

RISING TIDE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

December 16, 2019

Narrative Mission Statement:

What is the purpose of the school?

“...The Rising Tide Charter School provides students with community-based education each day, using the Town of Plymouth as a local yet dynamic textbook which will provide fertile ground for the development of higher-order thinking skills.”

Leadership and Governance:

“In accordance with MA Charter School Law, the Board of Trustees is ultimately accountable for the school’s educational mission, performance and adherence to its Charter.”

Call to Order

Chairman, Chris Schelleng, called the meeting to order at 7 PM. In attendance were Chris Schelleng, Norm DeCoste, Amy Norris, Sean Kelly, Sandy Kozlowsky, and Kevin Hennessey. Also in attendance were Michael O’Keefe, Head of School, and Eric Mello, Business Manager.

Guests

None

New Business

Eric researched regional bus transportation with 5 schools and presented information obtained from them. Although Rising Tide will have to pay the entire amount for transportation up front, the state will reimburse 70% of costs at the end of the year. He will get clarification on whether that includes costs for staff to manage.

Michael reviewed Rising Tide demographics of current students by grade, town, and prior school, as well as current lottery enrollment application data demographics. Based on the combined demographics, it was determined that 4 bus routes would accommodate our needs.

Sean made a motion to move ahead with the plan for regional transportation for the next school year, including an amendment to Rising Tide’s enrollment policy and a directive to establish an RFP process for bus providers. Kevin seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Michael shared 6 options from the Site Feasibility Survey put together by Beals + Thomas (Civil Engineering company who did prior work on this building). Desired program elements included Cross Country Trail (approximately 5K), a Middle School Play Space, an Outdoor Garden, an Indoor Field House/Gym, and additional sports fields. Considering the large investment of some options, we will need to think about future fundraising and other possibilities to fund any site projects.

Old Business

None

Minutes

Sean made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the November meeting minutes.

Financials

Eric updated the Board on the November financials. The Finance and Audit Subcommittee met prior to the Board Meeting. Not much has changed since last month. We are in a good place cash flow wise.

State tuition was based on original enrollment estimate of 660 students at \$14,850/student. Actual enrollment will probably be 655 students. Total revenue is under budget by \$19,803.

Expenses are lower than budget by \$39,790 due to delayed hiring of administrative positions. Operations and Maintenance Expenses are higher than budgeted due to higher water/sewer expense as well as maintenance and electricity expenses that are usually higher in the first quarter.

Net income compared against budget is \$19,987.

Cash balances remain stable. Prepayment of year-to-date tuition payments was made to the state in the amount of \$300,613.

Shades will be replaced over December break.

Eric pointed out the expenses for the athletic program, a major portion of which are transportation and facilities expenses, to keep in mind amounts we could save when considering future site projects.

Sandy made a motion to approve the November Financials. Norm seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the November Financials.

Board Subcommittees

Nominating and Governance – Met last Friday. Michael is reaching out to a couple of potential board members. Need to review/revise Head of School Annual Review Process at next meeting.

Finance and Audit – Met prior to the Board Meeting. Discussed regional transportation. Financials look good.

Communications and Advocacy – Did not meet

School Report

The Governor recently signed the Student Opportunity Act, which increases Chapter 70 funding, as well as improves the baseline for staff insurance and special education. Should mainly help disadvantaged districts to get more support, but all schools will benefit.

Winter sport season is up and running. Have 3 boys and 2 girls basketball teams. Also have co-op hockey team with Sacred Heart. Had a gathering in November for those interested in lacrosse. Kelsey and Michael will meet again Wednesday to see what can be done this Spring to start developing a program, with the goal of having teams next school year.

Safety update – there was a fight at the school before Thanksgiving. Michael was as transparent as he could be with the school community, balancing privacy and civil rights of kids involved with the safety of everyone else. Our new IT Director, Chris Dematos, is working with the Plymouth police to tie in security cameras to their system. There will be an ALICE drill in January with the police. First response team has new walkie talkies for another way to communicate during a crisis. Chris is also looking at upgrading the phone/paging system, maybe with a light feature for rooms where it is hard to hear a page (e.g., music room). The Crisis Response Team continues to meet once a month working on drills and possible emergency scenarios.

Other Business

Michael asked to make a clarification on the October Meeting Minutes. Sean made a motion to change the 3rd paragraph under “School Report” to:

Michael is having weekly meetings with teachers in small Monday Committee groups to discuss ways to improve the school community, while giving them the opportunity for faculty leadership.

Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Adjourn

Sean made a motion to Adjourn. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to Adjourn.