "an extremely high admin-to-teaching ratio" and includes positions such as "Director of Ag", "Director of Curriculum", "Principal", "Assistant Principal", "Assistants", "Social Media Director, etc". This is false. MITCH has an Executive Director (Meyer), an Assistant Principal/Dean of Students (Shasta MacLean), a Director of Curriculum and Instruction (Sandra Ottley, who also assumed full time middle school teaching responsibilities mid-year), and an Executive Assistant (Ashley Robinson). Our Ag Coordinator is also our full time PE teacher, Duncan Ketel. Ketel performs ag coordinator duties in addition to his PE duties. We do not have a social media director, but Jenni Grady is our .8 media tech teacher. We do not have other assists, as written in Holland's statement. We do appreciate the volunteers who assist all of our staff!

We find it ironic that as a school whose aim it is to teach the whole child, Holland would suggest that we minimize, or perhaps ignore, emotions. When someone repeatedly attacks us personally, a certain amount of emotion is to be expected in response. That is one reality of the whole person.

There was no "vindictive, coordinated effort with the board chair" to harm or undermine Holland. We at MITCH are about building character and being accountable. Our effort was to hold Holland accountable for behavior that violated MITCH's values, hurt someone's feelings, and put the school at risk by potentially alienating her and causing her to find another job.



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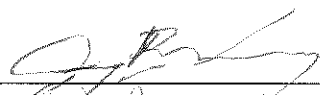
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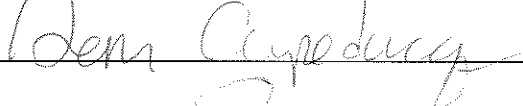
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Given that three MITCH parents joined the Board, and three members of the broader community are considering joining since we asked Holland to be accountable and apologize, we reject the notions that transparency has been “chilled” and the behavior of the other Directors would stifle participation of current and future board members.

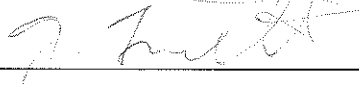
While Holland’s faith in the Board to do its job diminished is, the faith of the other Directors remains strong. We are in an excellent position and poised for a successful future.

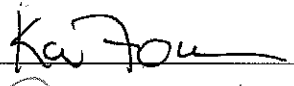
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Donna Capodacqua: 

Jeff Demland: 

Jacqueline Fassett: 

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