

The Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Trustees Present: Marguerite Battaglia-Evans, Leah Eagan-Stoddard, Liz Evans, Concetta Ferguson, Kathy Franklin-Adams, Catherine Herrick, Frank Housh, Pam Pollock, Matt Ryan

Trustees Absent: Mimi Barnes-Coppola

Others Present: John Sheffield, EVCS Director

Liz Evans called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

1. Liz presented the agenda for the meeting. There were no changes. Approved.
2. Minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on February 15, 2012 were presented.

Matt moved and Leah seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. Approved unanimously.

3. FINANCIALS

The Board reviewed the financial statement for the seven-month period ended February 29, 2012. Finances are stable despite being slightly over budget in several areas. **Frank moved and Pam seconded that the financial report be accepted as presented. Approved unanimously.**

John mentioned that there is a bill in the NY State Legislature cut funding for charter schools. It has passed in the House of Representatives, but does not appear likely to pass in the Senate.

4. EXPANSION/FACILITIES UPDATE

A. Since the last Board meeting, there have been three public meetings to discuss the school's expansion:

-Matt chaired an informational meeting with members of the Days Park Block Club.

The meeting was well attended and all parties were heard. Feedback about the meeting was generally positive. The fact that Jerry Strickland's office is located on Allen makes him close to the community.

-A second public forum at First Presbyterian Church was also positive, but less well attended.

-The meeting with the Kleinhans Community Association also went well.

-Plans have been submitted to the Preservation Board and the Planning Board.

B. The Facilities Committee, HHL and BRD, have met with the bankers. They are approaching the desired financial figures. Talks have included discussion of both the Phase II construction and the playground. However, those items will be deferred until a later time. EVCS will be looking for sponsors for the projects. Although most of our regular vendors contribute something, there will be a need for greater participation. It was suggested that the school investigate a PayPal account for greater ease of processing contributions and payments.

C. Plans to sublet the current site on Elmwood met with a setback when Autistic Services was informed by the NY State Department of Education that approval of the plan to expand their program was contingent on significant reduction in the use of teacher aides.

They assert that the success of their program is dependent on the high adult-to-child ratio. It was suggested that EVCS hire a broker to facilitate sub-lease process. **Frank moved**

and Leah seconded that Scott Roth, at Militello Realty be asked to serve in this capacity. Approved unanimously.

D. Matt reported that the property owned by Noel Sutton, which is adjacent to the EVCS parking lot, has been inspected. The inspector reported that the basement of Mr. Sutton's building is leaking on all four sides because his building is rotting. He stated that EVCS was not responsible and that Mr. Sutton has "no legal recourse." **Matt moved and Concetta seconded that EVCS decline to be a party to the license agreement proposed by Mr. Sutton, owner of 149 Elmwood Avenue. Approved unanimously.**

5. DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

John expressed thanks and appreciation to the staff and the congregation of First Presbyterian Church for their gracious hospitality in housing the EVCS Middle School during this interim year. Their professionalism and their kindness have been much appreciated.

John announced that the Theater of Youth (TOY) has been using the EVCS Atrium and cafeteria for some special classes and activities when school is not in session.

Personnel

-John proposed a raise of \$.50 per hour for part-time custodian, James Graham, to become effective March 26, 2012. **Marguerite moved and Catherine seconded that the proposal for a \$.50 per hour raise for James Graham be approved. Approved unanimously.**

-Resumes are coming in anticipating possible vacancies for September, 2012. John is considering some possible in-house changes prior to determining exactly where any vacancies might exist.

Enrollment

Applications for the lottery are due April 1, 2012. To date there are 372 applications filed. Breakdown follows: K - 189; 1st - 28; 2nd - 34; 3rd - 31; 4th - 23; 5th - 37; 6th - 16; 7th - 12; 8th - 2. After sibling preference, the drawing will be for 19 seats in kindergarten. The lottery will be held at 6:00 p.m., on Wednesday, April 4, 2012. Because of the anticipated size of the crowd and the emotion of the evening, John will ask Mark Williams to provide security for the lottery. There is a misconception in the community that EVCS is doubling enrollment this year. Hence, some parents expect at least 25 seats open for each grade level.

Academics

-On March 15, 2012, John attended training at BOCES on the latest revisions to the NYS mandates for teacher evaluations. Some very positive revisions have been made that include the elimination of vendor generated tests for sixth through eighth grade science and social studies; The elimination of Student Learning Objectives, and additional two-point tests in science and social studies for teachers who have more than 50% of their students taking a New York State Assessment; and the ability to use the STAR Assessment data in two categories in grades where no state assessments are administered, one for growth goals and one for achievement goals.

-EVCS held a half-day of professional development for all staff on March 16, 2012. Topics included operating values, SMART Board use, strategies from *Teach Like a Champion*, student led portfolio conferences, and a guided study on the article, *What if the Secret to Success Is Failure?*

Busing

With the announced closing of St. Margaret School, John has requested a statement from the Buffalo School District as to whether, or not, they will allocate those buses to EVCS. St. Margaret School has a 7:50 a.m. start time. And EVCS is, supposedly, next on the waiting list for buses. There has been no response to this inquiry at this time.

Assembly Budget

Should the NYS Assembly version of the State Budget, which includes cuts in charter school funding, pass, EVCS stands to lose over \$473,000 in anticipated revenue next year. John has spoken with the New York State Charter School Association. They outlined lobbying efforts that are being made. They do not believe that this cut will be included in the NYS Senate's budget, and the Assembly has no desire to fight it.

Fund Raising

John and Concetta met with CA Chair, Amy Flaherty, and Silvia Johnson to discuss ways to attract corporate sponsors for Evening In the Atrium and to increase revenue from the annual appeal. The school is currently exploring a PayPal account to make donations easier for supporters. Other ideas include targeting specific items to be purchased with proceeds from the Annual Appeal.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was no further old business.

7. NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

-Liz announced that West Buffalo Charter School will be opening this fall at the old Lafayette Hospital on West Lafayette Avenue. John added that the new Director of the school called John and expressed a desire to work cooperatively with EVCS as fellow members of the charter school community.

-The group *Peace of the City* owns a lot on Hudson Street where they plan to put in a block of eight family units to be called "Cynthia Gardens".

-The EVCS CA is talking with the Allentown Association about cooperating for a neighborhood clean-up.

-John announced that a slip-and-fall lawsuit against EVCS had been settled for \$20,000.

-Cozumel has requested that EVCS parents parking in their lot for drop-off and pick-up display a sign reading *EVCS Parent* on the dashboard. This will prevent being mistaken for unauthorized parkers. They hope to again use the EVCS parking lot during Cinco de Mayo festivities. They will take care of the insurance rider.

A motion to adjourn was made by Marguerite and seconded by Frank. Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Pollock

FUTURE DATES:

Meetings at 6:00 p.m.: Apr. 18, 2012; May 9, 2012*; June 20, 2012; Aug. 15, 2012

* 2nd Wednesday