

**Westinghouse Arts Academy Charter School
Board of Trustees**

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021, 6:00 P.M. EDT

Present:

Bill Pricener, Board President/Treasurer (Zoom)
Dexter Hairston, Board Secretary
John Hisiro, Trustee (Zoom)
Don Marinelli, Trustee (Zoom)
Greg Jakub, Trustee (Zoom)
Gloria Rayman, Trustee (Zoom)
Matt Racunas, Solicitor (Zoom)
Rick Fosbrink, WAACS CEO (Zoom)
Betsy D'Emidio, WAACS Principal/CAO (Zoom)
Elizabeth Speed, WAACS Faculty & Dir. of
Marketing (Zoom)
Nadine Dunn, WAACS Business Admin/Brd
Recording Secretary (Zoom)

Excused:

JP Hernandez, Trustee
Bernadette Gibson, WAACS Assoc. Principal
/Special Ed Coordinator
Chapree Pagliari, Dean of Students

Guests:

Westinghouse Arts Faculty, Staff and Parents
attending via Zoom

The Meeting of the Board of Trustees began at 6:02 p.m.

Roll Call of Board Members:

Bill Pricener, Board President, welcomed all attending via Zoom and wished us a Happy New Year.

Public Comment:

None

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Bill Pricener, Board President, presented the Minutes from December and asked if anyone had a comment. Ms. Gloria Rayman, Board Member, commented that she enjoyed the delicate wording of the facility notes of last month. After the Board shared in the humor, Mr. Pricener called for a motion to accept the minutes from the 12/2/2020 meeting.

Motion made: To accept the minutes from 12/02/2020 - Greg Jakub , 2nd: Don Marinelli

Vote: All in favor: ALL Yea; 0 Nay; 0 Abstaining- Motion Carried.

Board Governance:

Rick Fosbrink, CEO, shared with the Board information that he and Dr. D'Emidio learned at the IU Charter School Meeting that afternoon. Per Act 84, all Board Members will have school email addresses made for them and these email addresses will be posted on the school website This new law states that this information will be for public information and use. Mr. Fosbrink will follow up with Board Members when the email addresses are created and activated.

School Programs & Policies:

Dr. Betsy D'Emidio, Principal, shared that Keystone exams will be held, in person, on Feb. 3 & Feb. 9. Westinghouse will follow all appropriate CDC & PDE guidelines for safe testing during COVID. Dr. D'Emidio stated that students have the right to opt out but it would be considered a refusal to test unless it's for religious reasons. Mr. Pricener asked what if most of the students opt out, would that count against the school. Dr.

D'Emidio felt that PDE is aware of the concern for in person safety during these required testings and they would not hold it against the school. She stated that the graduating class of 2023 will have to show proficiency of educational information. This class will have 5 options to prove proficiency and the Keystone tests seem to be the easiest proof.

Next Dr. D'Emidio shared with the Board that we were finalizing the Spring Schedule. We would continue in this hybrid, 6 day rotation for this Spring, however looking into next year it will change. Dr. D'Emidio commented on the fact that the Board had tabled the conversation of trimesters, yet Dr. D'Emidio is looking to a more traditional schedule with the hope of a more normal looking 21-22 school year. She feels the traditional 7 to 8 period day with academics running all year is a better learning experience for our students. Many are having trouble keeping up with the fast pace of trying to cram a full course into one semester. The ART Core courses would be a double period, while the other subjects would meet one period each day, 5 days a week. Dr. D'Emidio said that she will be able to comment more and provide specifics as we get closer to next year and learn the guidelines for the 21-22 school year.

Lastly, Dr. D'Emidio shared with the members that we received two recent resignations. Josette Kurey, Literary Arts teacher, left to pursue another teaching opportunity and Bernadette Gibson, Associated Principal/Special Education Coordinator, has decided to retire once again. Dr. D'Emidio stated that Ms. Gibson will truly be missed by faculty and staff. Ms. Gibson may be asked back from time to time to share her educational knowledge with faculty through In-service training.

School Personnel:

Rick Fosbrink, CEO, referred the Board to the list of personnel who were hired recently and the departure of our literary arts teacher. He said that Ms. Gibson was not on the list because we have not officially received her resignation letter. Mr. Fosbrink stated that we are currently involved in the interview process for the literary arts teacher replacement and to fill the Director of Special Education position. He also commented that the newly hired theater teacher is also a Boardway actor who is currently riding out the pandemic here in Pittsburgh.

Bill Pricener, Board President, called for a motion to approve the personnel report.

Motion made: To approve the personnel report - John Hiriso; 2nd: Gloria Rayman

Vote: All in favor: ALL Yea; 0 Nay; 0 Abstaining- Motion Carried.

Mr. Fosbrink moved onto the next agenda item regarding the settlement with a former employee. Matt Racunas, Solicitor, interjected and said that this item should be discussed in the Executive Session. The Board tabled this discussion until the Executive Session at the conclusion of the public meeting.

Report on Facilities:

Rick Fosbrink, CEO, reported that the school purchased an industrial carpet cleaning machine with the remainder of the Covid grant funds. The facilities staff have started cleaning the carpets which haven't been done since the school opened. Mr. Fosbrink continued by saying that two additional water bottle refilling stations (like the one on the first floor) have also been purchased with the grant funds and will be placed on the second and third floors. The facilities staff over break continued with the deep cleaning and completed the painting of the second floor. Mr. Fosbrink said that the next items to be looked at are the pressure regulator valve on the main water line and the balancing of the heat output from the newly repaired HVAC units. It seems that now with all the units working properly, the students and faculty using the Commons area for learning tend to "roast".

Report on Finance and Business Services:

Rick Fosbrink, CEO, presented the reports for the December bills, contracts and payroll.

Mr. Fosbrink commenced that we have \$714,742 cash in the bank. The school just mailed the billing to the school district for January. Mr. Fosbrink pointed out that we are still owed roughly **\$608,789.17** amount from school districts. Most of those outstanding payments are owed to Charter School Capitol. Mr. Fosbrink continued his report by reviewing the Budget vs. Actual Report. In doing so, he pointed out that this report also shows the growth of enrollment over our 4 year history and it shows the the financial recovery that has taken place.

Mr. Pricener asked for a motion to retroactively approve payroll, contracts, and bills for December.

Motion made: To approve the contracts, bills and payroll for December - Greg Jakub, 2nd: Don Marinelli

Vote: All in favor: ALL Yea; 0 Nay; 0 Abstaining- Motion Carried.

Report on Marketing and Enrollment:

Elizabeth Speed, Faculty and Director of Marketing, reviewed the dashboard for the month of December. She stated that due to holidays and going all virtual for safety reasons, December was a slow month. That being said, we still have 38 pending evaluations and 21 students have already accepted for FALL 21-22. Ms. Speed stated that in looking at her numbers and what historical data she could find, our enrollment numbers are currently ahead of those from last February. Ms. Speed concluded by saying the marketing efforts will keep getting the word out.

One item that Ms. Speed wanted to bring to everyone's attention the fantastic work by our students and the Theater Faculty on the radio production of Christmas Carol and the theater department article in the newspaper.

Executive Session:

Bill Pricener, Board President, stated that this concluded the public portion of the meeting and the Board would move into the Execution session to discuss personnel issues.

Mr. Pricener thanked everyone for attending. The Board went into the Executive Session and the public meeting adjourned at 6:37 pm.

Next Meeting: February 3, 2021 at 6:00 pm

Date:

Board Secretary