

**PCCS Board of Director's Meeting
Prairie Crossing Charter School**

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, September 1, 2009

Approved 9/22/09The minutes of a meeting of the PCCS Board of Directors held on Tuesday September 1, 2009 in the Anna Botsford Comstock Building, Prairie Crossing Charter School, Grayslake, Illinois.

A copy of the board documents for this meeting is available for viewing either on the school website (www.pccs.ws) or in the school office.

Board Members Present

Geoff Deigan
Steve Achtemeier
Elizabeth Stearns
John Wylie
Mark Dybas
Eric Hebert
Barb Provost

Staff Present

Myron Dagley, Director
Brian Greene
Chris Hershiser

Absent

Bob Bentz
Bob Creviston

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Geoff Deigan.

Pledge of Allegiance

Correspondence

Mr. Dagley briefly presented the Board with information contained in a memo from School Counsel regarding changes in the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act.

Consent Agenda

1. Director's Report - includes Principal's, Manager's of Benefits & Facilities and Business Manager's Report

No comments, written report provided

2. Financial Statements, June & July 2009

No comments, written report provided

3. Treasurer's Report and Finance Committee Report

In addition to the written report provided, Mr. Achtemeier presented an update on the School's long term debt refinancing initiative. Presently a bank has expressed interest in working with the School on its refinancing; the bank has an "A" rating, however, it reportedly has a negative bias. Given the bank's current rating, refinancing would result in an interest rate for the School that would not be much higher than the initial refinancing rate. There would be costs incurred by the School as a result of refinancing, most of them legal fees. Mr. Achtemeier stated we may need to have a Special Meeting next week when BMO Capital can present the refinancing

option to the Board. While Lake Forest Bank is also investigating an alternative with another bank, that process is not moving forward quickly.

4. Human Resource Committee Report

No comments, written report provided

5. Governance Committee Report

No comments, written report provided

6. Communications/Public Relations and Fundraising Committee Report

No comments, written report provided

7. Excellence in Academic Programs Advisory Committee Report

No comments, written report provided

8. President's Report

No comments, written report provided

9. PSO Report

Written report provided. Mr. Greene thanked the PSO for their donation of computers to the School.

10. Review Open Session Minutes: 6/23/09, 7/1/09- Special Mtg.

No changes suggested.

11. Review Strategic Planning Steering Committee Minutes - 4/14/09, 7/22/09 & 7/23/09

No changes suggested.

12. Review Governance Committee Minutes – 6/1/09

No changes suggested.

13. Motion to Approve Open Session Minutes– 6/23/09, 7/1/09- Special Mtg.

Moved: John Wylie

Second: Steve Achtemeier

Voice Vote: All ayes

Carried

14. Motion to Approve Strategic Planning Steering Committee Minutes - 4/14/09, 7/22/09 & 7/23/09

Moved: Mark Dybas

Second: Eric Hebert

Voice Vote: All ayes

Carried

15. Motion to Approve Governance Committee Minutes – 6/1/09

Moved: Eric Hebert
Voice Vote: All ayes
Carried

Second: Mark Dybas

16. Motion to Accept Reports on Consent Agenda

Moved: John Wylie
Voice Vote: All ayes
Carried

Second: Elizabeth Stearns

Public Comment

Laura Fay informed the Board of the grand opening of an environmental charter school in Chicago that is part of the Chicago Public School system. The building is very environmentally friendly and we may wish to consider a relationship with them.

Discussion Agenda

17. Review Legal Bills

- a. May 31, 2009 - Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer, Rodick & Kohn (\$1912.24)
- b. June 30, 2009 - Hodges, Loizzi, Eisenhammer, Rodick & Kohn (\$53.00)
- c. June 30, 2009 – Sraga, Hauser, L.L.C. (\$58.50)
- d. May 27, 2009 - Franczek, Redelet (\$2371.50)
- e. June 30, 2009 - Franczek, Redelet (\$2869.60)
- f. July 30, 2009 - Franczek, Redelet (\$4872.68)

Mr. Deigan noted that the large cost of the legal bills is the result of three months worth of legal bills from Franczek, Redelet that are for re-chartering work. Mr. Hebert questioned if the legal fees for re-chartering were what we had expected. It was reported that they appear to have come in very close to what was budgeted.

18. Second Reading – Amend Policy 200.13 - Frequency of Board and Committee Meetings

Mr. Dybas informed the Board that the only changes made to the Policy were grammatical changes recommended at the first reading. There were no further comments on the Policy.

19. Review of Committee Agenda/Minutes/Packets/Management Protocol

Mr. Dagley presented this document to the Board. While the document is similar to what was discussed at the last Strategic Planning session it has been updated to reflect some feedback that was provided at that meeting. The Board suggested that the document should make it clear that all postings will be done in compliance with the Open Meetings Act (OMA). There was discussion about the meaning of “timely” in relation to the preparing of draft minutes for Committee meetings. It was agreed that this will commonly mean draft minutes are prepared and circulated prior to the next applicable Committee meeting including time for the draft minutes to be reviewed in advance of the next Committee meeting.

Ms. Stearns suggested that the document contain a sheet that explains the requirements of OMA in relation to posting requirements.

Mr. Wylie suggested that the document state postings must be done at least two days in advance of a meeting as he does not believe the posting requirements of OMA will ever be shortened.

Mr. Hebert suggested that since this document is not a Policy and can be changed at any time we should consider adding specific language about time frames for postings to add clarification, knowing that it can be changed at will if needed. The Board agreed with this suggestion.

Mr. Dybas brought forward the issue that it can be challenging for the Secretary of the Board to take minutes of the Board meeting while concurrently participating in the meeting in an active role. Mr. Dybas stated that he believed it was clear that this component of the position results in Board Members not wanting to hold this position. Mr. Deigan stated that the Secretary of the Board is a member of the School's Executive Committee and holding that position should be viewed as a privilege and not something to be avoided. The Board felt we should pursue looking for a volunteer to help with minute taking.

Mr. Dagley and Mr. Deigan stated that this protocol would be used effective immediately.

Mr. Dagley asked the Board for suggestions on how to more effectively get closed session packets to Board members as some Board members have reported that information sent to them via regular mail does not arrive in time for their review prior to meetings. Mr. Deigan suggested these situations should be handled on a case-by-case basis, thereby accounting for the specific needs of the involved individual.

20. Charter Agreement Compliance Tasks

Mr. Dagley and Mr. Deigan reviewed the Charter compliance check lists with the Board. One of these lists was prepared by Administration and had been circulated to the Board. The second, had been prepared by Jo Ann Price, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and will be forwarded to the Board.

In response to the requirements regarding outreach efforts, it was clarified that this requirement is for the upcoming school year. Mr. Deigan stated he would like these materials to outline how we are going to attempt to reach out to specific populations. Mr. Deigan would like to see some type of work group formed that can work on outreach throughout the year. Mr. Deigan realizes that such a group may not be in place by mid-September but that does not preclude the group from developing ideas on an ongoing basis and forwarding them to ISBE.

Ms. Stearns asked, if as a means of accountability, the Board should review items before or after they have been submitted to ISBE. Mr. Deigan stated that he believes periodic updates from Administration would suffice. The Board stated that it would like to see reports submitted for their own benefit and education, not necessarily simply for review or accountability.

When questioned about areas of concern related to the expected tasks, Mr. Dagley stated the outreach portion will likely be the most challenging part this year since we are learning exactly what ISBE desires as we go through the process.

Ms. Provost states she would like to see Charter compliance as a standing item on the consent agenda.

Mr. Heber stated he would like to see the School attempt to get receipts showing that documents have been received by ISBE.

Mr. Deigan asked that Mr. Dagley investigate the possibility of having an “ISBE” section on the new website that could contain all of the documents we submit to ISBE in relation to Charter compliance.

It was stated that we should have the final audit in hand prior to September 30, 2009 and we will provide the restated budget once we have a better handle on the long term debt refinancing.

21. Progress Discussion: Closed Session Minutes Review/Redaction

Mr. Deigan explained the closed session minute review process. Mr. Deigan has done a first review of closed session minutes. Mr. Hebert and Ms. Provost will be doing a second review of the minutes. Once both reviews are completed, the minutes will be sent for review by legal counsel and then brought to the Board for action.

Public Comment

Jen Ropke pointed out that we had an outreach task force in the past and suggested the School review any notes or information available from that body.

Mr. Rizzo stated that it appeared it would be possible for the LLC to have a meeting with the Board on September 10, 2009.

Laura Fay stated that in the past the School had attempted to use a 3rd party person to take minutes at Board meetings and this practice was not effective as the person taking the minutes did not have the familiarity with the issues discussed to prepare minutes in a fashion that conveyed the important aspects of discussions.

Motion to move into Closed Session for:

Discussion related to 5ILCS 120/2(c) 1-The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee to determine its validity.

- 22. FY10 Special Education Resource Teacher Contract
- 23. FY10 7th Grade Teacher Contract
- 24. Discuss Director’s Performance Evaluation – FY09

Discussion related to 5ILCS 120/2(c) 21-Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi annual review of the minutes mandated by Section 2.06

- 25. Review Closed Session Minutes – 6/23/09

Moved: Mark Dybas

Second: John Wylie

Aye: Geoff Deigan, Steve Achtemeier, Elizabeth Stearns, John Wylie, Mark Dybas, Eric Hebert, Barb Provost

No: None

Carried

Time: 8:30 PM

Board returned to open session at 9:00 PM.

Action Agenda – New Business

17A - Authorize Payment of Legal Bills- \$12,137.52

Moved: Barb Provost

Second: John Wylie

Aye: Geoff Deigan, Steve Achtemeier, Elizabeth Stearns, John Wylie, Mark Dybas, Eric Hebert, Barb Provost

No: None

Carried

18A – Adoption of Amended Policy 200.13 - Frequency of Board and Committee Meetings

Moved: Mark Dybas

Second: Eric Hebert

Voice Vote: All ayes

Carried

19A - Adoption of Committee Agenda/Minutes/Packets/Management Protocol

No action taken

22A – Approve FY10 Special Education Resource Teacher Contract

Moved: Eric Hebert

Second: Steve Achtemeier

Voice Vote: All ayes

Carried

23A – Approve 7th Grade Teacher Contract as discussed in closed session

Moved: Steve Achtemeier

Second: John Wylie

Aye: Geoff Deigan, Steve Achtemeier, Elizabeth Stearns, John Wylie, Mark Dybas, Eric Hebert, Barb Provost

No: None

Carried

25A – Approve Closed Session Minutes – 6/23/09

Moved: Steve Achtemeier

Second: Eric Hebert

Voice Vote: All ayes

Carried

Public Comment

Mr. Deigan stated an email had been received from a family stating they believed the School year starting in mid-August was inappropriate as this is the middle of a season and a time we should be supporting our children to be outside and experiencing nature.

Jen Ropke stated, “Holy cow” and asked that we at least consider starting a week later.

Identify Topics to Guide Future Agendas

- We will likely have a special meeting on September 10, 2009 at 7:00 PM
- Mr. Wylie asked that at a future meeting we review what is the Board’s role in approving teachers’ contracts.
- Mr. Deigan stated that he hoped in October we could have a follow-up presentation on the salary study.
- Mr. Deigan requested that we have a presentation on the web site.

Motion to Adjourn

Moved: Ms. Provost

Second: Steve Achtemeier

Voice vote

Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Dybas
PCCS Board Secretary