

RISING TIDE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

April 27, 2020

Virtual Meeting due to Governor Baker's stay at home advisory.

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, and Sandy Kozlowsky. Also in attendance were Michael O'Keefe, Head of School, and Eric Mello, Business Manager.

Guests

None

New Business

Eric updated the Board on the FY21 budget climate. There was a Charter School webinar last week. They discussed the likelihood of significant revenue losses for FY21 and told schools to budget conservatively.

Michael stated the Student Opportunity Act may be revisited and some things may be rolled back.

Eric is setting up the FY21 budget and going line by line looking at historical spends to see where things can be adjusted. Should have a preliminary budget for approval at next Board Meeting so contracts can be started. Sean pointed out we have a sizeable rainy-day fund.

Eric is looking at health insurance plan alternatives to try and save money since there is a 15% premium increase with renewal of current plan.

Eric just learned that when DESE updated tuition numbers In December, they had made an error in calculations. DESE's updated March tuition numbers are much more in-line with our initial budget numbers, so smaller surplus than we anticipated.

There will be an increase in spending for regional transportation, but enrollment projections look good. Eric will budget conservatively for state reimbursement.

Old Business

Friday evening, Michael received updated guidance from the state about remote learning due to extension of school closure through the end of the school year. Rising Tide was already implementing these strategies.

Michael will seek further feedback from families to help keep things manageable for them. Teachers will be providing additional options for kids who want more opportunities to learn.

Michael has been brainstorming with school staff to come up with creative ways to honor rites of passage for students (e.g., graduation, transition from 8th grade to Upper School, Arts Night, Spring sports, National Honor Society induction, etc.).

Rising Tide currently using O, S, N, U grading scale for remote learning. Michael is working with faculty to assign Quality Points to this scale to factor GPA. Maureen Chapman, Academic Director, is reviewing requisite standards per DESE guidance that need to be taught before end of school year. Teachers are reviewing course plans to make any needed adjustments.

Guidance from DESE Commissioner on re-opening schools in the fall will be forthcoming.

Minutes

Sean made a motion to approve the March, April 9, and April 10, 2020 meeting minutes. Norm seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the March, April 9, and April 10, 2020 meeting minutes.

Financials

Eric updated the Board on the March financials, which included updated tuition projections from DESE. Less income than budgeted.

On Expense side, there are salary and benefit savings. Net income compared against budget is +105,195, even with change in tuition.

Healthy cash balance of \$2,710,702.

Eric reviewed DESE Q3 tuition spreadsheet, pointing out biggest changes from sending districts.

Still holding back money on shades until contractor can come back to fix.

Amy made a motion to approve the March Financials. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the March Financials.

Board Subcommittees

Nominating and Governance – Had a quick meeting. Waiting draft from Michael to finalize structure for bonus compensation. Need to figure out caveats for next year because there are no MCAS tests. Will need to adjust in the Fall.

Finance and Audit – Did not meet.

Communications and Advocacy – Did not meet.

School Report

Michael shared working spreadsheet Melissa Jackson, Student Data Specialist, put together on projected enrollment for next year. Really encouraged with number of new Upper School students.

Michael is working with school leadership on possible ideas for initial outreach to incoming students, including email, virtual shadow visits, words of wisdom from seniors, etc. Planning live events in August beyond Open House – maybe community things for families.

Martha Popoloski is talking with leadership on ways to celebrate seniors' future plans via social media.

Adjourn

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