

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in serving on one of our committees at City Garden. First, a brief definition:

***"A committee is a group of people trying to accomplish something (the purpose) that cannot be better accomplished otherwise".***

Committees are the workhorse of most non-profit organizations. Committees allow individual members to use their specific talents to benefit the organization. It is the reason many people consider committee membership - so that they can use their expertise and talents to help others.

At City Garden, we take special care in selecting our committee members. After all, a committee's intended mission is to assist and support the board in carrying out its responsibility to support the mission of the school and to steward its resources.

Prospective committee members should:

- Understand the goals of the organization and the purpose of their committee to work collectively to achieve those goals.
- Be somewhat knowledgeable in the area of the committee's responsibility.
- Be receptive and open to new ideas and other people's opinions as work is accomplished in a committee through the give and take of an open, uninhibited discussion.

**Committees are an integral part of every successful organization.** A committee with a clear purpose, a well-informed leader and dedicated members is on its way toward success. When committees work well, they serve as a vital and important tool in aiding the board on behalf of City Garden. Effective committees:

- Have a strong commitment to the goal at hand and have strong communication and organization skills.
- See the bigger picture and move toward that goal with an analytical eye.
- Comprise a diverse group without being incompatible. We are actively seeking people with different perspectives.

I encourage you to consider serving on a City Garden committee. The first step is to attend a meeting or two of one of our committees; Building and Grounds, Development, Finance, or Governance, to learn how you can help. Next, read all about the structure of the Board and the responsibilities of each committee, the common characteristics of committee members, and the selection process. Finally, complete the Committee Membership Interest Survey.

You will find serving on a committee to be both personally and professionally rewarding, and you're liable to have some fun along the way!

With Appreciation,

Anthony Beasley, Board Chair

Christie Huck, Executive Director

## Interested in City Garden Committee Membership?

Thank you for being interested in committee membership at City Garden Montessori School!

Please read the following descriptions and instructions thoroughly prior to submitting an application for committee membership.

### **Prior to submitting your application for committee membership, we ask that you:**

1. Become familiar with the mission and vision of City Garden Montessori School via the school website and other informational materials. The school mission, history and descriptions of our community can be found here: (link to spot/s on the website and/ or articles.)
2. Visit City Garden Montessori School. (You can schedule a visit by contacting Executive Director Christie Huck at [Christie@citygardenschool.org](mailto:Christie@citygardenschool.org) .
3. Become familiar with the role of board committees and the skills and characteristics needed in committee members.
4. Attend at least one meeting of the committee to which you are applying, as an observer.

If you have questions, please contact Christie Huck at [christie@citygardenschool.org](mailto:christie@citygardenschool.org).

## The City Garden Board Structure

### **Board of Directors**

City Garden is technically its own small “school district,” or Local Education Agency, as well as a 501(c) 3 nonprofit agency. The Board of Directors is the ultimate legal and fiscal authority for City Garden Montessori School, as both an LEA and a nonprofit organization. City Garden has most of the legal compliance and reporting requirements of school districts throughout the state.

The Board’s duty is to guide the mission and vision of the school, to ensure that City Garden is fulfilling its mission and vision, to ensure that the school has adequate resources available to support and implement the mission and vision, to ensure that the school’s resources are appropriately managed and distributed, to set and approve policy that supports the structure and mission of the school and to safeguard the school in regards to legal and political matters that impact the school’s operation and/ or ability to implement the mission. The Board does not interact or oversee the daily operations of the school, but rather guides and makes decisions regarding “overarching” issues that impact the school and organization as a whole.

### **Committees of the Board**

The monthly board meetings are the regular, official business meetings of the board, where organizational decisions are made and committee reports are given. Much of the board work occurs in committees, which are responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Directors. City Garden’s board currently has the following committees:

#### ***Governance Committee:***

##### **Laura Jenks, Chair**

The Governance Committee is responsible for ensuring that City Garden, and its board, are effectively governed. The duties of the Governance Committee include:

- Establishing and recommending board policies and procedures.
- Reviewing and updating legal documents, such as the organizational Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Conflict of Interest policy, the school’s Charter, the school’s Accountability Plan with Saint Louis University.
- Ensuring that the board is in compliance with all federal, state and local mandates, such as the Missouri Sunshine Law, Missouri Ethics Commission requirements, etc.
- Establishing and recommending effective board and committee recruitment policies and procedures, and ensuring that these policies and procedures are followed.
- Recruiting and vetting new board and committee members and nominating board

- leadership annually.
- Coordinating the orientation of new board members.
- Coordinating board professional development.
- Coordinating evaluations of board members and board leadership.
- Ensuring effective communication among board members and from the board to the school community and the external community.
- Supports and ensures all Board Committees comply with the SLU Accountability report.

### ***Finance Committee:***

#### **Kristy Carstensen, Chair**

The Finance Committee ensures organizational fiscal responsibility and accountability. The duties of the Finance Committee include:

- Reviewing and approving the school's budget. The annual budget is first drafted in January of the prior year and approved no later than June 30, for the fiscal year that begins July 1. The budget is then amended quarterly; the Finance Committee works with the executive director and the accountant to revise the budget based on anticipated needs and actual revenues and expenditures.
- Reviewing/ monitoring revenues and expenditures. Each month the Finance Committee reviews the monthly financial statements and bank statements and bank reconciliations. Significant transactions in the bank statements are discussed. At least quarterly, the Finance Committee also reviews cash flow projections.
- Establishing and recommending fiscal policies and procedures, such as internal and external controls (checks and balances), banking policy, how financial statements are prepared, investment policies, etc.
- Monitoring the annual fiscal/ organizational audit and preparation of the 990 to the IRS.
- Providing oversight and support to the executive director and the finance/ business office staff.
- Supports and ensures compliance with the SLU Accountability report, specifically the Fiscal Health requirements.

### ***Development Committee:***

#### **Liz Fathman, Chair**

The Development Committee is responsible for guiding and overseeing resource development (fundraising) for the school. The duties of the Development Committee include:

- Reviewing and approving the school's annual development plan. The development plan is drafted in conjunction with the school's annual budget and is approved no later than June 30, for the fiscal year that begins July 1. The plan includes goals and strategies for bringing in the resources needed to meet the school's financial needs.
- Reviewing/ monitoring resource development outcomes. The Development Committee receives a monthly development report, cash flow statement and a report from development staff regarding progress toward meeting organizational goals.
- Establishing/ recommending policies and procedures regarding resource development.
- Overseeing the implementation of resource development activities and programming, including parent giving, major donor cultivation, corporate and foundation contributions, the annual gala, events, communications, stewardship and tracking of donations and donor information.
- Soliciting volunteer time, determining volunteer projects, and maintaining a volunteer pool to deploy during fundraising preparations and events.
- Providing oversight and support to the executive director, director of development and development staff.

### ***Building and Grounds Committee:***

The Building and Grounds Committee is responsible for ensuring that City Garden has adequate/ effective facilities and grounds to implement the school's mission and programming. The duties of the Building and Grounds Committee include:

- Establishing and recommending annual facilities planning that supports program implementation.
- Reviewing and monitoring legal matters pertaining to facilities needs, i.e., lease agreements, occupancy requirements, warranty agreements, liability matters, etc.
- Developing, reviewing and recommending any significant changes to the building or grounds, i.e., design and build-out of the outdoor space, the kitchen space, etc.
- Reviewing and monitoring building and grounds maintenance.
- Evaluating and re-bidding vendor contracts as needed.
- Developing and monitoring organizational commitment to environmental sustainability as it pertains to the built environment and operational practices.
- Developing ongoing maintenance/capital improvement plan.
- Providing oversight and support to the executive director and facilities staff.

### ***Anti-Bias/ Anti-Racism Board Committee***

#### **Claire Schell, Chair**

The Anti-Bias/ Anti-Racism (ABAR) Committee of the Board is responsible for ensuring that City Garden is fulfilling its commitment to being an anti-biased/ anti-racist institution, and guiding the organization in implementing this component of its mission.

Specifically, the ABAR Board Committee will:

- Analyze City Garden's governance components—its policies, structures and processes—through an ABAR lens and identify and prioritize areas to revise and change.
- Develop a process for organizational evaluation related to anti-bias/ anti-racism. The evaluation process will be outlined during the 2014-15 school year, and step one of its implementation will begin in the 2015-16 school year.
- Work with administration and faculty to analyze school wide data and outcomes to assess additional areas for development, in order to strengthen the school's ABAR commitment.
- Develop a mechanism for staff, parents and students to share and/ or report incidents of discrimination and micro-aggressions, as well as a process to respond to such incidents.
- Identify and assemble resources (organizations, curricula, books, websites, individuals, etc.) to support City Garden's implementation of ABAR principles.
- Stay abreast of the work of the faculty ABAR committee and the PAC Diversity Committee, working in collaboration with these committees to fulfill City Garden's ABAR commitment.
- Work with administration to guide City Garden's role within the larger (external) community to lead and/ or promote anti-bias/ anti-racism education, training and dialogue.

## The Characteristics of Board and Committee Members

The following have been identified as ideal attributes of City Garden Committee and Board members, in order to foster the effective governance of City Garden Montessori School:

- Passion for City Garden's mission and commitment to upholding the mission and vision.
- Understanding of and commitment to Anti-Bias/ Anti-Racism values and organizational work.
- Understanding of and commitment to Montessori philosophy and pedagogy.
- Understanding of and commitment to being a public charter school, and the organization's responsibility to a wide variety of stakeholders as such.
- Ability to see the "big picture" and to make decisions for the whole of the organization.
- Ability to look toward the future.
- Strong sense of professionalism.
- Ability to set aside personal interests, exhibits a sense of "egolessness."
- Gets along well with others.
- Diplomatic.
- Strong and effective communicator.
- Ability to be discrete and hold things in confidence.
- Has a positive attitude, is proactive.
- Organized.
- Ability to receive feedback.
- Ability to give feedback effectively.
- Flexible.
- Dependable.
- Brings needed expertise to the group.
- Astute awareness and respect of the group dynamic through:
  - Observation
  - Cooperation
  - Encouragement
  - Clarification

# The Road to Committee Membership

## Which Committee?

Familiarize yourself with the role of the City Garden committee you wish to be considered for membership. Attending at least one meeting of the committee you are interested in joining, and discussing your interest with the committee chairperson, are mandatory.

## The Application Process

The Governance Committee has developed a questionnaire to help in the evaluation of candidates for nomination to board committees. Please answer each question as thoroughly as possible using as much space as necessary. Please supplement with additional information in the comments section of the application.

The skills checklist aspect of the application is designed to serve as a quick reference for assessing what perspective or expertise potential members might contribute. **No applicant is expected to possess all of the listed skills.** Please feel free to include any other skills or relevant information not mentioned in the questionnaire.

***For committee membership applications will be accepted from January 1 to March 31 each year.***

## What Happens Next?

- All completed applications will be collected by the Executive Director's office and distributed to the appropriate committee chair for review.
- The committee chair will evaluate the candidate accordingly, and forward the names and pertinent information of the candidate he/she would like to consider for membership to the Governance Committee for review.
- The Governance committee will conduct a final review of the nominee. Once reviewed, the appropriate committee chair will be notified of acceptance.
- The committee chair will inform the candidate of the status of his or her nomination.
- New members will be informed by the committee chair regarding committee orientation and the committee schedule.

If you have questions, please contact Christie Huck ([christie@citygardenschool.org](mailto:christie@citygardenschool.org))

**By clicking "Apply" below, I acknowledge that I have read the three sections listed here, and wish to apply for committee membership:**

- ✓ The City Garden Governance Structure,
- ✓ The Characteristics of Board and Committee Members, and
- ✓ The Road to Committee Membership

[\*\*Apply\*\*](#)