

**The Elmwood Village Charter School**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 9, 2014**

**Trustees Present:** Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia, Jennifer Bernacki-Smith, Roy Clay, Leah Eagan-Stoddard, Concetta Ferguson, Kathy Franklin Adams, Andrew Mouw, Pam Pollock, Natalie Stoyanoff

**Trustees Absent:** Matt Ryan

**Others Present:** John Sheffield, EVCS Director; Colby Smith, EVCS Owner's Rep; Lisa Kirisits, EVCS Accountant

Concetta Ferguson called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

1. Concetta presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no changes. Approved.
2. Minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on March 19, 2014, were presented. It was noted that there was a typographical error stating the year as 2010 rather than 2014 in the first item of the Director's report. **Kathy moved and Jennifer seconded that the minutes be accepted as corrected. Approved unanimously.**
3. EXPANSION/FACILITIES UPDATE

-Colby Smith, EVCS Owner's Rep, stated construction of the additions to the school will begin on April 14, 2014. Neighbors have been contacted. Provisions for access have been made. Deliveries will be coordinated for minimal disruption. For example, larger items will be delivered during off hours. Items to be stored will be contained behind fences. The contract has been reviewed. Content and drawings were determined to be correct. The contract contains a cost reduction of \$25,000 on the project budget. The schedule was adjusted to allow the April 14 start date, but maintain the original completion date. Mr. Smith proposed an A1A133 Amendment to the current contract with R&P Oak Hill to set a maximum price for the construction. **Concetta moved and Andrew seconded that the Board accept the proposed A1A133 Amendment document as an amendment to the original contract. Approved unanimously.**

-An official Ground Breaking Ceremony to celebrate the beginning of construction for the addition to the building was proposed for April 23 or April 24. Additional information will be forthcoming.

4. FINANCIAL MATTERS

-Lisa Kirisits, EVCS Accountant, presented revised options proposed by Northwest Savings Bank for the coming construction loan. Last month the Board approved borrowing \$1.4 million and using a higher level of cash reserves in repayment of the loan. Revised proposals are for borrowing a larger amount of money. Two options were again presented. Advantages, disadvantages, costs and dates were discussed and compared. It was decided that option # 2 most resembled the proposal previously accepted by the Board. **Mimi moved and Natalie seconded that the new option # 2 be accepted. Approved unanimously.** This will involve borrowing an additional \$200,000 and repaying the money six months sooner.

-Lisa also reviewed projected operating budgets for the next five academic years. Budgets were essentially flat, as it is not possible at this time to assume any significant increase in financial aid from NY State. Board members expressed concern about not being able to increase salaries. John pointed out that while EVCS salaries are lower than some other charter schools, the school has retained full-time teaching assistants in all classrooms and provides better health care coverage. The projected budgets are manageable for the next five years as the number of students will increase during this period. At the end of this period, increased state aid will be required to sustain

programs. By the end of April, there may be information about the research into the possibility of a lawsuit on behalf of charter schools to establish equity in funding. **Leah moved and Andrew seconded a proposal that the Board accept the projected five-year operating budget plan. Approved unanimously.**

-The Financial Statement for March, 2014, was not available as the Board meeting was earlier in the month than usual. Review and approval of the March Financial Statement was tabled until the May meeting.

#### 5. POWER SCHOOL

Last month Liz Evans, EVCS Operations Manager, discussed the ever increasing NY State and federal reporting requirements and suggested investigating the possibility of replacing the current manual data entry system with a supported system. John reviewed the Power School Premier Program for the Board. He noted that other systems recognized by New York State cannot be customized. The program is costly. However, the cost is included in the current budget and future costs will be largely reimbursable. Technology support costs are comparable to the current system and support is available through BOCES. **Natalie moved and Mimi seconded that EVCS change from the current data management system to Power School Premier. Approved unanimously.**

#### 6. BOARD GOVERNANCE PLAN

Discussion of the Board Governance Plan, tabled at the March meeting, was reviewed. Board members were in accord with the bulk of the document. **Marguerite moved and Mimi seconded that the Nominating Committee be added to the list of standing committees. Approved unanimously.**

#### 7. ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Leah reported that the EVCS response to the United Way *Spring It on!* Day of giving was excellent. As of Tuesday evening EVCS reported a total of \$14,745 in contributions. There has also been an anonymous challenge of \$500 additional dollars for 50 new donors at any level by this coming Friday. The Community Association is considering extending the campaign a few more days in an attempt to secure “all the fish” in order to have all families represented.

#### 8. RECRUITMENT/ NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee met Monday to develop a set of questions which will be used to interview prospective parent members to the Board of Trustees. They will meet with John to schedule the interviews.

#### 9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

##### Academics

-New York State ELA (English/Language Arts) Assessments were administered to students in grades 3-8 on April 1-3. John expressed his gratitude to teachers in grades 3-8 for doing their very best to reduce test anxiety and for encouraging their students. Students understood that the only expectation was that they give the test their best effort. Despite all of the media attention given to the opt-out movement, EVCS had only one student “opt-out” of the ELA assessment. This is a credit to the positive classroom environment that EVCS teachers strive to create, and to the school's balanced and sensible approach to testing.

-As always, John expressed thanks to Anne Landrigan for the flawless administration of the assessment program. Each year this task becomes more daunting, but Anne doesn't miss a step.

-Mrs. Landrigan and teachers from EVCS are going back and forth to Rochester this week to score the assessments, with a consortium of schools from Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse, under the direction of ASAP Consulting. They are not staying over at a hotel

this year; they are car-pooling and will be reimbursed for mileage and meals.

Admissions Lottery

-Last night, EVCS held the admission lottery for the 2014-2015 school year. Dr. Maureen Boyd, Associate Professor in the Department of Learning and Instruction at the University of Buffalo, pulled the names for the lottery. Dr. Boyd is not affiliated with EVCS, and she had no vested interest in the outcome of the lottery. Dr. Boyd pulled 600 names, approximately 250 of those for kindergarten. Approximately 28 kindergarten seats are expected to be available to the general public after sibling preferences are filled.

Approximately 70 people attended the public Lottery.

-Once again, John thanked Lea Gladysz for a flawless lottery. Each year there are more students in the lottery, and Lea finds new ways to make the process more efficient.

10. NEW BUSINESS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

-Mr. Phillips will be co-ordinating a “Bike to School Day” sometime in May. Parents and children will be encouraged to bike together. Further details will follow.

-Roy announced that planning for next fall’s *Evening In Days Park* fund raising event has begun. Dates under consideration included Saturdays, October 25 and November 15.

**Jennifer moved and Roy seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

-Meetings at 6:00 p.m. - May 7, 2014\*; June 18, 2014

\*2nd rather than 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday