

**River Valley Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Meeting # 294
May 9, 2023 7:00 pm**

Meeting was called to order at 7:09 pm.

In attendance:

Pam Armstrong
Erin Bradley (arrived at 8:16)
Nancy Durkee (arrived at 7:15)
Denise Herrera
Lainie Ives
Ken Jackman
Nina Keery
Tim Letson
Catherine Martin (via telecomm)
Tanya Murdy
Erin Seaton (arrived at 7:25)
Albert Ting
Anna Wetmore
Chris Whitford (via telecom)
Jonnie Lyn Evans, Director

Absent:

Amber Hewett
Alfred Link
Eric Simone

Public:

Christine Getz

Vote: To approve minutes from the April Board of Trustees meeting and submitted May committee meeting minutes.

Motion: Anna Wetmore

2nd: Nina Keery

Yes:

Pam Armstrong
Lainie Ives
Ken Jackman
Nina Keery
Tim Letson
Catherine Martin
Tanya Murdy

Albert Ting
Anna Wetmore
Chris Whitford

No:
None

Abstain:
Denise Herrera

Absent:
Erin Bradley (arrived later)
Nancy Durkee (arrived later)
Erin Seaton (arrived later)
Chris Whitford (arrived later)

Director's Report: Jonnie Lyn Evans presented report

The Director's Report appears in the packet. Time was allowed for questions and comments.

Additional things:

Huge thank you to Tanya and the other volunteers for the amazing teacher's appreciation week breakfast and luncheon.

RVCS Revelation:

JLEvans presented a video on the environmental project students did while partnering with Parker River Wildlife Refuge. Other organizations have noticed and believe that this should be shared as broadly as possible. The pieces will be displayed at an upcoming event.

Additional things, continued:

All returned happy and safe from the white water rafting trip in Maine with reports of a good time. There are a number of other upcoming trips.

The Sparhawk School is closing for the upcoming school year. A number of their teachers have applied for jobs here. Families are contacting the school about enrollment here.

HRKnowledge, who handles our benefits, is trying to get RVCS closer to industry standards within charter school employee benefits.

In an effort to bring more families into the school, K and E1 families have been invited to 6th grade projects.

Health and Wellness Policy changes - will know more Thursday. The policy presented for a

vote will just be an update. Changes will be small but will reflect changes related to mental health and PBE.

DHerrara - Has Patty Innes been replaced? JLE - We do have an internal applicant that is looking good. DH - Applicants for business office? Only 3 applicants.

Strategic Plan Update and Approval

The final draft of the Strategic Plan is in the packet.

Vote: To approve the Strategic Plan as presented in the May board packet.

Motion: Pam Armstrong

2nd: Denise Herrera

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Denise Herrera

Lainie Ives

Ken Jackman

Nina Keery

Tim Letson

Catherine Martin

Tanya Murdy

Erin Seaton

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

Chris Whitford

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Erin Bradley (arrived later)

Amber Hewett

Alfred Link

Eric Simone

Discussion:

NKeery - For the action plan, can everyone involved in the plan's work update their progress on a yearly basis? Knowing when we will see them would be great. Pam - What the Action

Plan looks like is up to JLEvans.

ATing - Are there thoughts as to when this should be reported out to the board so we have an expectation to hear back? JLEvans - Not sure if a set time makes sense. DHerrera suggests quarterly.

KJackman - Perhaps organize the Action Plan by deliverable, vs the heading. NKeery - Highlights the importance of it being a living document that stays in front of people. JLEvans intends it to be a standing bullet point in meetings. DHerrera sees a lot of the tasks falling to other people as the administration fills.

ESeaton - Could some of this be committee work? It could promote buy-in from the staff. JLEvans - That would be wonderful, particularly in DEI. Having a task force that involves staff is ideal, but it's hard to ask more of them.

Committee on Trustees

Board Survey - It is a tool for board self-reflection. The Google form is about 30 questions with lots of open response opportunities. ATing will send a link at the end of this week and he'll ask us to finish by the next meeting. The committee appreciates our participation; it will be used in the charter renewal. COT will share out a summary, but it may not be until after the June BOT meeting, depending on how quickly responses come in.

The Board Retreat is planned for June 1, 5-9pm. For the first half, we'll be at the school. The activity is still TBD, hopefully to be a service project that benefits the staff. For the second half, we have reservations at the Sunset Club for a social time.

New Trustee Recruitment. There are three really strong candidates: Chris Getz, Meg Connerton and Elizabeth Rankin. Their application information is in the May board packet. The COT enthusiastically recommends them for nomination. We will vote at the June meeting.

PArmstrong highlights the need for committee members and asks that Trustees continue the work of finding potential members.

We will vote for this slate of officers at the June meeting:

Chair - Denise Herrera

Vice Chair - Albert Ting

Treasurer - Chris Whitford

Secretary - No interest yet. But we can elect an officer at any time.

PArmstrong - Are there any updates on the Director's Review?

ATing - Yes, there will be another survey coming out to Trustees.

JLE - Have there been discussions about any necessary changes?

ATing - We haven't finalized that, but Not Applicable is a perfectly good answer. The goal is to have this complete in time to have a productive Review by July 1.

Accountability Committee

The Committee held a discussion on the charter renewal (the charter is renewed every 5 years). JLE will have the lion's share of the work because of the timing. There are two areas where Trustees can help: editing the charter application, with a deadline in July, and updating and refining the accountability plan, with a deadline in the fall. Part of the charter plan renewal is a site visit with focus group meetings. JLEvans is looking for someone to coordinate a parent focus group for the site visit.

JLE is anticipating a little more scrutiny this cycle. Any conditions found will take precedence over strategic plan goals.

KJackman - Is there anything that has changed in the structure of the school that doesn't align with the current charter, specifically the lack of an assistant director? JLE - Any time that there has been substantive change, we've had to file an amendment. But she will reach out to the charter association for guidance.

Parent Caregiver Survey - As of now, we have had fewer responses than expected. The committee will revise the survey slightly next December. The committee discussed the use of the results.

In the June meeting, we'll discuss the results of the survey. All are welcome. JLEvans always puts out the graphs for results that can be presented that way. She summarizes the items that are more subjective.

KJackman - Perhaps the restructured organization chart should be updated and made official.

Development Committee

Maritime Mixer - Jane Patterson has connected to the Maritime Museum. The Executive Director and two board members will be at the mixer.

DHerrera - What is the museum's expectation for maintaining the relationship between the museum and RVCS? KJackman - The crux of the issue is that the museum feels that it hears from RVCS when RVCS has an ask. Having a contact from RVCS check in from time to time to see what opportunities are available would be helpful in maintaining a positive relationship.

Tall Ships Summer Event - The opportunity is there if RVCS would like to make use of it.

Parent Volunteerism - Gratitude to TMurdy for heading this. The message is getting out there. There have been 114 responses to volunteer opportunities within the school. It is clear that we just need to be more comfortable with asking for help and making sure that potential volunteers feel invited in to the school

Calendar Planning - The committee is getting ahead of expected community activities. JHubbard has put together the calendar and fall is already being planned. JPatterson had a takeaway from

NMA conference to refresh and streamline communications. There are lots of volunteers to make this happen.

Finance Committee

There are no concerns to report within the third quarter financial update. We are on track with salary and benefits spending.

Audit - An RFP for audit firms went out. Our current firm's costs have been going up. Three proposals were received; two new firms came in at about the same with time and cost which gives confidence in the proposals. Daniel Dennis was chosen. There was a better connection with this firm that focuses more on charter schools. All firms have been notified of the decision.

Financial Policy - With the change of moving to Central Source, the current policy feels too prescriptive. This will be a refresh of the document provided by Central Source. There will be a vote to approve this at the next meeting.

2024 Budget - The committee has the first version. The process is a little different this year. It is a more ground up analysis over the past few years. The committee is working on finalizing the budget. Benefit increase will be about 3%. The BOT has already voted on the salary line item increase.

Public Comment:

None.

Vote: To adjourn.

Motion: Denise Herrera

2nd: Nina Keery

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Erin Bradley

Nancy Durkee

Denise Hererra

Lainie Ives

Ken Jackman

Nina Keery

Tim Letson

Catherine Martin

Tanya Murdy

Erin Seaton

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

Chris Whitford

No:
None

Abstain:
None

Absent:
Amber Hewett
Alfred Link
Eric Simone

9:02 pm Board adjourns.