

**River Valley Charter School
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting # 238
November 14, 2017 7:00 pm**

In Attendance: Officers: Chair: Mark Belanger, Vice Chair: John Siegfried, Treasurer: Mason Mitchell- Daniels, Secretary: Katherine Brown **Trustees:** Ben Scherz, Josh Porter, Amber Hewett, Alfred Link, Nina Keery, Nat Coughlin, Jennifer McCormick, Pamela Brockmeier Armstrong, Kimberley Klibansky

Director: Andy Willemsen

Jonnie Lyn Evans, Deb McCrevan, Colin Vandenberg

Foundation Member- Bevin Andrews

Call to Order: 7:01

Acceptance of Previous Minutes:

Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion "To Accept Previous Minutes"

Motion by Nat Coughlin, 2nd Ben Scherz. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.

Public Comment: none

Working Groups Update-

Trustee Group- John Siegfried reported that this group is moving towards being the Committee on Trustees. As a group they have re-organized the list from the retreat in order to focus on the following categories: Academic growth, Community, Human Resources, Committee on Trustees and Miscellaneous goals. John passed copies of the list around to the Board and asked that each member prioritize three items and return the list.

Accountability Committee Update-

Ben Scherz reported that the committee reviewed the Montessori Audit Report and MCAS data as well as the recommendations made for RVCS. The Accountability Committee discussed finding the balance between an assessment driving instruction and the Montessori philosophy.

Development Committee Update-

Jennifer McCormick reviewed the upcoming events calendar with the Board.

11/17/17 Newburyport Chamber of Commerce Eye Opener at RVCS

1/3/18 Alumni Event at Newburyport Brewing

1/23/18 9th and 10th grade alumni invited to visit with RVCS 8th graders.

Jennifer reported that the Parents Alliance has a new volunteer coordinator and will soon be offering volunteer opportunities using a website signup.com.

Jennifer reminded the Board of the Annual Appeal in November and asked for 100% Board participation.

Finance Committee Update-

Mason Mitchell-Daniels stated that the Finance Committee met to review the first quarter financials as presented by Deb McCrevan. Findings were that RVCS is on target with budget.

Nat Coughlin asked about the \$40,000. transfer and if a decision was made to discontinue. Mason Mitchell-Daniels responded with no decision has been made and it is on the agenda for future discussion. Mark Belanger added that the Capital Plan will help decide that later in the year and that a committee member has initiated the research on refinancing. Nat Coughlin asked if this was in conjunction with the foundation. Andy Willemsen replied stating that Stu Steinberg is making some preliminary contact with area banks.

Director's Report: Andy Willemsen

January 2nd Public Montessori Convening

Andy discussed the plans for the New England Public Montessori Convening scheduled for 1/2/18. RVCS is inviting other schools to RVCS in order to to share best practices and address common challenges of operating a public Montessori school.

Enrollment Policy

Jonnie Lyn Evans told the Board that the Department of Education would like to see clear terms for the RVCS Enrollment Policy. She discussed the policy updates, listed below, with the Board.

- Lottery date is changing- going forward it will be the Thursday FOLLOWING Feb break.
- Application deadline will be the Tuesday following February break.
- Opt-In is no longer permitted.
- “Applicants who apply for admission and are not offered a spot will receive an email from the school during the following enrollment period reminding the parent/guardian to submit an application in the next lottery if they continue to be interested in RVCS. Information may be pre-filled on the application but the parent will be required to verify the information and submit a new application every year.”
- Admission offers are only valid for 5 school days during school year and five business day during summer.
- Waitlists remain in effect until February 15th and openings during the school year will only be filled through February 15th.

Whenever there is an opening in grades K-4, RVCS will backfill the position with a student from the waitlist of the same grade as the withdrawal, through February 15th of the school year. Whenever there are openings in grades K-4 after February 15th RVCS will fill the opening with a student in the same cohort at the start of the next school year. For example, if a 3rd grader withdraws on March 1st, the opening will be filled with a 4th grade at the start of the next school year.

Whenever there is an opening in grades 5-8 through February 15th, RVCS will only fill the position with a student from the waitlist taking into consideration the following: overall school enrollment, ideal cohort size (32 students), academic programming, staffing, and/or financial considerations. Openings after February 15th will be filled the following year in the same cohort, except for grade 8. February 15 will be the new deadline for enrollment. If a spot becomes available after February 15 it will remain open until the start of the new school year.

After a brief question and answer period, Andy remarked that the intention of the state is to increase access to the school and that that may be a good thing. Jonnie Lyn added that the population attracted to RVCS may not represent the greater population

and that this change in enrollment policy could result in a more representative blend of students.

Jonnie Lyn mentioned that an admissions database has been purchased and implemented allowing families to apply online.

Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion “To Adopt the Enrollment Policy (Final Draft November 9, 2017) Provisional on Subsequent Approval by the Commissioner of Education”

Motion by Alfred Link, 2nd John Siegfried. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.

ReVision Energy Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)

Andy Willemsen reported that the Foundation Directors, the RVCS insurance agent, the RVCS school attorney and he have all reviewed the agreement, and ReVision Energy has accommodated all concerns and requests. Since the RVCS Foundation is the legal owner of the school building, they have the responsibility of making the final decision to enter into this agreement.

Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion “To Support a Subsequent Decision by the RVCS Foundation to Execute the Power Purchase Agreement Dated as Presented on the Meeting on November 14, 2017 (attached) with ReVision Energy”

Motion by Nat Coughlin, 2nd Amber Hewett. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.

Montessori Audit Report-

Andy Willemsen reported that the audit report findings were very positive and RVCS met all criteria. The auditors identified several areas to focus on moving forward: scheduling, E2 materials use, Montessori materials inventory, the RVCS website and data collection on RVCS graduates.

MCAS Results-

Andy Willemsen reviewed charts of MCAS results trends for RVCS as well as sending districts and the state with the Board. Andy discussed the math results stating the numbers for 3-5 grades are discouraging, grade 6 is better and grades 7 and 8 are well above state levels. Nat Coughlin commented on the math results continuing to improve through the Middle School grades and asked if there were evaluative tools to measure progress prior to the next MCAS. Andy Willemsen responded with RVCS is using many assessment tools. Andy Willemsen and Ben Scherz stated that the Accountability Committee is currently reviewing assessment tools.

Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion “To Enter Executive Session under Massachusetts Open Meeting Law”

Motion by Nat Coughlin, 2nd Ben Scherz. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.

Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion “To Exit Executive Session under Massachusetts Open Meeting Law”

Motion by Nat Coughlin, 2nd Pam Brockmeier Armstrong. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.

Vote: Alfred Link called for a Motion “To Approve a Bonus of \$10,000 for Andy Willemsen Based on Unexpected Savings from the Middle School Project and Efforts Above and Beyond the Expected Role by the Director During the Completion of Said Project”

Motion by Alfred Link, 2nd Nat Coughlin. Board of Directors votes: 1 Abstain from Mark Belanger, 11 “yes” votes from the Board.

Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion “To Adjourn”

Motion by Nat Coughlin, 2nd Alfred Link. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.

Adjourned: 9:08