

This meeting of the Tech Valley Game Space Board of Directors was held on Thursday, 12/08/2022 at 8:04 pm EDT.

The following members of the board were in attendance via teleconference:

Taro Omiya (Chair of the Board)

Jarell Pryor (Acting Secretary for this meeting)

Jamey Stevenson (Executive Director)

Elizabeth McLaren

Tom Carmona

A quorum is present at the start of the meeting.

There is a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The Board approves the Consent Agenda.

First up, Jamey starts to provide an update on the COE grant. He wants to look at some reallocation suggestions with the Board. Mainly concerning these questions: Is our funding on track based on the current budget? How do we spend the extra that we don't have allocated yet?

Actually before we get to that, Elizabeth gives an update on the ongoing Curriculum Development for our teaching with Questar. She confirms that we have what we need for the January curriculum. They are still working on the curriculum for the rest of the school year, but the immediate needs are being met.

Back to the larger budget allocation conversation. Elizabeth also adds that the Nancy Warner contract has recently come through. What's our timeline on spending and delivery of their end? We're expecting there to be some gap in our ability to spend in the new year, but we want to make sure we are prepared for that, and are aiming to only have the gap within the first quarter next year instead of a 6-month gap between grant funding. As far as Nancy Warner goes, we have not made the official call. But Jamey clarifies that it doesn't seem like we have enough time for them to deliver on the work. So there's apprehension to pull the trigger with Nancy Warner. We can always re-assess this next year. Elizabeth adds that it seems like the ball is in our court to proceed, they seem to be ready. And that Elizabeth was operating under the assumption that we were definitely going to proceed with them in Q1. Jamey clarifies that this isn't a final decision, he's just floating this new thought now, to avoid cramming in the work or paying them too early for these deliverables. It's not unprecedented to pay them in advance, but Jamey is hesitant to do that here, as we haven't had the best luck with that route in the past. Jamey shares the revised budget document for the grant spending. To suggest where we should be allocating the funds that we need to spend by the end of the year. How much wiggle room is the Board willing to give? We're not going to have another Board meeting before the end of the year. So can we approve the execution of this budget to the Executive Director and Treasurer to use their best judgment on the final spending? When do we want to pause our practical spending this year, to give enough time to wrap up finances before 2023? The core of the proposal is to remove some of the

Nacy Warner funds and part of the Educational budget. And add those funds to more Equipment and Promotional spending. Would like to switch to more stuff we can purchase quickly and effectively, to improve the physical space and print more promotional materials (business cards etc.) Elizabeth asks what is the confidence we will have the same funding from this grant next year? She's hesitant to potentially burn our bridge with Nacy Warner, if they're our only current lead on pursuing further grant opportunities. Jamey says it is highly likely that we will receive an award from RPI, but the amount varies year to year. He also adds that RPI has been open to us requesting more in the past, if we have firm initiatives that need additional funding. This year is the lowest amount we've ever gotten because of our ask, so the assumption is that we can get at least this much if not more next year. Taro shares the concern that while we do have more information from Vocation Media, Nacy Warner's is our strongest lead on this side of things. He's concerned that we'll lose momentum on this if we pause it now. Jamey restates that there'll definitely be a pause in our funding, so we're going to have some disruption regardless. The conversation re-focuses on what specifically we're intending to re-allocate funds to. Jamey admits that our approach in the past has been rather flexible, and adds that RPI seems to be even more flexible this year in particular, so there's little concern that they'll approve it. As long as the overall amount remains the same, we should be fine from the grant approval standpoint. Equipment is the main suggestion because we can turn around those purchases very quickly, rather than working with contractors or running funded programs. Jamey mentions the intent here is to make the physical space more comfortable to inhabit and sell for potential coworking members. Furniture being the big one, and also storage space, to take advantage of the relatively small new area we have. Jamey asks for more thoughts on the Nacy Warner situation before we make a firm decision on them. Are we willing to pay them ahead of time? Tom raises a point that with Vocation media payment, they were unable to deposit the check initially. So now Tom has signed us up for ACH payments, but that won't be setup and ready to go until Dec 16 or so. Is that too late? Elizabeth agrees that the only possible plan if we go with Nacy Warner is to pay ahead and have them deliver on it in the coming months. She mentions that the current reallocations spending feels a bit more short term, while Nacy Warner would benefit our long term goals. And also agrees that the timing is not ideal at this point. Elizabeth also brings up the question: What is the risk of paying them and not getting what we need? If they don't deliver, how much of a loss is it really? Jamey is somewhat convinced on that point, with the main concern being the communication and follow-through from them. Tom confirms that this will at least be logistically possible, assuming there are no issues with doing this through ACH payments. If we don't get the payment out by Jan 1st, how much of an issue is that with us with RPI? Can we approve at this Board meeting, that the final execution of this funding would be in the hands of the Executive Director and Treasurer? If our deadline is literally Dec 15, we can't work with Nacy Warner even if we wanted to, but if it's later we can move forward with them. Discussion occurs on what exactly we're approving? Jarell asks if our plan is basically: If we can spend after Dec 15, Nacy Warner is a go, if not, we don't move forward with them? Jamey essentially agrees, and that after the discussion with RPI tomorrow, he intends to update the Discord channel before proceeding either way. Motion begins to approve the new reallocated version of the TVGS Budget? 3 Ays, 1 Nay. Motion does pass by majority vote. Now a second motion to confirm that the final execution of the funds would be given to the Executive Director

and Treasurer, should any new info come up that changes our ability for spending. With a cap of \$2500 on flexible spending, potentially with Nancy Warner. Motion to approve that? 4 Ays, 0 Nays. The motion passes.

Next, Jamey gives an update on contract negotiations. Still discussing things with Questar to nail down contracts with them. It seems they have more leeway than what was implied before. So it's possible to have Jamey work with them, but not as a direct employee, having TVGS being the entity that is paid. Also, the curriculum ownership discussion has not had much practical progress. Jamey's latest proposal to them is to just have TVGS own all of the curriculum, and let Questar use it for this year with no extra fees. So now the ball is in their court for finalizing or objecting to that latest draft of the contract. The only other contract negotiations were with Nancy Warner, as we've discussed earlier in the meeting. Elizabeth adds support for getting that contract nailed down with Questar as soon as possible.

Now we move onto Taro's update on Vocation Media's research and recommendations for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) research. He shares this document suggesting that we move to a single integrated donation processor and a better system to track our donors and funding. Jarell leaves for a quick bio break, while Taro goes through an overview of the document. Jarell is back while they're still discussing the Vocation Media document. Jamey just asks for clarification on who put this document together. Taro confirms that it was actually our coordinator who put this document together and not Vocation Media specifically. But it sounds like both Rochelle Toomer and Emily Cote were both in agreement on this document. Tom asks a question to clarify what value a CRM provides to an organization like us? Taro explains that it sounds like they're a better way for us to reach out to past and potential donors to keep track of everyone more reliably. And also keep track of where our funds are coming from, i.e. which campaigns are giving us the best ROI. Taro mentions that Paypal would be a difficult one for us to move away from, but that he thinks Patreon would not be as hard to move those members over. Tom asks if we will be able to manually add user information into CRMs, even if we're not able to move them away from the current system they're using to give us funds? Yes, Taro believes we can add their info manually for future communications, we will just likely not be able to get their funding history prior to this transition. Tom doesn't think the CRM subscription cost seems unfeasible for our general budget allocation. But he does bring up the question if any of the TVCOG conversations will impact our ability to use these services. If TVCOG wants to unify spending/member management, how will that impact our CRM usage? Taro agrees, and mentions that his request today would just be to investigate one of these CRMs, not fully move forward with one. Mainly focusing on donations and contact tracking, without focusing on membership management for now. And that even if we do give that responsibility to TVCOG, we might still use the CRM on our end. Tom is on board with investigating these further and adds that he'd like to be a part of those discussions. Jamey thinks the one part of Patreon that would be difficult to transition from would be the current ability to share Orbit content. In general, we would be transitioning from 3 services (Mailchimp, Patreon, and Paypal) to just 1. What features are we losing from those individual services? Taro asks for any strong preferences on which of these CRMs we want to look into more. Is one of these services jumping out more than others? As we'd like to share those preferences with Rochelle. That is assuming Rochelle

would like to continue as a coordinator in the next term. Jamey feels that she is pretty likely to do so. Little Green Light (LGL) sounds like our first choice, especially since we don't have much preference due to our unfamiliarity with CRM services. Taro confirms again that this first move will just be an investigation, with no intent on spending money for any of these just yet. Perfect, the Board is all good for looking more into LGL specifically. Last thing, Jamey brings up that anytime we do membership transitions, we will lose a bit of membership, which is an important thing to keep in mind here.

Jarell gives a Giving Tuesday update. Meta changing its policies threw a bit of a wrench in things. So we will not know the final donation totals until the end of December. Not as many donations as last year, but we still have time, and a plan to bump the fundraiser once more as the second recurring donations are coming in. Taro adds that his company will be matching his donations. So his donation of \$1000 will be matched, and TVGS can expect \$2000 in total from his end. And Taro adds that Dan's company should be matching things, and we should be seeing an additional donation from that end as well.

On the topic of funding, Jamey mentions that we've had cash flow difficulties in the past. With making our payments to all of our commitments, while we're waiting on the COE funding to come through. We've done it with a Promissory Note in the past, where Jamey temporarily loans TVGS the difference, to make sure we're set. But he would not prefer to do it that way this year, if anyone has alternatives. But it does seem like the only course of action if things don't perfectly line up. Taro adds that he might be able to contribute help if Jamey needs this year.

Next, we skip to discussing the review of 2022 financial targets vs. actuals. Tom confirms that he will likely have that ready for the January meeting, but it will be a little more difficult this year as he will have to be doing the quarterly reviews for this whole year. In future years he plans to wrap up the Quarterly reviews each quarter, so that the annual report will be a much lighter lift moving forward.

Next, we pivot to the SWOT discussion. Taro confirms that Dan still intends to be submitting the documentation to the Discord this month. For all of us to have some async input on directions of TVGS for him to compile and discuss with us before the January board meeting.

Before we end, Taro asks for any additional topics.

Jamey brings up an event this Monday for the New York State Digital Game Development Tax Credit Program that he will be attending. And just wanted to share it for our knowledge, in case anyone had any topics they wanted Jamey to bring up at the event. No further discussion.

Taro mentions that he received a DM about a community member asking him about TVGS' thoughts on return to office. Just to get our vague comfortability with holding another event or two that would be in-person. We don't dive deep into it, but it sounds like a good topic to mention in the SWOT documentation.

Last topic, Jamey brings up that he's still looking for people for the final Lift Off panel. Says that it will probably figure itself out, but it would be great to have even more panelists. With an emphasis on people of diverse genders of course. If so, contact Jamey offline later.

Finally, there is a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passes and the meeting is adjourned at 9:50 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jarell Pryor", written above a horizontal line.

Jarell Pryor, TVGS Acting Secretary of the Board