

**The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, February 18, 2015**

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Jennifer Bernacki-Smith, Roy Clay, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Ingrid Knight, Andrew Mouw, Pamela Pollock, Natalie Stoyhoff

Trustees Excused: Matt Ryan, Marguerite Battaglia

Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director; Colby Smith, EVCS Owners' Rep.

Mimi Barnes-Coppola called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

1. Mimi presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no changes. Approved.
2. Minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on January 21, 2015, were presented. **Kathy moved and Jenn seconded that the minutes be accepted with the correction of the typographical error in section number six. Approved unanimously.**
3. CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Colby Smith, EVCS Owners' Rep., reported that Phase II was completed on schedule despite being slowed by the large amount of snow this winter. Of 118 items on the punch list, 28 remain outstanding. A number of these involve exterior work and will be completed in the spring.

Walk through with the architect will be scheduled soon. Currently, there is \$43,000 left of the contingency fund, with those projects outstanding. Colby is working on close-out packages, warrantee sheets, materials data, etc. He will continue to monitor the project for one year to be sure that everything is performing according to warrantee. The Board expressed gratitude to Colby for his exemplary service as Owners' Rep.

4. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Andrew presented the financial reports for December, 2014, and January, 2015. For the seven months ended January 31, 2015, EVCS showed an increase in net assets of \$373,048 versus a budgeted decrease in net assets of \$241,040. The result is a favorable variance of approximately \$614,008. A significant portion of this variance is attributable to the SSF grant monies related to the building expansion. A question was raised about the fundraising expense line of the budget. Andrew will seek clarification from the accountant. **Ingrid moved and Natalie seconded that the financial reports for December, 2014, and January, 2015, be accepted as presented. Approved unanimously.**

5. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

John distributed copies of the 2014/2015 Student Code of Conduct. Revisions were made in consultation with attorney Bruce Goldstein, in order to ensure that it was in compliance with NY State law. The Code retains the essence of the original EVCS covenant but states behaviors in specific terms and cites specific sections of NY State Education Law. A copy of the Code and a letter stating that it was in compliance with the law, were sent to Susan Gibbons of the NY State Education Department. **Kathy moved and Pam seconded a motion to approve the revised Student Code of Conduct as presented. Approved unanimously.**

6. ADMISSIONS POLICY

-It has come to the attention of school leaders that, although the standard NY State application and lottery process have been used since the school's inception, it has not resulted in the desired

demographic. EVCS has retained the services of Kevin Quinn, Albany based attorney, to assist in developing an equitable admissions policy which will fulfill the obligations of applicable charter school laws.

-A task force to work on developing such an equitable admissions policy was named. Members include: John Sheffield, Anne Wechsler, Liz Evans, Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Jennifer Bernacki-Smith and Pamela Pollock.

-Pam moved and Ingrid seconded that the Board enter executive session in order to discuss legal matters. Approved unanimously. Discussion followed. **Mimi moved and Kathy seconded that the Board exit executive session. Approved unanimously.**

7. DISCUSSION 403(b)

Having approved a 403(b) retirement program for EVCS non-instructional personnel, the need remains to determine the school's contribution, if any. The Financial Committee will investigate the matter and report back to the Board.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Personnel

John requested approval to grant Jennifer Seitz, Title I reading teacher, unpaid leave with no benefits until May 4, 2015. **Natalie moved and Andrew seconded that the leave be granted as requested. Approved unanimously.**

Weather Related Closings

-At this point, EVCS will be in compliance with our charter by tacking on days in June. Opening earlier than Buffalo after the November Storm helped to preserve instructional days.

-If the school has to close this week, John will recommend converting April 8 from a vacation day to an instructional day.

-John recommended that the school stay open Thursday and Friday, unless wind chill factors fall below -30 degrees.

-Parents have been informed that if the school is open on Thursday and Friday, that they will have to use their own good judgement as to whether or not their children should take the bus.

-Since EVCS is contracting with the bus this week, buses will run at the discretion of the school.

Academic Report

-Data meetings are being held this week and next.

-Teachers are using a wide range of reports from STAR (Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading) including a standard-by-standard report that shows which students are exceeding, meeting, or falling below each of the Common Core Standards. Each assessment provides estimates of students' skills and comparison of Students' abilities to national norms. The State Standards Report aids in developing curriculum and instruction by providing feedback about student, classroom, and grade-level progress. When particular deficits are noted, teachers identify remedial strategies in their weekly lesson plans. Individual student's progress is monitored from the beginning of the year to the mid-year point; students who are not making adequate progress are referred to the Child Study Team for an intervention plan.

9. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION UPDATE

Roy reported that the CA is doing well. There is a new "Yoga and Meditation" enrichment group open to students in grades 5-8. A Glee Club will be starting soon. These special activities typically last for 8-10 weeks. He will be contacting Lisa Kirisits as he needs an updated Treasurer's Report.

10. NEW BUSINESS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ingrid reported that she, and another EVCS parent, Tanicka Shedrick, had attended Charter

School Advocacy Day in Albany. They met with various lawmakers attempting to dispel some of the many myths about charter schools and gain more support. Her general impression was that the legislators know very little about charter schools, partially because charter advocates have failed to educate them. Various strategies such as letter writing, inviting them to visit, etc. were discussed.

Andrew moved and Roy seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

-Meetings at 6:00 p.m.: Mar. 18, 2015; Apr. 15, 2015; May 13, 2015; June 17, 2015;
July 2015 no meeting; Aug. 19, 2015