

**River Valley Charter
School Board of
Directors Meeting
Meeting # 259 October
22, 2019 7:00 pm**

In Attendance: Officers: Chair: Pamela Brockmeier-Armstrong, Vice Chair: (Amber Hewett), Treasurer: Mark Bishop, Secretary: Karina Moltz Trustees: Nancy Durkee Mark Belanger Catherine Martin Sam Jordan (remote) Erin Seaton Nina Keery Jennifer McCormack Ali Fields Alfred Link

Absent: Amber
Hewett

* All votes taken via roll
call

Public: Dan Bouchard, Deb McCrevan, David Seaton, Anna
Wetmore Convened at 7:05 pm

Montessori Minute/RVCS Revelation Dave Draper showed diagramming of sentences – grammar leads to lots of interesting discussions. Example: diagramming sentences of The Raven has led to discussion of “tis” etc. Presented scope of sentence analysis that his class has been doing so far in the year.

Public Comment: David Seaton: 8th grader, wanted to share some events in the MS. Environmental Coalition has been working on a Zero Waste Day and Zero Waste Initiative. All E2 classes and MS classes are competing to see who can produce the least amount of trash. Group has also put up a scarecrow downtown to represent the amount of waste that is generated in the school. MS student government has been talking about a costume contest, maybe just for MS, maybe for the whole school. David has talked to JLE about the idea of posting a Pride flag in the MS area. Pam discussed the idea of Board being involved in policy decisions.

Approval of Minutes Motion: Mark
Bishop 2nd: Karina Moltz Roll call:
all unanimous (done out loud)

Director's Report (goals will be forthcoming next time):

Highlights

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- Roaring 20s party was a big success – thanks to everyone who worked on it
- Wastewater plan: city has some plans going on around the easements on the RVCS property, that the city plans to dredge and address. JLE and Deb McCrevan have met w 3 civil engineers and have selected one who they'd like to do the work.
- Accountability – MCAS results (available online through DESE)
 - Data can be hard to evaluate bc a large scope of students are grouped together.

JLE did some analysis to try to sort out results and see what the pattern looks like ○ Essentially the same pattern of results for the past 3 years (that's how long the test

has been consistent) – third graders don't do well, results go up as the grades go up ("hockey stick"). ○ Erin Seaton: there's a tension between serving the mission of the school and the

goals of the test. Early years of Montessori are not compatible w standardized testing. ○ Ali Fields: pattern has been seen for the past 15 years ○ Nina Keery: hopes that Accountability will keep COLs in focus as a capstone ex-

perience. ○ Alfred: because MCAS is the only measure that is constant across the years, it

gets a ton of scrutiny and examination. We need other measures to look at so we can figure out real patterns and not base everything on MCAS. ○

JLE has spreadsheets for MCAS results sorted if anyone wants to see it.

Accountability While AC does normal calendar of policies, etc, the Committee will also try to sort out MCAS results and figure out what the implications are. AC is working to come up with other measures that can be used to supplement and offset MCAS. Very excited about this project, but wants to make sure everyone knows how long of a project this would be. More notes above under "Director's Report".

Pam: appreciates the way that MCAS scores were presented this evening, and the increased transparency that has been seen so far this year.

Development

- Renewed focus on alumni: LinkedIn group, brewery get-together, reunion for graduating high-schoolers before they go to college
- Local politicians visiting school
- Three new members

Committee on Trustees:

- Committee did not meet formally this month. Sent along a powerpoint to new trustees so that they can review it and become acclimated and have any questions answered.
- CoT can share powerpoint around if people have questions about it
- Nina: CoT was working on assessment of director – was a decision made on the part of the EC to take the task away from CoT and take it to a working group that will sit outside of CoT? Nina has concerns about that decision bc volunteer groups often wind up not having any members.
- Nina proposes that chairs of each committee agree to sit on the working group that is re- viewing the director.
- Pam: important to consider this question – (not clear that a decision has been made)
- Mark: very important process to review and work on. Maybe we take one board meeting and review the progress that was made and see what still needs to be done.
- JLE: attended a Montessori training institute that included an evaluation portfolio with a public Montessori framework.
- Pam: seems that for now it should live with CoT, Jonnie Lyn should share info from in- stitute.
- Nina: feels strongly that it should not be a volunteer committee. Preferably the chair of each committee.

Finance Notes on audit meeting are in Finance Committee Report, along with documents relevant to the audit meeting.

Vote: Acceptance of audited financial report for year ending June 30, 2019:

We, the Board of Trustees of River Valley Charter School vote to accept the representations of management and the expression of opinions by Alexander, Aronson, Finning CPAs as embodied in the combined general purpose financial statements, supplementary schedules, and independent auditor's reports for the year ended June 30, 2019. We also certify that the representations made by management and the disclosures in the combined general purpose financial statements are accurate and have been correctly and completely disclosed as required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Charter School Audit Guide for the year ended June 30, 2019.

Discussion: Mark Belanger: reminder that we hire auditors to make sure that we are aligned w best practices and fraud is not being committed. Ali: do you hear differences in the letter this year? Mark: seems more lawyerly this year – they have disclaimers about not being able to prevent fraud, seems more like a liability protection.

Motion: Nina
Keery 2nd: Mark
Belanger

Roll call:
unanimous

Miscellaneous John Gregorio is stepping down as President of the Foundation, and Liz Fabel is replacing him. John will remain on the Foundation.

**Motion to
adjourn:**
Made by: Alfred
Link 2nd: Mark
Belanger