

**River Valley Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Meeting # 294
June 23, 2022 7:00 pm**

In accordance with the Executive Order applying to MA Open Meeting Law, this meeting will be held virtually on Zoom ID: 81365798611 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was called to order at 7:24 pm.

In attendance:

Pam Armstrong
Erin Bradley
Nancy Durkee
Amber Hewitt
Nina Keery
Karen Popken
Albert Ting
Anna Wetmore

Absent:

Mark Bishop
Alfred Link
Catherine Martin
Erin Seaton

Also Present:

Jonnie Lyn Evans, Director
Dan Bouchard, Assistant Director
Deb McCrevan
Denise Herrera
Eric Simone
Tim Letson
Chris Whitford
Tanya Murdy
Ken Jackman
Diane Johnson

Montessori Minute

JLEvans presented a video about the school's Placed-Based Education program.

The video can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JDCKzUaX-c>

Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) Presentation

MASBO President Diane Johnson honored Debra McCrevan for her dedication and procedures. The award comes with a \$1000.00 contribution to the district in honor of the recipient. Deb was nominated by JLEvans. Deb has been a part of RVCS since its inception, wears many hats and has influenced the positive school culture.

Deb spoke to what an honor this is. While having always been happy to remain in the background while working tirelessly for the school, it is wonderful to be recognized.

Public Comment:

Karen Popken: it was a privilege to serve with dedicated people. It was a wonderful experience to serve another term. The Board expressed gratitude for her important contribution.

Vote: Accept May BOT Minutes and May committee minutes.

Motion: Anna Wetmore

2nd: Pam Armstrong

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Erin Bradley

Amber Hewitt

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

Nancy Durkee

Absent:

Mark Bishop

Alfred Link

Catherine Martin

Erin Seaton

Director's Report presented by Jonnie Lyn Evans

The Director's Report can be viewed in the June Board Packet.

Time for questions and comments was allowed:

EBradley - New hires are exciting, glad to see people are coming back.

Student Opportunity Act - There is an opportunity to amend and provide an update on the goals plan submitted Jan 2021 in our previous plan. Board approval is not required for amendment, however, it will be circulated when it is submitted.

Hoping to reintroduce the swim program to the Kinderhaus curriculum in the 2022-23 school year.

Celebrations of Learning -

NKeery spoke to the COLs and how they have evolved and grown over the years.

NDurkee suggests exploring alternatives for students who feel that they can't present the traditional way. JLEvans is happy to discuss further.

AHewitt loves going in to see COLs after presenting her own 18 years ago. Happy to be a part of an organization that still celebrates students in this way.

PARmstong thanks JLEvans and her team for coming through such a challenging year.

Board Business

PARmstrong - It was great to see everyone in person at the productive and energizing retreat. We expect to return to in person meetings for all board and committee meetings in the fall.

Committee Updates

Finance Committee

Vote: Approve a transfer of \$140,000 from unrestricted cash reserves to restricted capital reserve funds for future capital improvements per the capital needs assessment plan.

Discussion: PARmstrong - note, this does not affect the salary line.

Motion: Pam Armstrong

2nd: Anna Wetmore

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Amber Hewitt

Erin Bradley

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:
None

Abstain:
None

Absent:
Mark Bishop
Alfred Link
Catherine Martin
Erin Seaton

Vote: To authorize the school to utilize surplus revenues plus available cash up to a total of \$150K. These funds are to be used at the Director's discretion for items including staff compensation, classroom furniture and equipment, technology, and Montessori Materials. These funds would be spent prior to fiscal year-end.

Discussion: primarily used for teacher retention stipends

Question: Have two weeks to spend the money? Yes.

How does this compare to last year's surplus? Just about the same amount. Spent about \$100 on retention bonuses. Net profit of \$67K at year end.

PArmstrong - Finance committee wants JLEvans to be able to compensate as she sees fit while being sure we can maintain the future of the school. This year it is more and she has more leeway in rewarding the staff.

Motion: Pam Armstrong
2nd: Erin Bradley

Yes:
Pam Armstrong
Nancy Durkee
Amber Hewitt
Erin Bradley
Nina Keery
Karen Popken
Albert Ting
Anna Wetmore

No:
None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop

Alfred Link

Catherine Martin

Erin Seaton

Vote: To Approve Proposed Budget FY 2022-2023.

Discussion: David Kelleher reviewed the balanced budget.

Motion: Pam Armstrong

2nd: Nina Keery

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Amber Hewitt

Erin Bradley

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop

Alfred Link

Catherine Martin

Erin Seaton

Committee on Trustees

Please be on the lookout for emails regarding the finance disclosure form from DESE. Be sure to fill it out; they are due September 1, 2022.

Trustees also should have received email with the attached director review tool. Executive officers and committee chairs are required to participate, all other Trustees are invited to participate.

PArmstrong is putting herself up for reelection as Board Chair.

JLEvans publicly thanks Pam. She's been supportive, thoughtful, responsive, discreet.

ATing would love to step up to Vice Chair. He has learned so much from everyone, but particularly thanks AHewitt and NKeery for the encouragement to speak up. He is open to alternate solutions and likes to ask questions. He has learned over the years how powerful Montessori is, but still loves being open and asking why.

AWetmore would like to be considered for a second term as Secretary. After a year of learning, she looks forward to continuing to tighten and simplify processes while keeping the flow of information moving throughout the board.

Vote: To elect Pamela Armstrong as Chair of the Board of Trustees for the 2022-2023 year.

Discussion:

AHewitt: Pam's commitment and the time she's put into the board is unmatched. She has taken on two years that have knocked us all on our feet. She treats the volunteer job as a full time job. You will have more support, so she won't have to do a full time job.

EBradley: Torn, is concerned about Pam taking on too much. However, she does have a lot of support.

AHewitt: Was willing to step up, but is excited to support Pam.

Motion: Amber Hewitt

2nd: Nina Keery

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Amber Hewitt

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

Erin Bradley

Absent:

Mark Bishop
Alfred Link
Catherine Martin
Erin Seaton

Vote: To elect Albert Ting as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees for the 2022-2023 year.

Discussion:

EBradley: Appreciates Albert's deliberate conversation and cannot be more excited to have him in this role.

AHewitt: Enthusiastic about passing the baton to Albert. Knew we were in for something great when she met him for the first time.

PArmstrong: Excited to see how the executive committee comes together.

Motion: Amber Hewitt

2nd: Anna Wetmore

Yes:

Pam Armstrong
Nancy Durkee
Amber Hewitt
Erin Bradley
Nina Keery
Karen Popken
Albert Ting
Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop
Alfred Link
Catherine Martin
Erin Seaton

Vote: To elect Anna Wetmore as Secretary of the Board of Trustees for the 2022-2023 year.

Discussion:

AHewitt: There was a seamless transition, bringing order and precision. Quality of work and professionalism.

PArmstrong: Is grounded ethically and morally and also notes that an assistant secretary is a

possibility.

DMcCrevan: Always comes through for the audit in a timely manner.

Motion: Amber Hewitt

2nd: Erin Bradley

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Amber Hewitt

Erin Bradley

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop

Alfred Link

Catherine Martin

Erin Seaton

In August we can revisit the open Treasurer role. We have a very capable Finance Committee with lots of potential chairs. Note: there is opportunity for an assistant treasurer.

The committee encourages a full board orientation.

Two prospective trustees presented for vote:

KJackman: Struck by quality of education and seeing what ties it together from beginning to end after watching his first child finish. There's an opportunity to reestablish the school community. Experience includes 18 corporate 4 non-profit boards. Very excited to be a part of this board in particular.

TMurdy: Motivation is rising 3rd grader. Has an extensive Montessori background as a student and daughter of a Montessori teacher. Was lucky to have a taste of what a normal year was like before the pandemic. Was PA Chair and has been on the Development Committee. Excited to bring new energy and amplify what the school has to offer. Background is in Finance.

Vote: To approve Ken Jackman's appointment to the Board of Trustees for a three-year

term 2022-2025 beginning July 1, 2022.

Discussion:

NDurkee: good to hear excitement

PArmstrong: felt positive after the initial meeting. So much so, she wanted him to talk to other people. Was taken aback by email sent to members of the board and was concerned by the tone, on the other hand, paperwork is impressive. Still torn trying to figure this one out as we are coming out of crisis years and going into opportunity years where we need lift. Recommends Ken would be most effective on the Development Committee and then potentially becoming a trustee.

EBradley: with covid, we are all highly stressed. Perhaps the email was not understood by everyone in the same way. Wants to make sure we are seeing all the sides of this. Interprets the email as passion for the school and being a part of the committee. Several board members, including herself, were not on committees.

NDurkee: appreciates Pam for her leadership through this challenging time, she saw a passionate parent and we are all challenged when we aren't able to communicate face to face. We all need to work on respectful communication. Sometimes the passions can get the best of us. However, please remember how much personal time and work Pam has put into the Board. We should be inclusive of people with wonderful backgrounds.

AHewitt: thanks every trustee and Ken for all of the communication when this came up. The email was alarming. We are just volunteers. After a coffee with Ken and Albert, the conversation was helpful in realizing how important it is to talk.

Motion: Amber Hewitt

2nd: Erin Bradley Irose

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Amber Hewitt

Erin Bradley

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop

Alfred Link

Catherine Martin

Erin Seaton

Vote: To approve Tanya Murdy's appointment to the Board of Trustees for a three-year term 2022-2025 beginning July 1, 2022.

ATing: Tanya's questionnaire and attendance at all meetings speaks to her commitment.

PArmstrong: Tanya has a strong Montessori background and will bring enthusiasm as a Trustee.

AHewitt: also had a wonderful conversation. Tanya's passion and love for the community really came through.

EBradley: excited about her get up and go energy.

Motion: Amber Hewitt

2nd: Nina Keery

Yes:

Pam Armstrong

Nancy Durkee

Amber Hewitt

Erin Bradley

Nina Keery

Karen Popken

Albert Ting

Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop

Alfred Link

Catherine Martin

Erin Seaton

PArmstrong notes that we have pulled in six new Trustees and they are all parents. She calls on the COT to search out Trustees with different connections to the school and the community.

NKeery complimented AHewitt on her tenure as COT Chair.

Lives: Works with all of the grade levels, from engineering with the K to spelectives with the middle schoolers. As a specialist, she also works with teachers at all grade levels and can represent that group as well.

Vote: To approve Laine Ives's appointment as Teacher Representative of the Board for a one-year term 2022-2023 beginning July 1, 2022.

Motion: Amber Hewitt
2nd: Erin Bradley Irose

Yes:

Pam Armstrong
Nancy Durkee
Amber Hewitt
Erin Bradley
Nina Keery
Karen Popken
Albert Ting
Anna Wetmore

No:

None

Abstain:

None

Absent:

Mark Bishop
Alfred Link
Catherine Martin
Erin Seaton

Development Committee

Please refer to minutes of the meeting.

Built a skeleton calendar.

Accountability Committee

ALink is not present. Please refer to the minutes in the June Board Packet

General Board Notes

First board meeting is scheduled for August 23rd. JLEvans and PArmstrong will build the full board calendar from there. Committee chairs will then schedule their meetings based on those dates.

Wrapped with a thank you and wishes for a good summer.

Public Comment:

ATing compliments EBradley for her courage to stand up and comment when she sees things differently and her ability to get to the heart of things.

9:18 pm Board adjourns.