I. Call to Order

Debbie called the meeting to order at 11:46 a.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves for the benefit of Susan Barnhill, a longtime OCPS employee who will officially join the Foundation team as of tomorrow, April 6. Twanna is retiring after 13 years of supporting the Foundation, and Susan will be the new administrator for the Teacher Impact Grants program and the annual Fore Our Schools Golf Tournament, among other duties.

II. President’s Report

- Legislative Update:

Scott clarified how the approved state budget for the upcoming year impacts OCPS. The total amount of about $100 per student is fairly narrowly allocated, specifically for meeting new mental health and security mandates after the Parkland shooting. More support for these issues is good, however, there was no proportionate increase in funds, only an increase in requirements. This means that once all legal obligations are met, Florida districts are receiving just .47 unrestricted funds per student; for OCPS, this equals about $100,000 for the entire school system.

Pam added that it was important for the public to understand that even this budgeted money does not come straight to the district(s); it must be obtained by the districts through locally collected taxes and by applying for grants.
This highlights the necessity of the special one mill, which was originally sought due to the state’s decision to roll back the RLE, or required local effort. The one mill was first approved in 2010, with an option for renewal every four years; voters approved it for renewal in 2014, and it would be eligible again this year.

The Orange County School Board will vote on whether to request a renewal of the one mill on Tuesday, April 10, and pending their decision, Scott will provide a more in-depth presentation on this at the board meeting in June.

Debbie asked how this relates, if at all, to the half-mill tax that Dick Batchelor is requesting be added to the ballot; Scott answered that they are not tied to each other, and there are three key differences between the proposals. One, there is not yet a definite plan describing how the “children’s trust” money would be used; two, it has no sunset; and three, if approved, it would represent an actual increase in taxes. The one mill vote would be to renew a tax already in place.

•  Hall of Fame – update:

In preparation for the upcoming Hall of Fame, Scott went to New York over spring break and met with Myrna Weissman, a Columbia University professor who is the widow of Marshall Nirenberg, one of the OCPS Alumni honorees. Dr. Weissman generously donated one of six official copies that exist of Dr. Nirenberg’s handwritten notes on the genetic code chart, the original of which is stored at the National Institute of Science along with his Nobel Prize.

This gift will be properly appraised and insured before being used as a tool for encouraging student interest in STEM subjects; it will be exhibited at schools throughout the district, and accompanied by a video of Dr. Weissman talking about Nirenberg’s work on the genetic code.

III. Consent Agenda

February Board Meeting minutes, February Financials:

Debbie requested a motion to approve the consent agenda items; Eddie moved (seconded by Alan), and motion passed by unanimous consent.

IV. Committee Reports

•  Board Development Committee:

Debbie shared the current thought process of the committee; continuing to emphasize to any prospective or interested members that active participation with any of the committees is a great way to get involved right away. This can help build the Foundation’s “bench” and ensure that we have enthusiastic and committed individuals ready to move onto the board as seats become available.

Scott added that the committee has been working on defining which board seats should be considered permanent ones, tied to specific partners, and on what qualities and skills are currently missing in the board profile.
Also, there has been some discussion of starting an “advisory council” that would periodically hold higher-level meetings. This would create an opportunity to involve prominent local figures and members of the philanthropic community with the Foundation’s activities and direction.

- Finance Committee:

Tom gave an overview of the financial statements from February; revenue was ahead of plan by about $12,000 and expenses exceeded plan by $63,000, although much of this could be explained by timing issues. Operation costs were $27,000 over budget; this was mostly due to 1) the SeaWorld event, which was an unbudgeted expense (as it was unforeseeable) of $15,000, and 2) about $10,000 in operating costs for the Community Outreach programs and needs. Assets are up $600,000 over last year, with only minor losses in February and March despite volatility in the markets, and Tom noted that this can be taken as a sign that the strategy employed by NBC Securities on our behalf is an effective one.

The draft budget is on track; the final version will be brought for approval in June.

The Finance Committee recently asked for a review of two areas that have had no activity in the past couple of years; a fund established for Princeton Elementary ESE efforts, and some board-designated assets. Debi has spoken with the original contact for the Princeton fund, Elizabeth Padilla, who is still in the same role with OCPS. Once the school year ends, they will have more time to discuss how best to move forward.

The committee also continued to work on revisions to the Investment Policy, and developing best practices for accepting large individual gifts so as to protect the Foundation’s mission. Tom also created a separate Donor Gift Commitment Agreement template to act as a guideline in future. The goals are to clean up the existing document and ensure flexibility and clarity going forward.

The committee’s concern regarding how to provide adequate oversight for funds under management, as the number of separate accounts continues to grow, has been resolved by NBC Securities providing a new monthly summary tool.

The board will receive an electronic copy of the revised Investment Policy; any suggestions or changes can be sent to Scott and/or Debi.

- Community Outreach Committee:

Elise shared the committee’s progress on their project to provide added support to 10 schools throughout the 2018-19 school year. The 10 schools have been identified and approved by Area Superintendents, and appointments are being set to meet with the schools’ principals/assistant principals/PIE and ADDitions coordinators/Parent Engagement Liaisons.

Scott added that the next idea the committee wants to pursue is having schools with high success rates adopt or partner with schools (either in close geographic proximity or otherwise) to help them with fundraising, best practices, community connections, etc.
Jose asked if Faith-based Advisory Council connections with the schools was a deciding factor, citing concern that it might narrow the focus too much. Scott explained that it was only looked at during the end-seleciton; it was not a piece of the initial criteria. Debbie also had questions regarding the selection process; the use of the DOE Five Star School Award criteria was explained and while all agreed this was a great approach, it was also emphasized that the methods be reviewed periodically.

- Golf Committee:

Matt explained that the Disney venue and courses are getting close to being finalized as the location for the 2018 Fore Our Schools tournament. For slightly less than the cost of the Grand Cypress in previous years, the tournament would take place on the Palm and Magnolia courses, with the luncheon held in the Shades of Green ballroom. Several of the committee members will accompany Foundation staff on a site visit April 13.

Fundraising is going well: SGM has returned as the title sponsor and Cigna is the chairman sponsor; 36 teams have been sold so far, with 72 being the maximum number of teams; and more than $95,000 has already been received. A drawing for a $1,000 discount encouraged early-bird sign-ups and the winner of the drawing, CORE Construction, has agreed to donate their savings back to the tournament.

There were two suggestions, both having to do with bringing attention to the beneficiaries of the tournament; OCPS students. Susan asked if the silent auction had ever included student artwork, and Pam C. asked if the student golfers could be offered, for a fee, to round out a team.

V. Old Business

Debi reminded everyone of two items: that it was grant application season, and FOCPS should start receiving some funds by the time of the next board meeting; and that Hall of Fame was coming up on May 5 and FOCPS board members are eligible for the reduced ticket rate of $75.

VI. New Business

Debi shared that she, Pam and Scott were in the midst of attending the CFEF Spring Conference in Orlando, and that CFEF is developing a best practices matrix/test, and invited FOCPS to be a pilot. The test is self-scoring, and will not only assist CFEF but also potentially provide insight for FOCPS internally.

Scott added that we are coming up on the 12-month mark for the 18-month strategic plan, and that it will need to be refreshed/extended in the first part of the 2018-19 fiscal year.

Meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.