

**URBAN CHOICE CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – MINUTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2009**

Present: Mike Abraham, John Bliss, Ron Boillat, Susan Fox, Thomas Felton, Jr., Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Sidney Moore, Gail Sklair, Spiro Ziogas

Absent: Hanif Abdul-Wahid, Ed Cavalier

Media Notification: Erica Bryant of the Democrat and Chronicle was notified of the October 1, 2009 Board of Trustees meeting on September 22, 2009. Public notice was also posted in the school and published in the school newsletter.

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Susan Fox.

Motion 091001.1 Upon a motion by Michael Abraham and duly seconded by Gail Sklair, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees approve the September 3, 2009 minutes.

Voting in the affirmative: Mike Abraham, Ron Boillat, Susan Fox, Thomas Felton, Jr., Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Sidney Moore, Gail Sklair, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 091001.1 passed 8 to 0

Mission Minute – John Bliss

John Bliss read a statement from long-time volunteer Deborah Waltzer, discussing her decision to commit even more time after her own child went to college this year, and the benefits she gets from knowing she is impacting these students' lives.

Governance Report – Thomas Felton

Tom reported on the October 24 Board Retreat. Mike Cooney, a Nixon Peabody attorney with extensive nonprofit and board experience, will present in the morning. Mike's draft presentation, based in part on board-provided topic suggestions, covers non-profit board issues extensively, but is not charter-specific.

Susan asked if the board wanted her to plan a charter-specific afternoon. Another possible focus would be to begin a strategic planning process. It was decided that while a necessary project, strategic planning is too big to take on this way. It was shelved for now but should be reexamined after we hear about the high school.

The board asked Susan to pursue a charter-specific afternoon session, but better to get another expert to either speak themselves, or help Susan plan. John will contact NYCSA, Skip Hallenbeck, Brett Costello, and/or others. Susan will start reviewing the charter-specific books and materials she has. Tom will continue with retreat logistics (food, pre-retreat board “homework”, etc.). Sidney will assist Tom in creating the agenda.

Treasurer’s Report – Spiro Ziogas

Spiro apologized that the quarterly financials and balance sheet are not yet available. As soon as he can clarify some discrepancies he noticed with Carol, he will send them out.

Mike asked if the initial September projections look good. Spiro said we are in very good financial shape. Susan confirmed that Bonadio will bring the audits to an October 15 meeting.

CEO Report – John Bliss

Attached. Notes on items involving further discussion:

1. The October 14 SED visit and November 5 board trip to Albany was discussed. Board members asked for clarification on what would be asked. John felt there would be questions on finances, high school location, and the academic program. Ed Cavalier, a new board member with extensive high school administrative experience, should be familiar with the program. However, John will try and find out what kinds of questions might be asked, and he will put together some materials for the board can use to prepare. Susan will arrange another separate meeting just for those likely to attend.
2. See attached proposed breakdown of additional ARRA Title funding.
3. Open House – like last year. Parking at 28. Food. Entertainment. Fun. 6-7:30. Gail commented that while the event last year was great, there were organizational issues (mostly traffic, crowd control, etc.) that needs to be addressed. John agreed.
4. See attached suggested Board activities.
5. Principal Hiring: See Timeline attachment. John noted that this is simply a one-page summary of the plan. There will be a complete binder, including all aspects of the school, ready for the new Principal. We will be putting this together soon.
6. Portables: John is applying for more Stimulus funds for the portable classrooms. He is waiting for portables cost from Joe, probably a couple hundred thousand for acquisition and installation (would be covered by this grant) and operating costs (not grant-covered).
8. Principal’s Report: Very nicely done, a good, clean summary of the school. Susan asked if our contacts all got one, and thought all donors, no matter how small, should also get one (she has the list). John said they will also be available at the Open House.
9. RTS: An RTS rep has been here and talked to us and to parents, and we are handling things as best we can, but the reality is that especially the transfer station poses problems. We do offer

early drop-off for MS parents who really don't want their kids on the bus. John would rate it a 6 or 7 out of 10 right now.

10. New Grade 7-12 Charter (all boys): Joe Munoz is running it; they will be looking for space as well. John knows him, but probably not well enough to discuss the space issue.

John added that he is continuing to focus teachers on home communication. At the same time, he continually emphasizes having fun, engaging experiments, field trips – not drilling by rote. Susan noted that Brighton schools do maybe 2 field trips the whole year; John confirmed we do far more than average. Grade 8 may go to DC, there is some budgeted for a grade 8 graduation trip and they could do extra fundraising.

Chair Report – Susan Fox

1. Due to the SED trip November 5, Susan suggested moving the regularly scheduled meeting to November 12, which was agreed upon.
2. Tamala will go with Carol Wynne and Jon Schmidt to the NYCSA conference in two weeks.
3. Susan read Harvey Reiner's resignation email and subsequent conversation when he explained his extensive community commitments. However, he is willing to stay on the finance committee, which is fine with Spiro and Susan. Susan mentioned how they have talked about having non-board members on committees, meaning more community involvement.

Motion 091001.2 Upon a motion by Ron Boillat and duly seconded by Spiro Ziogas, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accept the resignation of Harvey Reiner.

Voting in the affirmative: Mike Abraham, Ron Boillat, Susan Fox, Thomas Felton, Jr., Tamala Lynch-Bradford, Sidney Moore, Gail Sklair, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 091001.2 passed 8 to 0

4. Susan shared a new chaperone policy she was required to sign for her children in the Brighton schools, discussing safety, confidentiality, no alcohol/drugs, etc. She asked if that was something needed at UCCS. John felt that while parents do go on field trips, we are not big enough to need something like that; it is also covered in the Code of Conduct.
5. In reviewing committee assignments, Susan realized the staff survey, a big project of Craig's, had fallen through the cracks. She was involved but he did a lot that was very valuable, and we wanted it to be twice a year. It could just be one person working with Susan. Sidney volunteered and will contact Craig.

6. Susan noted that the Principal's Report was fabulous and encapsulated the school really well. It will be a great piece for garnering support, fundraising, and similar.
7. She stressed that visiting the school was critical and asked Board non-parents to consider the last time they visited, other than meetings. Even short visits will open your eyes.
8. Susan has begun her Leadership Rochester participation and sent around a group roster with pictures. There was an overnight the previous week. The group is learning more about each other and she is making some great connections.
9. She needs biographies of everyone for the website (taking pictures tonight). Email them to her as soon as possible.

Ron asked for a review of all other recent board changes. Susan noted those who termed out (Jerald, Craig), resigned (Kevin, Harvey), and joined (Sidney, Gail, and Ed).

Board Final Notes

1. Board/Parent/Staff Interaction - John encouraged parent guests to attend the Parent Forum. Sidney asked if Board members can go and Susan encouraged it. A parent attending the Board meeting suggested that one Board member try to attend each Parent Forum and it was decided that at the next Board meeting a sheet would circulate to have Board members sign up to attend at least one per year.
2. Ron added a note on Facilities. The Maple Street site is back on the market. Once we know more about the high school, hopefully in November, we can revisit this idea, but he wanted to note its availability now. Mike added that since the last process, financing may be much easier due to market changes and the Build America program.

Susan then began the process of taking photos of the Board for the website.

Next Board Meeting:

Thursday, November 12, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.