

**Elmwood Village Charter Schools
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, January 24, 2024
Site: EVCS Hertel**

Trustees Present: Patti Anderson; Jennifer Bernacki Smith; Lacle Brumfield; Ed Castine; Kathy Franklin-Adams; Ken Gholston; Nicca Lebeda; George McLean; Joahua Pennel; Jake Piorkowski; Pamela Pollock; Matt Ryan; Anna Sotelo-Peryea

Trustees Absent: None

Trustees Excused: Mimi Barnes Coppola;

Others Present: Danielle Bruno, EVCS Head of Schools; Liz Evans, EVCS Director of Operations; Anne Wechsler, EVCS Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Lisa Kirisits, CPA, representing Kirisits & Associates, EVCS Accountants

CALL TO ORDER

Jen called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. She presented the agenda. There were no changes.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Elmwood Village Charter Schools Board of Trustees meeting held on December 20, 2023 were presented. There were no changes.

Matt moved and George seconded that the minutes be approved as presented. Approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lisa Kirisits reported a bank balance of \$6.7 million. The ESSER Grant money has nearly all been spent. She reported assets of \$7 million vs. liabilities of \$2 million. This is considered to be a good ratio. Ed Castine, chair of the Finance Committee, reminded the group that \$1 million had been moved from the operating account to the investment account as had been discussed at last month's meeting.

Lisa noted that the "clawback" monies which have been discussed at length at previous meetings, are beginning to be paid out. She suggested developing a budget strategy for these funds as they are received.

Discussion of the Form 990 was postponed until the February meeting.

Josh moved and Anna seconded that the financial report be approved.

Approved unanimously.

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The Directors' Report was prepared jointly by Danielle Bruno, Liz Evans and Anne Wechsler,

Director of Schools

School Leadership and Culture

- Google Review Campaign - please take a moment to leave a Google review for Days Park/Hertel
- Black History Month - Teacher leaders from both campuses are collaborating to plan a student-focused program (day and evening) to celebrate Black History; led by Mrs. Delaney and Mrs. Badger
- Annual American Heart Association events in PE, plus fundraiser
- Bullying prevention - Assemblies and preventative programming created by Mr. Williamson (based on Teach Like A Champion Dean of Students Curriculum and PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center Teens Against Bullying Program)
- Additional training for McKinney Vento liaisons and awareness for staff
- 7th and 8th grade Hertel students creating a documentary about the first graduating class of 2024
- Therapy dogs at both campuses (Paws for Love)
- 8th grade jobs at both campuses - students participate in campus-based community service to focus on the 3 Cs of the EVCS mission statement and build their leadership and responsibility
- Winter Sports Season (Hertel basketball team invited to St. Francis tournament, unfortunately cancelled due to snow)

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Academics

- Parent-teacher conferences on 1/25
- Mid-year STAR administration and data meetings will be done by end of month
- Mid-year SEL survey will happen first week in February

-4th graders will take NAEP on 1/30/24 (National Assessment of Educational Progress)

Coaching

- Mid-year SMARTE goal check-ins in progress
- Instructional rounds were focused on math instruction
- Continuing with observations and feedback cycle

Professional Development

- 1/2 day PD on 1/11 (topics included academic monitoring, math retrieval practice, deescalation strategies, etc.)

Director of Operations

Operations/Facilities

Hertel: Liz met with representatives from People, Inc. and the attorney representing EVCS regarding water meter readings. The attorney asked EVCS to figure out the usage percentage for the house vs. the School, which is in process. However, they informally agreed to pay that percentage of water and sewer costs. People Inc. did pay half the cost of water line repair from 2022.

Days Park: Additional outside cameras were added to the building to increase the ability to monitor neighborhood conditions that might affect security at Days Park.

Shared: EVCS is investigating the possibility of becoming its own food service authority in order to bid out food service providers. The plan is to visit a school in Buffalo next week to try the quality of the food, that would probably be similar to what EVCS could offer with its current facilities. A draft budget based on EVCS current student population and demographics has been obtained. School leaders are still assessing the possibility of putting this into place.

Admissions/Student Enrollment

Enrollment Projections: Enrollment is unchanged from last month.

Applications: The new applications are on a par with the rate from two years ago, which is slightly behind last year. EVCS is sending out a press release announcing March open houses to media contacts. EVCS is also doing a post-card campaign with a link to the application and asking staff to put them up and distribute them in the community. Applications are due 4/5/24.

Technology

Computer based testing practice on 1/23/24 went well with only one log-in issue. Thanks to Melina Hong and testing coordinator Melissa Wine for the planning that went into the test.

Grants/Finance

Grants: EVCS did not receive the Stronger Connections Grant - only 4 area charter schools did. EVCS has requested feedback on our application.

Finance: Compensation study has been concluded. Findings will be shared with the Finance Committee at their 2/12/24 Meeting. An *initial presentation* of EVCS findings with our position in the local market in regards to compensation levels was shared.

HR Updates

Health Insurance rates from Univera came back with an initial increase of 13%. This was negotiated down to 8.9%. This was disappointing, but was based on a number of high-cost employees which will hopefully be mitigated in the coming year with another year of experience with EVCS. If Univera is not able to decrease the rate next year, EVCS can go to market to bid out coverages.

Other Business

Board development-Strategic Planning:

Lindsay Haldeman/Jon Thatcher

NYCON (\$700)

Board Resources from SUNY Charter School Institute (Topic, guidance, legal requirements, etc.)

<https://www.newyorkcharters.org/resource-center/board-resources-tools-model-documents/>

Academic Excellence Committee
Finance Committee
Nominating Committee
Space planning Committee
Development and Advocacy Committee
EVCS Culture Committee

The committee will meet in the near future.
See Treasurer's report.
Nothing new to report.
The committee is scheduled to meet next Wednesday.
Nothing new to report
The committee is scheduled to meet on the first Wednesday in February.

ANNUAL REPORTS

-A new document is forthcoming regarding updated school policies in various areas.

SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

The Charter School Institute has pushed the deadline for school charter renewal applications to April 1st. This will apply to the Days Park campus.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

The EVCS Website is currently undergoing an informational update. Items being addressed include requirements; Board contact information; complaint procedures, etc.

124 ELMWOOD -Update

Final documents and other requirements are forthcoming. Everything seems to be on track for a final resolution.

PEOPLE INC./ HERTEL CAMPUS - Waterline Issue

The issue of the adjoining water lines remains under investigation and discussion.

SPED FUNDING

A change in Special Education funding has been proposed. It appears that this might produce a small increase for EVCS. However Details remain unclear.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Community Associations from both the Hertel and Days Park Campuses are discussing the pros and cons of merging for fundraising purposes. A Meat Raffle is to be held at the Hertel Campus on Friday, March 15, 2024. This event will also feature 50-50s, basket raffles and possible other attractions. A chocolate sale is also being planned.

ADMINISTRATION, PERSONNEL & BOARD MANAGEMENT

Matt moved and Ed seconded that the Board enter executive session to discuss Administration, Personnel and Board management issues. Approved unanimously.

Relevant discussion ensued

Ed moved and Matt seconded that the Board exit executive session. Approved Unanimously.

Matt moved and Ed seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pollock

EVCS Board Secretary

Future Meeting Dates: Feb. 28, 2024; March 19, 2024; April 24, 2024; May 15, 2024; June 19, 2024

All meetings begin at 6:00 PM