

Seacoast Charter School  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February, 14, 2017

Members Present: Tom Fontana, Raina Ames, Amy Costello, Becky Riekert, Kacy Drouin, Marc Wood, Peter Sweet, Judy Lee

On Phone: Brianna Moynihan

Not able to attend: Tom Marshall, Shara Khalsa, Dorothy Young

Call to Order: 6:09

Approval of Minutes: All Approved. Brianna Yes.

Correspondence:

Email from Maureen Mooney, Founders Academy regarding 2017 Best Practices Conference.

Email from NH Alliance for Public Charter Schools: Keys to Sustainability for Charter Schools.

Information of legislation to consider to help charter schools thrive and be funded.

Chair Report:

Motion to nominate Kacy Drouin as Treasurer, as Treasurer she has authority to sign checks on behalf of the organization.

Vote: All in Favor. Brianna, Yes.

Motion Passes.

Job description for BOT Members, Peter requested we hold discussion until after BOT Best Practices discussion.

Community Board Member Recruitment Plan. Would like to find members with legal and financial background. Staggered terms so there are old and new members. Would like to add two new members in the next few months. Will be making recommendations to Governance Committee at next meeting.

Raina discussed that she has not used her expertise in the arts. Other BOT members stated that her position adds a lot to the school and shows that someone in her position is willing to serve on our board and that it gives credibility that an art professional sees us with bigger goals.

Head of School Report:

On January 12th the State DOE sent SCS our renewal as a charter school in NH for the next five years! We have received a draft report from the DOE with many commendations, recommendations to keep doing what we are doing. That SCS is setting the bar high for charter schools in the state.

Building Audit: The Turner Group visited the school and have specific recommendations for our building. Measured Progress is willing to work with us, our building was built in three sections. Will hopefully have an estimate for audit for our building at the March meeting.

Recommendation for Financial Audit: Murphy, Powers and Wilson Group. They are able to meet with the school on a consistent basis, give feedback, have knowledge of public schools. Their references were all good, they are willing to come in and work with us now before the audit free of charge, they will meet the audit time frame of July/August and come and share report with the BOT.

Motion: To authorize Peter to engage Murphy, Powers and Wilson Group as our financial auditors for this financial year 2016-2017.

Vote: All in Favor. Brianna Yes.  
Motion Passes.

Motion: To authorize Peter to spend up to \$6,500. to engage Murphy, Powers and Wilson Group 2016-2017 audit.

Vote: All in Favor. Brianna Yes.  
Motion Passes.

Current Enrollment: 276 K- Grade 8. Pre-school 15 students.  
Wait list is over 100 applicants. Many spotlight tours have been scheduled and are full.

Equitable aid check of \$500K plus was received from the State.  
January 26th Strings/Rock Concert was amazing. Wonderful to see the talents of our students and how they progress through the strings program. Congratulation to Teachers and Students!

Flatbread Pizza Fundraiser on February 21st from 5 - 9 p.m.

Winter Break - February 25th - March 3rd.

We have used our five built in snow days.

#### Governance:

Discussion on the need to bring legislators in to meet with us to inform them how we feel and how it affects the school. What House bills are pending and the need to become more active as a board and staff to inform the community to enable them to write to their legislators of what the issues are and how it affects us. Not to tell people how to vote, but to keep the community informed and build awareness for them. We have in the past invited legislators in for tours/breakfast and shared the names of legislators who represent members of our community.

Discussion: Best Practices for Charter School Boards. Peter introduced and teacher members present were allowed to join in conversation, as well as community members who have served on the board in the past. (Kristin, Theresa, Zoe, Rhett). In a past meeting we discussed board committees vs. school committees. Report presented was researched based on best practices for Public Charter Schools. That Public Charter School boards change over time, more developmental stages. Start-up, Transition/Adolescence and Sustainability. Governance and Management, roles and responsibility. List of Best Practices.

Possible Recommendations:

1. Review Bylaws to make sure they are consistent with our current Board's beliefs and best practices.
2. Analyze and recruit members for the Board of Trustees. (9-11 members)
3. The Board will create a Governance and Finance Committee at the Board level.
4. Committees such as Accountability, Personnel, Facility, and Technology will be created by the Administration with Board representation.

The board has had to redefine our role at different times due to past issues, now as we are in the Sustainability stage it is a good time to revisit the BOT roles.

For a long time we have had been in an intense crisis management mode, but now that we are more stable it would be good to get back to pre-crisis when the BOT was focused more on Strategic and Forward Thinking. Less management and move vision. Trust the teachers and HOS to manage and go forth with the mission of the school. Shift in focus, back to less intense. The Teachers and BOT saved the school. Time to breath and create sustainability. Work smarter and strategic. Trust all other things and work can and will happen, doesn't need the BOT to management.

We are in a new community, some parents only have charter school experience or only public school experience. The roles of both boards are different, SAU/HOS

We needed the BOT to manage at one point, now we can be the role models for NH and the country.

Now is the time to be creative and motivated members.

BOT main customer is the students.

We are in a place where we are ready to do this.

Without a requirement of serving on "x" amount of committees and an "x" amount of time, it may open up others who want to join the board and serve in various ways.

Remember once you leave the BOT meeting you have no legal right. Unless the board authorizes you. (i.e. the board authorized Tom F. to sign for purchasing the building) No authority once you leave this meeting.

We need to tighten up on this. We had crises and now we are stable and need to move on and make the changes to move forward.

This is not a new idea for the BOT to be more strategic. Peter is the strongest leader we have had in a long time. We have a stable staff. Tasks had to be done by the BOT prior because we did not have leadership who could carry out the tasks.

Finances have never be in a very good state, consistently getting into the negative. We can work with the new auditor for optimal funds and methods to stay within a balanced budget.

The BOT role is to keep the school financially stable and funded.

We will review the report presented and discuss further at the next meeting.

To form an Accountability Committee.

Overview:

Overview The role of the Accountability Committee is to collect, monitor and submit evidence to the New Hampshire Department of Education that demonstrate that Seacoast Charter School is meeting our academic, financial, organizational and programmatic goals and objectives as outlined in our charter.

Four questions serve as the framework for periodic assessment of the New Hampshire charter Schools:

- Is the school making progress toward achieving its mission?
- Is the school responsibly using public funds?
- Is the school promoting student attainment of expected knowledge and skills?
- Is the school sustainable?

The committee will collect information throughout the year and submit periodic reports and the Annual Accountability Report to the Department of Education for review. This committee's oversight will also be an avenue to identify significant successes, as well as significant challenges, and share that information in its periodic reports to the New Hampshire Board of Education, the Board of Trustees and the SCS staff and community.

Membership- The Seacoast Charter School Accountability Committee ("SCSAC") is comprised of the Head of School, 2 teachers, a parent, a board representative, and an administrative staff member.

Purpose To establish a School Accountability Committee (SAC) to function in compliance with NHDOE Accountability Reporting Requirements and a reporting structure: • To assure SCS compliance with NHDOE by following reporting procedure as outlined on the NHDOE Charter School Reporting Schedule. • To create and implement a parent/ student satisfaction survey. • To complete the Accountability Report)

Responsibilities- • Draft and submit the Annual Accountability Report to the New Hampshire Department of Education in response to the four key questions: ○ Is the charter school making progress toward achieving its mission? ○ Is the charter school responsibly using public funds? ○ Is the charter school promoting student attainment of expected knowledge and skills? ○ Is the school sustainable? • Monitors progress toward outcomes or goals academically and

operationally • Create and monitor Accountability plan • Provides required reports and plans to Board • Ensures operational viability (including student needs) • Creates a calendar that assures compliance with deadlines of required Charter Reporting Schedule as required by the NHDOE Charter Office. • Conducts surveys of parent community, students and teachers, including results in the Accountability Report.

Discussion: Are we proposing to put this in place in the future or now? Need to start now and be clear with new members. What changes do we need to make now to move in the right direction? Are we looking to have a teacher lead school in the future? Peter: we should have a shared governance. Teachers need to be leaders in their school and have a say as they are ones doing the work day to day. We don't know what it will be in the future at this time. Believe in shared governance and see the value in it. Question regarding the check and balances. BOT still oversees the HOS. Financial committee still at BOT level. Day to day allow those hired to do the jobs they are hired for.

Motion: To task Peter to implement an accountability committee as proposed. (see above proposal)

Vote: All in Favor. Brianna Yes.

Passes

Financial software package, still checking references, hope to have recommendation at next meeting.

#### Development Report:

Working on setting up a meeting date for Strategic Planning Meeting. Developing a forecast for year to year finances. Have a short term plan until June.

Upcoming Fundraisers: Fun Run, Art Auction and Small Spring Appeal.

Yoga Event: \$215.

Contributions: \$620.

Music Department: Donations and bake sales: \$982.67

Grants: \$4,980. Bank of NH Level Up Village.

\$1,000. NH Audubon

\$2,000 for 3D printer and accessories from ABC for Global Citizens.

Had eight Enrichment class during winter session.

Working on creating ways to give monthly donations. The button on the web site was not working correctly.

Volunteer Hours: 60-80.

Peter and Ann are working to lower cost of internal connections with a government subsidy. A 40% discount that will save us \$41K.

NH Charitable Gaming Commission Update: working on application. Will have 7-10 nights in March or April. Could bring in up to \$10K.

Technology Committee: Meeting tomorrow. Aim is to discuss policies. Action steps made gains at January 18th meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Due to winter weather, we do not have a completed Cash Analysis report at this time.

Forecast for needs for the summer. Need to get final 10% from the state before July 20th. Will need mid-August \$150K to tide us over to first check for the 2017-2018 school year. Peter will contact the state to request an early release of funds or we will need to look at our LOC. Will send out to BOT final Audit Report 2015-16 and IRS 990. The two "material weaknesses" previously identified have been addressed to the point of no further action is needed. One "significant deficiency" surrounding financial reporting and accounting system need to be addressed in the coming year.

Personnel: Meeting canceled due to snow day. Rescheduled for February 20th at 3:30.

Teacher Report: Students enjoyed Spirit Week, which was organized by the 7th and 8th graders.

Facilities: Tom did a great job clearing the roofs off of snow. Will schedule a meeting once the weather settles. Still have not heard back regarding the variances from the State.

No Public Comment:

Non Public Session:

RSA 91-A:3II (e) Negotiation of pending claims/litigation.

Vote to go into Non-Public Session: Kacy: Yes; Amy: Yes; Judy: Yes; Brianna: Yes; Becky: Yes; Tom F.: Yes; Raina: Yes.

No Action Taken.

Vote to return to Public Session: Kacy: Yes; Amy: Yes; Judy: Yes; Brianna: Yes; Becky: Yes; Tom F.: Yes; Raina: Yes.

Summary and Action:

-Review Board of Trustee Best Practices and have recommendations and agreement of how to proceed forward.

-Committee Chairs discuss Best Practices and how it would affect the committee.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 6:00p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:44 p.m.