

**River Valley Charter  
School Board of Directors  
Meeting Meeting # 257  
August 13, 2019, 2019 7:00  
pm**

In Attendance: Officers: Chair: Pamela Brockmeier-Armstrong, Vice Chair: Amber Hewett (remote), Treasurer: (Mark Bishop), Secretary: Karina Moltz Trustees: Nina Keery, Mark Bishop, Erin Seaton, Jennifer McCormack, Katherine Brown, Mark Belanger, Alfred Link, Nancy Durkee, Sam Jordan (remote), Catherine Martin (remote) Director: Jonnie Lyn Evans Public: Deb McCrevan, Dan Bouchard

**Call to Order:** 7:02  
pm

**Public Comment:**  
none

**Introductions** – new members, Mark Bishop, Erin Seaton, Nancy Durkee, Dan Bouchard (not voting), Sam Jordan

**Chair:** The past year was busy and demanding and all turned out well – we are excited to welcome our new leadership team and to help with the transition year, be as supportive as we can, despite any bumps along the way. Our call is to support Jonnie Lynn and Dan in their work.

The BOT is the governance arm of the school. Jonnie Lyn is the management arm of the school. The school is the ship – we are the owners, Jonnie Lyn is the captain, she has chosen her crew, it is their job to direct the school, and our job to say “yes, and how can we help?”

**Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Vote: Mark Belanger called for a Motion “To Accept Previous Minutes”** 2nd Nina Keery Roll call: all yes votes except for Sam Jordan, Nancy Durkee, Erin Seaton who all abstained

**Director’s Report- (See Appendix A)**

Daily News article – if BOT members are asked about the article or allegations, questions should be directed to Jonnie Lyn Evans. BOT members aren’t involved in personnel issues and can’t comment.

Is there an increase in middle school SPED services this coming year? JLE: yes, it’s an increase.

There is a MS student who requires significant support for 2 of her core classes. A positive change.

Charter school advocacy will be a focus for the BOT this year. Someone from MPCSA will come to speak to the BOT at the September meeting.

### *Enrollment*

*Update: 29*

students leaving

3 students of staff members have come in off of the lottery list Every time there are large numbers of withdrawals it feels like there are red flags going up. JLE has talked to families to get a sense of why people are leaving. No patterns discernible, other than parents saying “it’s for social reasons” – example of a student who is thinking about high school and feeling concerned about not having a wide circle of friends.

Another student reported that in a multiage classroom there was not enough chance for the student to make friends – 3 girls of an age in a classroom. Many parents give their child a choice of whether to go or whether to stay.

School is fully enrolled – people still on waitlist

Questions about the storm pond drainage project: could we share the cost with any neighboring companies? JLE is looking into this.

Deb McCrevan– the main cost is to arrange for removal of the debris, it’s a long and involved procedure. Contacting Conservation Committee first to see what the first steps are. The state will dictate who is in charge of the process and what the timeline is. Estimate is of next summer, though it’s probably cheaper to do it in the winter because companies aren’t as busy, but we have to go through a bidding process, finding an engineer, it’s going to be a long process.

JLE – we should write up a project proposal that has scope and sequence, parameters, etc.

The Finance Committee is currently handling this but it will shift elsewhere in the BOT as the process goes on. Mention of possible middle school involvement as a project was suggested.

**Bucciarelli’s:** Increase in prices for school lunch for the coming year. Bucciarelli’s used to offer any kind of food and now it is going to have to be more limited. A rotating menu will be offered.

**Before Care/After Care** New system modeled after Amesbury, Pentucket, Newburyport. Aim of the program is to meet the needs of working families. MORNING – one price for arriving

between 7-7:30 am, another price for coming btwn 7:30 – 8:00 am. AFTERNOON – afternoon program will be split into two parts, similar pricing structure.

Preregistration fee will be \$20/family. If families are late to register then it'll be \$30. Trying to avoid last minute drop-ins. It's important to be thoughtful about how the afterschool program is run regarding the mission, and JLE and Dan Bouchard want to keep the program accessible and also structured.

Plan to roll out new system w families – Dan is creating a document for families w fee structure and FAQs.

Financial assistance – last year there was a big jump in how many families were asking for financial aid for lunch, aftercare/before-care, field trips, etc. Lunch really hit RVCS in terms of cost – kids might bring lunches even when RVCS was paying for the lunch. RVCS was paying for 10-12 lunches per day.

Mark Belanger expressed desire to keep financial support in place. There is lots of evidence around kids getting fed and how important it is. Also lots of evidence about any kind of access barrier being really prohibitive.

JLE – RVCS always has food available.

Costs are rising - \$5000 in the last year. Difficult bc JLE never wants to deny a child an opportunity to participate in programs and benefit from enrichment, etc. Feels like it's getting a little unwieldy.

Jennifer McCormack - foundation would likely be willing to participate in filling in gaps in funding for lunches, etc.

Giving parents some education about how to apply for assistance etc could be useful. When parents move on to high school, college, etc.

Director's  
Goals

- The goal is to work on goals! Working for a smooth transition and focusing on goals moving forward is the main goal (until late in the fall).

**Executive Committee: Vote: Pamela Brockmeier-Armstrong called for a Motion “to accept Mark Bishop as Treasurer”** – Katherine Brown, seconded by Mark Belanger. Roll call, votes were unanimous.

**Description of  
Committees**

**Finance Committee- (See Appendix B) – meet on Tuesday the week before the BOT meetings, 6 pm** Great way to get a read on the financial workings of the school. Review line items, keep tabs on budget, work closely with Deb.

**Accountability** – Lots of activity, but not as much engagement in the Committee as parents and trustees might want. MCAS results, parent survey design and result review, accountability plan.

JLE – Assessment Playbook just released in the last year. Lots of exciting resources about assessments of all types.

The Committee may split into two parts – one group does policy review, another works to strengthen the use and understanding of assessments. Bringing staff members onto Committee would be a good move, says JLE.

**Committee on Trustees - (See Appendix C) – typically meets the hour before the BOT meetings** Charter is to provide for the health and well being of Trustees. Onboarding and acclimating new trustees. Plan retreats. Director review. Next step is to look at the notes from the Board Retreat in the spring, talk through implications or next steps, and look at 360 review of Director also. By March, COT is looking to recruit new Trustees.

**Development – first Wednesday of every other month** Fundraising arm of the Foundation, work on relationship building with families, alumni, etc.

Assumption will be that returning BOT members will stay on their current committees. New members will contact Pam or Amber to talk about what committees they'd like to join.

Suggestion made to revisit idea of bringing a student onto the Board.

Pam – everyone should speak to Nina with any questions. We aren't changing bylaws at this time, students can come as members of the public.

JLE – we need to include more parents in Board life also

Sept 12/13 – Open School Nights, members of the Board should attend if possible.

Reminder that as members of the Board we are supporters of the school, and that includes financial support. It should be an amount that is personally meaningful. Link to donate is in Happenings. Contact JLE if your company matches.

Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> – Roaring 20s party at the Custom House  
Museum

**Vote: Pamela Brockmeier-Armstrong called for a Motion “To Adjourn”** Motion by Mason  
Mitchell Daniels, 2nd Josh Porter. Board of Directors vote to accept was unanimous.