

**URBAN CHOICE CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2009**

Present: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, John Bliss, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble, Harvey Reiner, Spiro Ziogas

Absent: Ron Boillat, Tom Felton, Jr.

Guest: Joe Burkart and Carol Wynne (Director of Business and Finance)

Media Notification: Erica Bryant of the Democrat and Chronicle was notified of the April 2, 2009 board meeting on March 27, 2009. Public notice was also posted in the school and published in the school newsletter.

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m. by Susan Fox.

Renovation Update (*Refer to Attachment A*)

- Joe reported that the drawings are 95% complete.
- Building permit process should take a couple of weeks.
- Plan to have six to eight contractors.
- April break planned construction schedule was revised. We have received a verbal deadline for completion extension from the State.
- Construction planned to begin after school is on break for the summer.
- Five week planned construction window with completion planned for early August.
- Due to impact on ground floor, there is advantage to waiting for school break.
- Positive news received related to the budget as this project will not require prevailing rate labor. This gives us the opportunity to include additional bidders and could potentially save 15-20%.
- Carol shared that she is expecting the signed documents within a few weeks and that the funding date goes through August. Discussion followed indicating it would be best to have the signed obligation prepared as soon as possible with construction completed by the end of July.
- Joe indicated that he has a list of contractors that he is very comfortable working with. He will mail information about the project for bids to selected firms and confirmed that some are minority firms.

School Report (Carol Wynne)

- Carol discussed the major revisions made to the Employee Handbook:
 - Employment classification changes (full-time, part-time, hourly, salary, exempt, non-exempt).
 - Letter of appointment added to communicate commitment planned for the following year.
 - Introductory 90-day period added for new hires. Flexible spending account and 403b match will begin after this 90-day period.
 - Vacation ladder established for 12-month employees.
 - Personal days to be earned with ability to bank and accrue. Begin with one and add ½ day every month for a total of six per school year.
- Carol submitted a draft of next year's budget with changes highlighted. (*Refer to Attachment B*)
- Carol discussed issues related to fingerprinting requirements for employees. (*Refer to Attachment C*)
 - Currently pursuing the possibility of sharing the cost of digital fingerprinting with BOCES which would make the process completely electronic and efficient (24-72 hours).
- Selection of a new bank has been completed (HSBC) by Carol.
 - Carol solicited proposals from six banks and visited each one at least once prepared with a list of questions from the Finance Committee.
 - HSBC and Citizens were great to work with and she was impressed with their financial management offers.
 - Due to location, staff, and user-friendly Internet capability, Carol made the decision to go with HSBC.
 - A discussion followed clarifying that the decision to go with HSBC was Carol's and two of the board members with HSBC associations were removed from the decision-making process and received no benefit as a result of the selection.

Motion 090402.1 Upon a motion by Jerald Noble and duly seconded by Kevin Fiscella, the following was submitted for adoption:
RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees enter executive session to discuss pending legal issues.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble, Harvey Reiner, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090402.1 passed 9 to 0

Motion 090402.2 Upon a motion by Jerald Noble and duly seconded by Harvey Reiner, the following was submitted for adoption:
RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees end executive session.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble, Harvey Reiner, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090402.2 passed 9 to 0

Motion 090402.3 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 the March 5, 2009 minutes.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble, Harvey Reiner, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090402.3 passed 9 to 0

Treasurer's Report

Craig shared his report. *(Refer to Attachment D)*

- Operations ahead of budget. After adding back Sullivan Center expenses, results in a surplus of \$345K versus a budgeted \$149K, \$195K additional cash.
- Balance sheet total capital \$1,007K of which \$480K is cash.
- Two remaining state aid payments are March and May.
- No significant expenses expected that are not budgeted.
- Sullivan Center project costs are final at \$883K vs. a \$900K budget.
- Bank relationship moved from M&T to HSBC.
- 403b plan changed per previous board resolution.
- Skip Pleninger will attend the next Finance committee meeting to discuss our overall insurance coverage.
- Budget must be approved by May 15. Recommendation for board approval with Finance committee endorsement expected at the next meeting.
- Financing options are being explored for the high school – comparing financing with public debt financing.
- Sullivan Center renovation was on hold but is now restarted.

Governance Report

- Jerald shared that three new potential officers will be available for consideration at the next meeting:
 - Ed Cavalier (retired principal)
 - Sidney Moore (human resources)
 - Gail Sklair (parent and employed by ad agency)
- Board self-evaluation is approved by committee and process is outlined in charter renewal application.
- Next Governance Committee meeting April 30 at 4:00 p.m.

Mission Minute

John shared that as some first graders were walking by him, he overheard one of them stating that they were so happy that they will get to stay at UCCS for high school.

CEO Report

John shared his report. *(Refer to Attachment E)*

- Lottery was held today for 325 applicants.
- Preliminary test scores are in and positive. *(Refer to Attachment F)*
- Search for a Principal is in process. An interview team has been established for approximately nine candidates for the first round. The second round of interviews will include John, Tamala and Christina.
- Parent surveys were sent with results expected for the next meeting.
- Three minute surveys continuing. Consistent finding – teachers have a strong relationship with John but there are some concerns about the school culture in the K-5 building which emphasizes the need for a Principal.
- Open House is planned for Tuesday, April 7.
- State Education will be visiting on Tuesday, May 12 from 12:30-4:30 p.m. Board members are asked to RSVP their availability to attend.
- Key dates related to staffing/summer school were shared with staff. *(Refer to Attachment G)*
- Summer school will be coordinated. Approximately 150 students will be invited.
- 20 students on retention list with 34 or more close.
- Charter renewal process is progressing. The high school component is quite involved.
- Meeting with Nazareth later this month about a potential relationship to have a teaching concentration in the high school.
- An issue involving a student required legal advice. It did not involve student safety.

Motion 090402.4 Upon a motion by Jerald Noble and duly seconded by Spiro Ziogas, the following was submitted for adoption:
RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees approves the elimination of the position of Assistant Director of Instruction effective July 1, 2009.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble, Harvey Reiner, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090402.4 passed 9 to 0

Chair Report

Motion 090402.5 Upon a motion by Jerald Noble and duly seconded by Spiro Ziogas, the following was submitted for adoption:
RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees approves the insertion of the complaint policy as distributed at the March 5 meeting into the charter renewal application due July 1, 2009.

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

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090402.5 passed 8 to 0

- Susan distributed a flyer and shared information regarding a fundraiser planned by a group named “Friends of Phil Banks’ Family” to assist with medical costs not covered by insurance.
- Progress is being made on John’s evaluation. Craig tabulated the results of a staff survey which were circulated for board members’ information.
- Board training date has been adjusted. The original focus of governance has been changed to a financial focus supported by Craig, Carol and Ron to examine specifically our financial outlook and forward looking budget for the next five years going into the high school.
- Proposed training date was set for Thursday, May 28 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

High School Report

In Ron's absence, Susan shared his report. (*Refer to Attachment H*)

175 Humboldt Street

- Owner not willing to provide space for green area/field. He has not agreed to provide space for parking which significantly impacts the viability of this location.
- Preliminary cost to build the space out was provided by the owner and is significantly higher than earlier projections. It is over \$6M total cost plus furniture, labs, etc.

Maple Street

- Facility has significant potential.
- It is approximately 48,000 square feet with enough land to potentially add on.
- Potential environmental issues with some conflicting information. Experts are being consulted through Joe Burkart.
- Listed for \$4.5M which is high. It is assessed for \$2.5M.
- If found viable, we could consider entering into negotiations with Heritage to obtain the facility.
- Potentials for financing include: Heritage holding mortgage, bond issuance and mortgage from a bank.
- Marketing and developing efforts will require an investment of \$75K-\$100K.
- Estimate that we could secure building for \$3M-\$3.5M.
- Cost per square foot for Humboldt Street is approximately \$80/square feet while Maple Street is \$83/square feet. The difference is that you could own Maple Street and it is your asset vs. putting that much money into some else's building with limitation on green space.

Motion 090402.6 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 gives Board member Ron Boillat authorization to begin negotiation with Heritage to purchase the school building at 1020 Maple Street. It is understood that this will require a Letter of Intent to the seller with an initial purchase offer, but that no money will be committed without express approval from the Board.

Voting in the affirmative: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Michael Abraham, Kevin Fiscella, Susan Fox, Craig LeFeber, Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Jerald Noble, Harvey Reiner, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 090402.6 passed 9 to 0

- Susan and Ron met with four PR/ad agencies and one development person to try to get an idea of what would be needed for a campaign – largely centered on a high school and kicking off a capital campaign.
- It is possible that a full blown marketing effort will end up in the \$75-100K range for total cost. No recommendation at this time – would need to consider it as an investment with the expectation of raising a certain amount.
- The campaign would be used to offset financing for the high school.
- Timeframe to engage someone would be this summer or as late as the fall.

Next Board Meeting

- Thursday, May 7, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.