



MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 16th, 2014

The meeting was held at: 198 Varet Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206

PRESENT

Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee
Gabriel Perez, Teacher Liaison

GUESTS

Kathleen Gaffney, Principal
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney
Kathy Fernandez, Staff
John Witherspoon, IT Consultant
Belnardina Madera, Staff

Darnell Pierre, Staff
Patrick Kern, Staff
Princess Barimah, Staff
Donald Brusca, Staff
Rickey Brown, Staff
Denise Williams, Staff

EXCUSED

Lourdes Putz, Chair,
Alma Iannotto, Parent Liaison

James Lema, Trustee
Akil Bello, Co-Treasurer

Robert Shea, Trustee
Charles Hobson, Trustee

The meeting was called to order at 7:09pm.

1. WELCOME

Mr. Rivera opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Rivera said we will table “Approval of November Board Meeting Minutes” for the January meeting due to lack of quorum.

3. FINANCE UPDATE

Ms. Fernandez reported that as of November, the budget was \$6.6 million, which is on target. The School spent \$6.3 million. That leaves a surplus of \$300,000. The phone and camera system updates are still pending, but all bills were paid on time. Construction on the facility was done as needed within the budget. ADP (Automatic Data Processing) is in phase 4.

4. ACADEMIC REPORT

Ms. Gaffney gave her report and highlighted the top five items for the month:

- Teacher surveys and evaluations.
- School culture – safety, transitions, uniforms.
- Ninth period scheduling – Ms. Gaffney reported that this change has been tough, but she is listening to all opinions. Mr. Perez has heard from some faculty that this is an additional job with extra work, but he feels that in the spring, things will go smoother. Ms. Johnson suggested that Mr. Perez and others take those teachers under their wings. Mr. Rivera expressed his pleasure that school leaders are listening to commentary from everyone openly.
- Case Conferencing – this helps “at risk” students. Counselors, Grade Directors and teachers come together to develop a plan to help them achieve their goals despite adversity.
- Senior On Track Off Track – this helps us follow seniors to see where they are, credit-wise.

Academic Summary: Ms. Gaffney said that the “super seniors” always bring our numbers down. Mr.

Brusca explained the data and how teachers report their scores. Mr. Rivera said that he would like to revisit this topic at the next meeting.

Ms. Eagen mentioned that the Board needs to approve funding for teacher recruitment.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES

ADP is in place, which will help with direct deposit, leaves, sick time, etc. Evaluations will also become uniform for all staff.

The Board discussed the March teacher recruitment Open House. Ms. Eagen mentioned having a Personal Development that day with an outside vendor. She then discussed with the Board the possibility of compensating staff per-session for their time, which the School has funds to do and would be a morale boost. She said it would be the right thing to do, but that if it is not going to happen because of the precedent it sets, it should come from the Board rather than Ms. Barimah. The Board decided to table the issue for the next meeting after an email circulates from both Human Resources and the Finance Department to the full Board.

6. FACILITIES/IT UPDATE

Mr. Rivera updated the Board on:

- FDNY violations and three proposals for a standby generator installation, of which he recommended Leader Electric, which should cost approximately \$15,000. Ms. Eagen said that Mr. Grossman will be asked to pay a portion of the bill. Mr. Rivera said we should move forward on this subject to Board approval at the next regular meeting.
- Carpets and tiles were replaced on all floors.
- Pine trees were ordered for the main entrance.
- Environmental control board hearing for flame proofing the curtains in auditorium.
- Fire and Safety Plan should be ready next week.
- FDNY violation for two-way radio installation.

IT UPDATE

Mr. Witherspoon reported on his evaluation of the IT system:

- The original system has not been utilized fully.
- No back-up is in place if the system goes out.
- Cameras do not record; they only take snapshots.
- Computer lab needs updating, and the wires are a potential concern.
- Internet – content filtering is not fully in place and frequently goes down.
- Projectors need upgrading.

With regard to fixing the issues with the camera system, Mr. Witherspoon showed the Board three competitor bids and ultimately recommended ACT. Mr. Witherspoon fully disclosed that he had worked with this company in the past. Ms. Eagen asked if he was getting compensated for recommending them, and he said that he was not. He told the Board that they provide support and maintenance. They also provide training for staff. Maintenance would cost \$2,600 a year and Ms. Fernandez said it is budgeted. After a robust and thoughtful discussion, Mr. Rivera said that the Board will discuss by email and get back to Mr. Witherspoon this week so that ACT can start working over the winter break or as soon as possible given the urgency.

7. COMMUNITY OUTREACH/FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Mr. Kern reported on an event held the same day as the Board meeting to honor the supporters of the AFAR

trip. He said it was a huge success and was attended by Mr. Hobson, Trustee. He also reported that WCHS has kicked off a new campaign to fund the next trip, and Ms. Fernandez will hold all donations counting up to \$40,000. Ms. Eagen was the first to donate and presented a check for \$1,000.

Mr. Kern also reported on the dance studio. He said that the School will be opting for a new vendor, since the original company's rates were very high.

Also, Mr. Kern reported on accountability and getting clarifications to the State on Title I and Title II.

Mr. Kern spoke about the viewing of Mr. Hobson's film and how the work thus far truly captures the feeling of the School. The film should be ready in time for the lottery. Mr. Kern believes that it will be used for years to come to showcase positive aspects of Williamsburg Charter High School. The Board asked that the School send holiday greeting cards to their supporters.

Ms. Eagen also spoke about teachers' 401k and matching contributions for the holiday. Ms. Barimah will meet with Mr. Leleck, put a proposal together for the Board, to be tabled for the next meeting.

Ms. Eagen also reported on the Immigration Clinic held at the School, where the presenter was impressed with the interaction of the staff and the care they showed for their students.

8. NEXT BOARD MEETING

January 20, 2015

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

10. ADJOURNMENT