

DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL

Board Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2013

A Board of Trustees Meeting was held on October 17, 2013, at the Discovery Charter School; 133 Hoover Drive, Rochester, NY 14615.

Trustees Present: Scott Adair (trustee-elect); Daniel Aureli; Thomas DaRin (trustee-elect); Donna Dedee Doyle; Joseph Martino; Delmonize Smith; Grace Tillinghast; Sara Varhus; David Vigen

Trustees Excused: Barthelemy Koumassou

Also Present: Steven Polowitz, Attorney; Valerie Nolan, Independent Consultant

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and it was determined that a lawful quorum was present.

2. Proof of Public Notice of Meeting

Public Notice was provided in the Messenger Post.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2013 meeting was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved with those absent at the last meeting abstaining.

4. Director's Report

Mr. Vigren asked if there were questions or comments regarding the Director's Report. There were none. During general discussion it was asked if the board will be presented the results of Expeditionary Learning's current evaluation of the school. The Chair indicated it will be on a future agenda.

a. AIMSweb Results. Mrs. DePalma led the board through a presentation of Fall Year 3 AIMSweb assessment results. In general, the results show continued weakness in our highest grade (4th), the grade which came to us with two years of schooling elsewhere, and strength in our lower grades. Mrs. Tillinghast made the observation that there is a striking correlation between attendance and Tier 1 performance. Overall, no one is completely satisfied with the results and Mrs. DePalma outlined a variety of steps being taken this year to improve them.

b. Enrollment Report. Mr. Vigren presented the Enrollment Report as of October 1. It was noted that two students left the school during September and three enrolled, bringing the total enrolled to 214.

c. Personal Time Off Policy. Mr. Vigren presented the minor changes to the policy recommended as a result of a Human Resources review by experienced staff at Education Enterprise of NY. A motion to adopt the changes was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Mrs. Tillinghast and unanimously approved.

5. Motion to Move into Executive Session

A motion to move into Executive Session to discuss a confidential legal matter was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Dedee Doyle and unanimously approved.

6. Motion to Move out of Executive Session

A motion to move out of Executive Session was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Dedee Doyle and unanimously approved.

A **Resolution (#136)** to retain a litigation attorney in the event that the school needs to legally defend itself was moved by Mrs. Dedee Doyle, seconded by Mr. Smith and unanimously approved.

A motion was made to:

(1) Establish an escrow account into which rent amounts to Bishop Kearney High School for the months of August, September, and October 2013 will be deposited; and

(2) To commence paying such Kearney rent amounts to the Hoover Drive building landlord as of November 1, 2013, subject to said landlord's agreement to establish and hold said rents amounts in an escrow account pending final resolution of the dispute with Bishop Kearney High School.

The motion was made by Ms. Varhus, seconded by Mr. Aureli and unanimously approved with Mr. Martino recusing himself.

7. Nominating Committee Report

Ms. Varhus reported that the committee is currently working with a spreadsheet of 36 names of potential trustees. Individuals with strong education backgrounds may be invited to help the Expansion Committee with their work. She further reported that the Committee feels the board should be in no hurry to fill the remaining authorized seat on the board but rather be very deliberate in our search for strong individuals for consideration. There was general consensus among the trustees that the approaches outlined are sound.

8. Compliance Committee Report

Ms. Varhus reported that the Committee is in the final stages of assembling the material supporting the school's work relative to the 10 performance benchmarks approved by the Board of Regents.

9. Expansion Committee Report

Mr. Martino reported that the Committee has met twice since the last board meeting. Most recently it has expanded to include a financial person to help with budgeting and two educators to help with academic structuring. A plan will likely be available for the board early in 2014.

10. Board Evaluation Policy

During a review of policies, certain changes appeared to be in order for the school's Board Evaluation Policy. A motion to adopt the changes as presented was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Ms. Varhus and unanimously approved. It was noted that Mr. Smith's staff is working on the construct of a survey for trustees to take.

11. Conflict of Interest Policy

Trustees gave the Chair their signed Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Agreement documents.

12. Finance Committee Report

a. Monthly Statements. The board reviewed the September financial statements noting an operating deficit for the month stemming from quarterly depreciation and transportation expense resulting from August bus service. Year to date, operating results are significantly favorable to budget.

b. Audit Report. The Mengel Metzger Barr (MMB) outside audit report was reviewed by the board. A motion to approve the report was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Dedee Doyle and unanimously approved.

c. Audit Response. The response to the MMB Advisory Comment Letter was reviewed by the board. A motion to approve the response was made by Mr. Martino, seconded by Ms. Varhus and unanimously approved.

d. Grant Status. Ms. Nolan reported that the partial Federal government shutdown may impact the flow of Title funds. She also reported that SUNY Trustees may take action of our facilities grant application at their November 14-15 meeting.

e. Friends of DCS Report. Mr. Vigren noted that the board of Friends of the Discovery Charter School, Inc. have elected three new directors: Dan Aureli, Scott Adair, Joseph Saia. A meeting is being arranged to elect board officers, after which the corporation is expected to be dormant.

f. Check Detail Report. The Chair called for questions on the September Check Detail Report. There were none.

g. Checks Over \$5,000. A *Resolution (#135)* authorizing payments to two firms was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mrs. Dedee Doyle and unanimously approved.

13. Old Business

a. Open House. Mr. Martino reported that an Open House for supporters of the school will be held on December 11.

b. Staff Holiday Reception. Mr. Aureli reported that the Staff Holiday Reception will be held at the Bamba Bistro on December 19 prior to the board meeting.

14. New Business

The Chair asked for any new business. There was none.

15. Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Aureli, seconded by Mr. Martino and unanimously approved at 9:15 pm.