

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2020 at 6:00 PM

School Location: PVCICS, 317 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035

This meeting was held via Zoom and Telephone access due to the current State mandated school closure from the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn

The meeting was officially called to order at 6:01 PM. The following statement was read into the record: “Hello, my name is Elizabeth Larivee, commonly called Betty. I am the Secretary for this Board and Chair of the Trusteeship Committee. During the month of November 2020, the Board’s Chairperson, Paula Quinn, and Vice Chairperson, Aime DeGrenier, both submitted letters of resignation which became effective on November 30, 2020. These resignations triggered Section 3.02 of the Board By-laws regarding succession of the Officers. Following the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Treasurer is the next officer to chair a meeting. The current Treasurer, Elaine Wang, is a new Board member (having attended only 3 meetings) and did not feel comfortable taking on the responsibility at this time. The succession then goes to the Secretary – which is me—so I am here tonight to chair this meeting. Tonight’s agenda has an item regarding the election of the two missing officers so we will take up that matter in due course and see what happens.”

Roll call for attendance:

In attendance: Interim Board Chair Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee, Charles “Nick” Bagley, Cynthia Farmer, Edison Santana, Dan O’Shea, Scott Livingstone, Mina Liang, Faculty Representative Hannah Treworgy, Ying “Elaine” Wang, A. Juliet Larke, Student Representative Sebastian English, and Lian Duan (intermittent attendance during meeting).

Absent: Peter Wood

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, and Director of Student Services Marilyn Kusek.

Public Comment: Natalia Shcherbakova spoke to the Board regarding the Covid-19 safety procedures used at Western New England University. She stated that this information is now on the school’s website: wne.edu/coronavirus. She wanted to share this information with PVCICS to assist in planning for re-opening the school for on-site instruction.

Administrative Items: Minutes of Previous Meeting(s):

Minutes of the November 5, 2020 Meeting were presented for review. A correction was noted as follows: (page 4 – last line) Student Rep Sebastian English did not vote on the motion to go into Executive Session. Scott made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; seconded by Dan. Roll call vote for approval: Nick Bagley, Cynthia Farmer, Betty Larivee, Scott Livingstone, Dan O’Shea, Edison Santana, and Elaine Wang. Abstaining from the vote: Juliet Larke, Mina Liang, and Faculty Rep Hannah Treworgy. Motion passed.

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Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of November 5, 2020

Page 2 of 5

Committee and Task Force Reports:

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine reported:

- ✓ At this time, there is nothing to report.

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Betty reported:

- ✓ The Trustee Handbook was e-mailed to all Board members in early November. If anyone sees mistakes or things to edit, please let her know.
- ✓ According to the By-laws, this committee must operate with five members. Paula and Aime were both members so their resignations have left vacancies. During this month, the committee does not have work to complete but Board recruitment will begin in January so additional members will be needed on this committee. Please think about joining this committee – it will be on the January agenda.
- ✓ Board recruitment will start in February. Information related to the Recruitment Process will be another item for the January agenda.
- ✓ The Self-Evaluation of Board members has been completed. Board members received a summary of the results on 11/30/2020. This evaluation will be used to determine training sessions for the Board and skills areas to highlight in the Board recruitment process. The Trusteeship Committee will work with the new Board Chair to review the results and determine the next steps.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Peter was absent:

- ✓ No report

Litigation Working Group: Scott reported for this group:

- ✓ This working group was formed by a vote of the Board on January 26, 2019 to handle issues arising from the litigation with DESE.
- ✓ The group met today before the Board meeting to complete their final business.
- ✓ Now that the lawsuit and appeal are not going forward, this group is no longer needed.
- ✓ Hannah made a motion, seconded by Juliet, to disband this Litigation Working Group. Roll call vote for approval to disband: Nick, Cynthia, Betty, Juliet, Scott, Dan, Edison, Hannah, and Elaine. Mina abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

Principal's Report: Principal Kathy reported the following:

- The Family Handbook is still under revision. Changes are being made to align with pandemic safety procedures and recommendations from Atty. Dupere.
- The 2019 version of the Handbook was given to families at the start of this school year. Under the constraints of remote learning, much of the Handbook does not apply to this school year.
- An update on the reopening for PVCICS was discussed using a slide presentation. Topics covered included (1) Current Remote Instruction focused on (a) Academic Monitoring, (b) Emotional Assessment, and (c) State Mandated Testing; (2) Health Issues related to (a) volatility of moving between in-school and remote learning, (b) creating a 30-day “Bubble” prior to re-opening PVCICS, and (c) current info and guidelines from

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Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2020

Page 3 of 5

CDC, DPH and DESE; and, (3) Planning currently being done in anticipation of using a hybrid instructional model as of January 27, 2021 subject to updates from DESE and DPH.

- Several questions were asked by Board members as well as by the audience via the Zoom Chat Room – (1) Must medical information regarding Covid be shared with the school. Answer: No. this is not a mandated requirement. (2) What are “priority students”? Answer: As defined by DESE, they are students with Special Needs, English Language Learners, and those at High-Risk for academic failure. They also prioritize elementary over middle and high school students. This school is also considering those students with social/emotional issues to be High-Risk. (3) Given that we are a regional school, how will staff and students from “red” communities be tracked or identified? Should there be some form to complete on a daily basis? Answer: Guidelines from DESE and DPH will be followed; Legal and Privacy issues complicate the use of daily checklists; an “Honor Code” approach may be the solution. (4) Under a Hybrid Model, what will students be doing in the remote week? Answer: Instruction will continue as is currently being done in full remote instruction. (5) Per DESE priorities, will additional instructional time be given to K-5 students? Answer: Schedules are currently being developed to address instructional time as well as non-instructional events that impact school schedules such as arrival and dismissal, walking thru hallways, bathroom breaks, lunch, etc. (6) What will happen at school when the Nurse is absent? Answer: PVCICS has two nurses on staff and the State is allowing other staff to be trained to assist the School Nurse.
- To assist in gathering information for future re-opening, another survey has been sent to the staff. One is also being prepared to be sent to all families.

Executive Director’s Update: ED Richard reported:

- Recruitment for next school year has started with 42 applications currently on file. This is a slow start, but given the current pandemic, it is not unexpected.
- Tuition payments from the State are behind because the State has not finalized their budget. Adjustments are expected in December.
- Financial Reports dated 11/30/2020 were sent to the Board. School finances are very sound with adequate cash reserves. Anticipated salary adjustments for staff are again being postponed until State and local budgets are settled. However, a \$1000 bonus will be given to staff as a good will gesture before they break for the holidays.
- Current student enrollment is stable with few withdrawals.
- New technology and costs are being reviewed. Classroom cameras for middle and/or high school instruction in hybrid learning are being considered so all students are connected at the same time regardless of their physical location.
- The YMCA After-School Program has been approved by DESE to provide services to students from PVCICS.
- Questions were asked and answered by Richard regarding (1) financial risks and goals in light of budget issues, and (2) marketing and student recruitment strategies in regards to the pandemic concerns and in-school instruction.

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Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2020

Page 4 of 5

School Policies: Betty reported the following:

Peter is working with ED Richard and Principal Kathy to develop a central repository of all school policies that are now located in various areas. These include the Family Handbook, Board Handbook, Staff Handbook, Athletic Handbook, Financial Procedures, Nursing/Medical Policies, and the District Accommodation Plan (DCAP) to name a few.

Executive Director 2019-2020 Summative Evaluation: Interim Chair Betty reported the following:

- This evaluation of ED Richard was completed as an on-line process. Seven Board members completed the evaluation; two Board members did not complete the evaluation; six members were exempt because they were teachers, a student, or new members of the Board.
- As indicated on the last page, this Summative Evaluation Report is a compilation of the seven individual evaluations and comments. The format was developed by DESE and is used throughout Massachusetts for the evaluation of Administrators.
- In all areas, ED Richard received “Met” or “Proficient” scores.
- Scott made a motion to accept the 2019-2020 Summative Evaluation Report; seconded by Nick. Roll call vote to approve: Nick, Lian, Cynthia, Betty, Juliet, Scott, Dan, and Elaine. Abstaining from the vote: Mina, Edison, and Hannah. Motion passed.

Board Member Updates: Interim Chair Betty reported:

- ✚ The position of Board Chair and Vic-Chair are open on the Board. The elections will be handled in separate votes by nominations or self-nomination. If no nominations or self-nominations are received, then the vote will be postponed until the next Board meeting. The term for this office will be from the time of election to the end of June 2020. New Board elections will occur in July 2020 and the same individuals may again be elected as a Board officer.
- ✚ Nick nominated Cynthia Farmer for the position of Board Chair. Cynthia agreed to accept the nomination.
- ✚ Betty asked for any other nominations or self-nominations. None were received.
- ✚ Betty called for a vote on Cynthia Farmer as Board Chair. Roll call to approve Cynthia as Chair: Nick, Lian, Betty, Juliet, Scott, Dan, Edison, Hannah, and Elaine. Abstaining from the vote: Cynthia and Mina.
- ✚ Congratulations were offered to Cynthia by various members on her election as Board Chair.
- ✚ Betty asked for nominations or self-nomination for the position of Board Vice-Chair. None were offered. Betty said this position would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

New Business:

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- Dan said that he supported the idea offered by Mina of developing some type of ‘Pledge Form’ regarding Covid-related personal health and safety when staff and students return to the school building.

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2020

Page 5 of 5

- Cynthia stated that she agrees with this idea – especially for staff. She feels it would help to allay some fears that families may have in regards to returning to school.
- Mina spoke about the Board Self-Evaluation and the need as a new Board member to have information on the Board’s History and Highlights.

There being no further business, Betty made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board; seconded by Lian. Voice vote was unanimous approval. This session of the Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on January 7, 2021

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