

**URBAN CHOICE CHARTER SCHOOL  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – MINUTES  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 2009**

**Present:** Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, John Bliss, Ron Boillat, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble

**Absent:** Spiro Ziogas

**Non-Voting**

**New Members:** Tom Felton, Jr., Harvey Reiner

**Media Notification:** Erica Bryant of the Democrat and Chronicle was notified of the January 8, 2009 board meeting on December 19, 2008. Notification was published in the newspaper the following week. Public notice was also posted in the school and published in the school newsletter.

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Susan Fox.

**Motion 090108.1** Upon a motion by Jerald Noble and duly seconded by Ron Boillat, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees approves the minutes of the December 4, 2008 meeting.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Ron Boillat, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090108.1 passed 8 to 0

**CEO Report**

John presented his report which is attached. (*Refer to Attachment A*)

- Suggested organization changes beginning July 1, 2009:
  - Add position of Principal.
  - Dean of Students to report to the Principal.
  - Restructure Assistant Director of Instruction position to become the Director of Student Support Services.
  - Currently looking for board input/questions.
  - Final documents to be presented at the February meeting for approval.

- Begin advertising for Principal in March, interview in April and hire in May.
- Rationale for changes:
  - CEO is currently acting as Principal and CEO.
  - Duties involved:
    - ✓ Instructional responsibilities include supervising 18-20 teachers which involves observations, evaluations, on-going communication along with program development, implementation and evaluation which is a full-time position.
    - ✓ CEO responsibilities include review and revision of policies and procedures, hiring/firing along with most personnel issues, parent relations, approval of significant instructional orders, management of inventory, managing and supervising key administrative staff, annual report, grant and SED requests, review and distribution of data, board relations, recruitment for board committee membership, political and community engagement, marketing and student recruitment, and staff evaluations which is a full-time position.
  - Current Assistant Director of Instruction cannot take on any additional responsibilities.
  - Dean of Students should be on the instructional side of the organizational chart.
  - Additional position needed for succession and to ensure that someone other than the CEO can manage the programs/staff.
  - No budget implications since two to three positions will be eliminated (unrelated to proposed position).
- CEO strongly recommends approving the addition of another room for the middle school:
  - Space needed for art or music.
  - Funds available.
  - Joe Burkart (project manager) was introduced and available for questions from the board.
    - ✓ \$126K grant for the addition was received.
    - ✓ \$195K bottom line cost.
    - ✓ \$325 per square foot seems high. Joe confirmed that prevailing wages will be used with a major impact on cost in addition to more involved structural needs.
    - ✓ Much work to be completed during the April break.
    - ✓ Grant money must be spent prior to June 30, 2009.
    - ✓ Parish has approved the project.
    - ✓ Confirmed that there are not opportunities to increase the size of the addition due to limitations.

**Motion 090108.2** Upon a motion by Hanif Abdul-Wahid and duly seconded by Jerald Noble, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees approve proceeding with the proposed addition to the Middle School with a cap of UCCS spending of \$70K with state grant funds of \$126K to be applied.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Ron Boillat, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090108.2 passed 8 to 0

- Charter text is progressing. Educational sectors are almost complete.
- Several key elements are under consideration:
  - There will be two high school tracks – normal and advanced.
  - Setting length of school day.
  - Electives and special classes need to be discussed.
  - Two to three weeks of summer orientation for all grade 9 students.
- The revised Employee Handbook is being reviewed by an attorney. It should be available for board review in February. It is scheduled to be implemented this June/July when contracts are completed.
- John shared that the middle school schedule has been revised.
- Seven of nine sixth grade students that were two or more grade levels behind in reading are now at grade level.
- ELA is scheduled for next week. 130 parents and students attended an informational meeting.

## **High School Report**

Ron Boillat shared the following:

- Richard Mauser returned to 175 Humboldt Street to confirm that the space allows for the educational needs of the high school.
- Will attempt to keep all to one floor level.
- Estimated approximately 30-35K square feet required initially.
- Estimated cost at approximately \$50-\$75 per square foot.
- Area is wide open and structurally sound.
- Owner appears to be receptive to negotiating the lease.
- Rezoning is needed – currently manufacturing – could be a hurdle.
- Ron and Susan will meet with the City (Carlos Carballada) next week to explore gaining support. This will be an important meeting with hope for positive feedback.
- Board members met with Brett Costello who quickly picked up on the vision and mentioned the possibility of revitalizing the area.
- Brett also added his thoughts about raising money by getting a story and marketing plan together along with public relations to get better known.
- Susan and Ron will meet with Dixon Schwabl on Monday to pursue some ideas related to marketing/public relations efforts.
- A development contact could be a critical factor. Brett suggested a specialist/development consultant named Mark Seeberg. Ron has made contact and is awaiting a return email message.

## **Treasurer Report**

Craig shared his report which is attached. *(Refer to Attachment B)*

- Revenues remain lower due to irregular Title I receipts and enrollment less than budgeted.

- Expenses less than budgeted. Net income is \$77K more than budgeted when Sullivan Center expense added back.
- Balance Sheet has total capital equaling \$1,257K of which \$995K is cash. Will decrease in December with no state revenues received.
- Exploring charitable and bond financing options for the high school.
- Budget submitted by the Governor has a 2% reduction in revenues to RCSD. Waiting for confirmation from Peter Murphy, CS lobbying group, but the same reduction likely to be applied to UCCS.
- Contact Susan if interested in becoming Chair of the Finance Committee since Craig's term will end.

## Governance Report

Jerald Noble reported on the following:

- Committee is current searching for three candidates for board service. One is to fill the vacancy from Jason Tonkery, to complete his term through June 2010. The two remaining positions would be for full three year terms. If you know any potential candidates, please contact Jerald.
- John shared that he has been recruiting.
- There is a need for a Governance Committee Chair when Jerald's term ends.
- Jerald would like to create a training calendar before his term ends.

## Chair Report

Susan Fox reported the following:

- It was decided that training will take place for all board members on Saturday, March 21 from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Susan has gathered together materials from conferences attended in Buffalo and NYC, focusing on Governance and will conduct the training. A more comprehensive training schedule will be put in place for next year.
- Susan has coordinated with a staff member to develop board related sections of the charter renewal. Susan is looking for assistance in gathering information, drafting and writing text. Kevin Fiscella and Tom Felton offered assistance with advance notice.
- Susan provided the latest copy of the bylaws and summary (*refer to Attachment C*). Skip Hallenbeck, Esq. has reviewed and there are a few changes that are significant. It is important that all become very familiar with our by-laws. Skip will attend the February meeting to answer any questions.
- Susan requested that each board member familiarize themselves with charter renewal information. All board members will need to sign and notarize the Statement of Assurances (*refer to Attachment D*).
- Susan clarified the role of the Executive Committee that was formed a few months ago. It consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and was created to serve as a sounding board between the Board and the CEO. Meetings are held one week prior to the board meeting where the agenda for the board meeting is established. There is no level of authority, no

decisions are ever made, and never any intention of information shared not being fully transparent to any board members.

**Motion 090108.3** Upon a motion by Ron Boillat and duly seconded by Jerald Noble, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session to discuss a student discipline case.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Ron Boillat, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090108.3 passed 8 to 0

*The Board entered into Executive Session.*

**Motion 090108.4** Upon a motion by Ron Boillat and duly seconded by Jerald Noble, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees end Executive Session.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Ron Boillat, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090108.4 passed 8 to 0

*The Board ended Executive Session.*

### **Next Board Meeting**

- Thursday, February 5, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.**