

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, June 17, 2009

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia-Evans, Shirley Courton, Liz Evans, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Kitty Herrick, Regan Ihde, Pam Pollock, Kelli Simpson,

Trustees Absent: Paul Souter

Others Present: John Sheffield, Director, Paul Marzello and Concetta Ferguson, prospective Trustees, Ann Sullivan and Jessica Mahle, EVCS teachers

Liz Evans called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

1. Liz presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no additions. Approved.
2. Minutes from the meeting held on May 20, 2009, were presented. **Kathy moved and Kitty seconded that the minutes from 5-20-09 be accepted as submitted. Approved.**
3. RELATED SERVICES DISCUSSION
EVCS teachers, Jessica Mahle and Ann Sullivan, spoke about the related services provided to the students. In addition to the compliance problems noted at the time of the third year review, they cited difficulties scheduling around specials and essential instructional/testing periods, limited integration of related services into the instructional program, and the impossibility of providing required make-up sessions, in view of the differences between the EVCS school calendar and that followed by service providers from the Buffalo Board of Education. They advocated for the use of a private contractor for related services to address these issues. The Board heard a proposal from Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center at its May meeting. The promised proposal from Diversified Services has not been received. Kelli reported that she has worked with Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center providing services at her pre-school for years. Everyone has been very satisfied with their program. **Marguerite moved and Mimi seconded that John be authorized to contract with Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center to provide related services for EVCS, provided that they can meet the needs for OT and PT. If BHSC is unable to fill the OT and PT needs, John should keep those two services with the current provider, OTIS, and contract with BHSC for speech services only. Approved.** Pam Pollock abstained.
4. FUND-RAISING
- Andrea Rodriguez, chair of the Evening in the Atrium fund-raiser, reported that the first event, in 2008, earned \$5600 from ticket sales and \$5500 from the silent auction and other items on the evening it was held. The 2009 Evening in the Atrium will be held on Saturday, September 26. Patty Gonzalez has agreed to be the accountant for this year and hopes to identify specific items or activities that are the most profitable. Letters are available in the school office for the use of anyone who has a personal contact to solicit donations. Ticket prices for this year have been modified. Early bird tickets will be sold for \$25. Two weeks prior to the event they will increase to \$30. At the door tickets will be \$35.

-Andrea also proposed another fund-raising activity - a summer street bazaar to be held each Saturday in August in the school's south lot. Up to 30 10ft. by 16 ft. spots in the EVCS lot would be rented to area artists, craftsmen, etc. Each renter would pay a one-time fee of \$31 to the city of Buffalo to cover the cost of the permit and \$25 per Saturday (up to 5) to EVCS as rent. This would give them an opportunity to showcase and sell their products and also attract shoppers to our area as a community-based event. EVCS insurance provider has been consulted and does not consider this a liability issue. **Marguerite moved and Mimi seconded that EVCS be allowed to host a street bazaar under the conditions specified and that the proceeds come to the school as donations. Approved.**

5. BOARD MEMBERSHIP

-At the May Board meeting Marguerite introduced Paul Marzello as a candidate to fill the seat on the Board of Trustees vacated by David Rodriguez. The Board was favorably impressed by Mr. Marzello's credentials and with the brief discussion which followed his introduction. The potential appointment of Mr. Marzello was tabled until the June meeting in order that the Board President and the Director of the school might be present. **Marguerite moved and Regan seconded that Paul Marzello be appointed to fill the seat on the Board of Trustees vacated by David Rodriguez. Approved.**

-Liz introduced Concetta Ferguson who was elected by the EVCS parents to replace Kelli Simpson whose term as parent representative is expiring. Following a review of her credentials and a brief discussion, **Pam moved and Kitty seconded that Concetta Ferguson be appointed to fill the seat on the Board of Trustees vacated by Kelli Simpson. Approved.** Both Paul and Concetta have submitted their resumes and questionnaires which will be forwarded to Albany. Kelli was thanked for her hard work and wise counsel during her term as Trustee.

-It was noted that the terms of office of Marguerite Battaglia-Evans and Liz Evans were also expiring. Both expressed willingness to serve another three-year term as Trustee. **Mimi moved and Kitty seconded that Marguerite Battaglia-Evans and Liz Evans be elected to another term as Trustee. Approved.**

6. OFFICER ELECTIONS

The following slate of officers was presented: President -Liz Evans; Vice President - Mimi Barnes-Coppola; Secretary - Pam Pollock and Treasurer - Regan Ihde. **Kathy moved and Kitty seconded that the proposed slate of officers be elected in entirety. Approved.**

7. DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY

Enrollment - Projected enrollment for 2009-2010 is 174-177 students. Two students have been recommended to repeat second grade. Hence, if all current and newly expected students enroll, we will be over the target 175. This will require a charter amendment.

The Board will revisit the issue when enrollment figures for the fall are more concrete.

Academics - Interactive assessment reports showing aspects of EVCS students' performance on the 2008-2009 NYS ELA and NYS Math were distributed. These looked at performance of particular sub-groups. Trustees were advised to review them for further discussion at the August meeting.

Response to SED - The corrective action plan responding to the citation from SED regarding missed speech services has been completed and sent.

Financial - John filed a complaint with the Commissioner of Education regarding the manner in which the Buffalo Board of Education presented EVCS a bill for related

services. John was advised that we may not be liable since there was no negotiated contract in place. Representatives of the Buffalo Board will be meeting with individual charter schools during the summer to negotiate related service contracts for 2009-2010.

Fixed Asset Inventory and Disposition Policy - Copies of the proposed policy were distributed. There were questions about some of the stated figures. John will seek legal clarification on this prior to final Board approval.

EVCS and Medaille College Partnership Agreement - Trustees reviewed the 2009-2010 Educational Partnership Agreement. New this year is that Medaille will operate an On-site after-school reading clinic during the fall semester.

Employee Handbook - The school has been advised by its lawyers to be more specific in the areas discussing religious observance and domestic partnerships. John submitted a statement defining "domestic partnership" based on ACLU guidelines as well as a clarification of time off for religious observance. **Mimi moved and Pam seconded that these be approved as written and entered into the Employee Handbook. Approved.**

Employee Benefits - A new voluntary benefit is now available. Employees may use payroll deductions to pay for a whole-life life insurance policy and/or a short-term disability insurance policy. These programs come at no extra cost to the school.

Freedom of Information Law Request - NYSUT is trying to determine whether the New York State Charter School Association and the Western New York Charter School Coalition are engaging in "union busting". They filed a FOIL request for all records of all EVCS communication with these groups. After consulting with legal counsel, the information, which amounted to 438 pages, has been compiled and sent.

Staff Changes for 2009-2010

Jessica Mahle to kindergarten - dual certification in Elementary and Special Ed. is asset
Patty Mietus to grade 5 - She has had previous experience with this age group.

Anne Landrigan - Special ed. and Special Ed. Coordinator position

Eliminate Kelly Bohr from Special Ed.

Tara Czamara to Special Ed. - dual certification

Theresa Jankowski to grade 3 - returning to area and EVCS

Summer Staff Development - Staff development, beginning August 17, 2009, will focus on continued work on Responsive Classroom, instructional technology and expanded use of SMART Boards, continued work on writing rubrics, vertically aligning the curricula in writing mechanics, science and social studies, line-item analysis of Math and ELA Assessments focusing on performance within content strands, expanded training in the Orton-Gillingham approach and differentiated instruction. Teachers who will be changing assignments will participate in an additional three days of professional development in the Lucy Caulkins Writing Workshop Model specific to their new grade level.

AmeriCorps - AmeriCorps is a program which allows schools to split the cost of a teaching assistant with the federal government. EVCS is eligible for an additional AmeriCorps member through President Obama's recovery plan. Candidate is certified in elementary education with a concentration in literacy, and is currently working on a master's degree in special education. It is hoped that she can assume responsibility for

the scripted corrective reading program. However, the AmeriCorps assistants, vary widely in training and ability and begin work after Oct.1. Next year's 4th grade class is a difficult one involving a high number of students with special needs. John is proposing to decline one AmeriCorps assistant and used the money saved and some additional dollars to re-hire an experienced teaching assistant, who is once again available, for that class. **Kitty moved and Pam seconded that John be empowered to use his discretion to make a strong appointment for grade 4 teaching assistant. Approved.**

Charter Renewal - John reminded the Board that the application for our 5th year renewal is actually due on July 1, 2010. This is a long process which involves rewriting and revising the original Charter

8. TREASURER'S REPORT

Regan presented the treasurer's reports for months ending May 31, 2009. For the month ending 5-31-09 EVCS incurred an actual increase in net assets of \$402,500 against a budgeted decrease in net assets of \$43,900. The result is a favorable variance of \$446,400. **Mimi moved and Liz seconded that the financial report for 5-31-09 be accepted. Approved.** With the expiration of Kelli Simpson's term as Trustee, the Financial Committee will be looking for another member.

9. OLD BUSINESS

-The Task Force on Middle School Expansion has had two widely varying appraisals of the School#36 building. The first, a full appraisal, came in at \$725,000. A member of the Task Force who has knowledge of real estate issues, Bill Ferguson, suggested obtaining a second appraisal. A "restricted appraisal" was done by a city-approved appraisal firm, which valued the building at \$250,000 and pointed out some specific areas at issue. There are boiler problems which will require fixing or possible replacement. An elevator will be needed at an estimated cost of \$60,000. There is asbestos, but it is apparently stable and confined to the floor tiles. There will be another meeting of the Task Force prior to the August Board meeting to attempt to formulate a formal recommendation to the Board.

- Data is available from the Board's evaluation of the Director. It is obvious that John has acted in an ethical, legal and prudent manner in following his job description as outlined in the Charter. Liz, Pam, Shirley, Kitty and Concetta volunteered to serve on a committee to formalize the evaluation process and complete the write-up of this year's evaluation based on these established criteria.

10. NEW BUSINESS

There was no other new business.

A motion to adjourn was made by Marguerite and seconded by Regan. Approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:31p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

-Next meeting of the EVCS Board is Wednesday, August 19, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.

-Second Annual Evening in the Atrium is Saturday, September 26, 2009