

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday October 21, 2015

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola, Marguerite Battaglia, Jennifer Bernacki-Smith, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Ingrid Knight, Pamela Pollock, Matt Moscati, Matt Ryan, Liz Santacrose, Natalie Stoyanoff

Trustees Excused: None

Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director; Liz Evans, EVCS Operations Manager; Karen Burhans, CPA, Kirisits & Associates; Thomas M. Burns, CPA, Auditor, Lumsden McCormick, LLP; Peter J. DeSabio, CPA, Lumsden-McCormick

Mimi Barnes-Coppola called the meeting to order at 6:04 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 September 16, 2015, were presented. **Matt moved and Jenn seconded that the minutes be accepted. Approved unanimously.**
3. Mimi announced that Matt Moscati and Liz Santacrose had been approved as trustees by the NY State Education Department. Matt officially agreed to accept the position of Treasurer of the EVCS Board of Trustees.
4. ANNUAL AUDIT

Auditors reported no material weaknesses and stated that their recommendations were not deemed to indicate significant weaknesses. Highlights included:

- During the period 2014-2015 EVCS revenues increased faster than expenses.
- Long term debt increased significantly over the past year.
- In terms of fiscal responsibility, a sum of 1.5 to 3, or greater, indicates that an organization is fiscally sound. EVCS has a sum in excess of 3 and is hence judged to be fiscally sound.
- 2013-2015 was judged to be a positive period with no areas of weakness and no areas of concern.

See full report for details.

The question was asked about how EVCS might best use current surplus monies in a fiscally responsible way. Mr. Burns noted that in the current financial market, the best way to make money is generally to reduce debt. The financial committee will look into prudent options for this. **Matt Ryan moved and Ingrid seconded that the Board accept the annual audit report and approve the financial statements up to September 30, 2015. Approved unanimously.**

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT September, 2015

Karen Burhans, CPA, reported that for the three months ended September 30, 2015, EVCS showed a decrease in net assets of approximately \$344,742 vs. a budgeted decrease in net assets of \$499,833. The result was a favorable variance of approximately \$155,091. See full report for details.

Regarding some seemingly delayed financial reports at the end of summer, Karen explained that, with the annual audit report due by November first, the books for year-end months of July, August and September are left open longer. The goal is zero audit adjustments. **Ingrid moved and Kathy seconded that the September, 2015 financial report be accepted, Approved unanimously.**

6. REPLICATION COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT

Liz reported that she had recently visited the South Bronx Classical Charter School which now has three schools which share some instructional and business services. The committee has had several telephone conversations with people at the Charter School Institute. She has been assured that it is possible to form a second school under a new authorizer and then merge the two schools - possibly even before the second school opens its doors. The committee has reached out to teachers and has made a presentation to the Community Association. They felt that responses were generally positive and the project seemed "very do-able". A "letter of intent" would be due in Albany on December 11, 2015, and the full application would be due six weeks later. Marguerite is in the process of scheduling some community meetings in an effort to gain evidence of community support. Parent representatives countered that they have been approached by some who do not fully understand the proposal and have concerns that a second school might somehow dilute the excellence of the current one. Several other Board members were concerned the matter needed additional discussion before consensus could be reached. Natalie suggested that a careful examination of all details, especially potential pros and cons, could be the topic for the annual Board continuing education retreat. Board members agreed to meet at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 7, 2015, to work on this project.

7. RE-BRANDING: Website and Logo Status

Liz presented several possible logo designs and spirit wear options for discussion. Suggestions were made regarding use of colors and lettering styles. Board members were asked to e-mail additional questions and suggestions to Liz so she can discuss them with the artist.

Liz also reported that she had two reasonable proposals for an updated website. She felt that one was superior in that the designer was more experienced and had taken the time to speak to some parents before making his proposal. **Marguerite moved and Natalie seconded that EVCS retain David Cloyd to update the EVCS website. Approved unanimously.**

8. Liz also presented two previously discussed resolutions regarding the EVCS admissions policy.

**RESOLUTION #1 OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
THE ELMWOOD VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL**

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees duly called and held on October 21, 2015, be it

RESOLVED, that families of children admitted to EVCS through the lottery as a Buffalo resident must live within the city of Buffalo on the first Day of the school year for which they were admitted. Any families not living within the city of Buffalo on the first day of school will forfeit their spot to the next eligible student on the waiting list for that grade level.

Kathy moved and Natalie seconded that Resolution # 1 be adopted. Approved unanimously.

**RESOLUTION #2 OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
THE ELMWOOD VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL**

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees duly called and held on October 21, 2015, be it

RESOLVED, that beginning in the 2016-2017 school year children of EVCS staff members will be given preference in the admissions lottery. First preference is given to returning students, then siblings of current students, then children of current EVCS staff, then students residing in Buffalo, then all other eligible students who return applications by the deadline.

Jenn moved and Natalie seconded that Resolution #2 be adopted. Approved unanimously.

9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Personnel

John made the following proposals regarding personnel:

- Leroy Horne, Sr. (full-time custodian) has completed his probationary period as supervisor, and will transition to full-time effective November 1, 2015, to replace James Graham (approved by the BOT in August). John proposed that Mr. Horne's pay be increased from \$10.30 per hour to \$11.00 per hour effective November 1, 2015.
- John asked the Board accept the resignation of Leroy Horne, Jr. (part-time custodian).
- John asked the BOT to approve the appointment of Anthony Brown as part-time custodian, and approve a 28 day emergency waiver of national background check (in progress). He has received a clear local background check.

Pam moved and Kathy seconded that the Board approve the requested personnel actions.

Approved unanimously.

Staff Health Insurance

In order to stay in compliance with the Affordable Care Act, EVCS must now provide single health insurance to all employees working more than 30 hours per week. John requested approval to pay 80% of the premium for single health insurance coverage for employees whose FTE is between 30 and 39 hours per week, with no buyout option. The benefit would go into effect for two employees at the anniversary date of the insurance. **Kathy moved and Pam seconded that the health care coverage for employees working 30-39 hours per week be provided as described. Approved unanimously.**

John has been exploring health insurance options for next year. He distributed a chart comparing the plans. He recommended that EVCS switch from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to Independent Health. Given the modest increases to premiums that would be incurred by switching, he also recommended that EVCS continue to pay 100% of single coverage, and 85 % of the various family plans, and that EVCS continue to offer the \$2,000 buyout for full-time employees who decline health insurance coverage. **Marguerite moved and Mimi seconded that, for 2016, EVCS change insurance provider from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to Independent Health under the conditions described. Approved unanimously.**

Academics

- STAR testing has been completed and data review meetings have been held for all classes.
- Interim Assessments are complete for nearly all classes, and all will be complete by the end of next week.
- The following professional development has taken place since the opening of school:
 - September 14; Detecting OT, PT and Speech Issues by BHSC Staff (1 hr.)
 - September 25; Using Interim Assessment Data Effectively by Anne Wechsler (3hrs.)
 - October 19; Response to Intervention (RTI) by Anne Landrigan (1hr.)

Current Poverty Rate

The poverty rate for the 2015-2016 school year is up to 52% from 49% in 2014-2015 and from 47% in 2013-2014.

10. SCHOOL ATTORNEY SEARCH

Since the reorganization of EVCS's attorneys, Damon and Morey, to merge and become Barclay-Damon, Jenn has been investigating how this might effect the school and whether another firm might better fill the needs. She narrowed the field to three firms and finally recommended the firm Hodson-Russ. She felt that their firm contained the broadest range of expertise and that they had a great deal of experience representing schools. She also noted that the school's contact

person was available and easy to talk to. Some discussion ensued. **Natalie moved and Liz Santacrose seconded a motion that EVCS retain the law firm of Hodson-Russ to represent the school. Approved unanimously.**

11. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION UPDATE

In consideration of the lateness of the hour, the Community Association update was deferred until the November meeting.

12. NEW BUSINESS /ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was no additional business nor announcements.

Marguerite moved and Mimi seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Pollock

Future meetings-Meetings at 6:00 p.m.: Nov. 18, 2015; Dec. 16, 2015; Jan 20, 2016; Feb.17, 2016;
Mar. 16, 2016; April 20, 2016; May 11, 2016; June 15, 2015