

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

August 6, 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 school closure from the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn and then Principal Kathy Wang.

In attendance: Board Chair Dana Parsons, Aime DeGrenier, Faculty Representative Hannah Treworgy, Dan O’Shea, A. Juliet Larke, Vice Chair Paula Quinn, Charles “Nick” Bagley, Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee, Lian Duan, Scott Livingstone, Cynthia Farmer, Edison Santana, Ying “Elaine” Wang, Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, and, Attorney Fred Dupere
Absent: Peter Wood

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:05 PM. The Board immediately went into Executive Session and re-opened the Regular Meeting at 6:55pm.

More than a dozen individuals were in the Zoom “waiting room” and were admitted to the Regular Board meeting as viewers and/or listeners – not participants.

Election of Board Officers for 2020-2021:

- ✚ Chair Dana called for nominations for the position of Board Secretary. Betty Larivee self-nominated; Dana seconded. Unanimous roll-call vote for approval of Betty as Board Secretary.
- ✚ Chair Dana called for nominations for the position of Board Treasurer. Dan nominated Elaine Wang and Dana seconded. Elaine accepted the nomination. Unanimous roll-call vote for approval of Elaine as Board Treasurer and therefore also Chair of the Finance Committee.
- ✚ Chair Dana called for nominations for the position of Board Vice-Chair. Scott nominated Aime DeGrenier; Dana seconded. Aime accepted the nomination. Unanimous roll-call vote for approval of Aime as Board Vice-Chair.
- ✚ Chair Dana called for nominations for the position of Board Chair. Betty nominated Paula Quinn; Dana seconded. Paula accepted the nomination. Unanimous roll-call vote for approval of Paula as Board Chair.

Following elections of new officers, Dana indicated that he had sent his resignation letter (received via e-mail at 7:02pm). Comments were made by various Board members to Dana – “Thanks”, Best Wishes”, etc. He turned the meeting over to new Chair Paula and left the meeting.

Public Comment: Mandi Jo Hanniki read a prepared statement regarding the re-opening of school at PVCICS and the lack of information presented to date to families. Chair Paula asked that Mandi Jo e-mail a copy of her statement so it could be shared with the Board.

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Administrative Items: Minutes of Previous Meeting(s):

Minutes of the June 4, 2020 Meeting were presented for review. A question was asked about keeping the location as the school address since the meeting was held via Zoom which was indicated in the next line. Consensus was to keep all the information as presented. Hannah made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Scott; motion passed by unanimous roll-call vote.

Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Betty reported:

- ✓ Edits to the By-laws were finally approved by DESE. These edits basically related to the changes of dates for the Annual meeting. All Board members received an e-mail copy of these approved updated By-laws.
- ✓ Three new Board members are with us tonight as their first official meeting: Cynthia Farmer, Edison Santana, and Ying “Elaine” Wang.
- ✓ The Trustee Handbook is in the process of being updated. Current Board members should review their bios for any changes; new Board members will have their bios added.
- ✓ With the resignation of Dana, the Board now has a one-year vacancy on his term. As mentioned at the last Board meeting, both Nick and Scott will be leaving the Board at the end of their terms in January 2021. Does the Board desire to have recruitment for this one year term? After discussion, Dan made a motion to approve the recruitment process; seconded by Juliette. Unanimous roll-call vote to approve this motion.

Finance Committee: Board Chair Paula reported:

- ✓ The previous Chair Roland has left the Board so no meeting has been held since June. She asked committee members Dan and Nick for updates but they had nothing to report.
- ✓ Past Chair Dana has offered his assistance to mentor new Treasurer and Committee Chair Elaine as she transitions into this position.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Peter was absent; Betty reported:

- ✓ The committee has completed the 2019-2020 observations of Principal Kathy. Her End-of-Year Report will be developed but given the current circumstances this is not an immediate priority. The committee will work with Kathy to get the EOY Report and finalize her 2019-2020 evaluation process.
- ✓ As the new school year starts, new annual goals will be expected from ED Richard and Principal Kathy. These will be presented to the Board upon receipt.

Chair Paula indicated that there were some chat box comments on the Zoom screen and wondered if we needed to go back to Public Comment. Attorney Dupere stated that it would be appropriate, but not required, to recognize these individuals but given the length of tonight’s agenda it might not be a good idea at this time. Consensus of the Board was to carry-on with the meeting and collect all the chat box comments for possible future response(s).

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Principal's Report: Principal Kathy stated:

- Given the months of school closure, she has missed the interaction with Parents. She thanked those attending this meeting via Zoom or phone.
- Over the summer months, she has been very scarce with information about fall re-opening because of the constant changes and updates in guidelines from the CDC, DPH, and DESE. Even this afternoon new changes and dates for submission of information were posted by DESE.
- Kathy indicated that she had a video presentation regarding the fall re-opening so she put it up on the screen. At this time, ED Richard gave Kathy control (hosting) of the Zoom meeting. This video covered (1) Background Information, (2) Health and Safety, (3) Learning Models, (4) Community Feedback, and (5) Next Steps.
- She often emphasized that DESE Commissioner Riley used the words “tolerate ambiguity” as fall planning was occurring because no one could predict what may or will happen to schools.
- A preliminary plan was submitted to DESE on 7/31/2020 for alternating weeks of school (Group A and Group B) so students would be in the building for a full week and then on remote learning for a week.
- On Friday, August 14th, a final plan must be submitted to DESE. However, this date has now been extended to Monday, August 17th.
- As of August 12th, staff at PVCICS return to work for planning and in-service training.
- It is anticipated that students will start school on September 8th.
- Health and Safety issues have major cost for equipment (i.e.: gloves, masks, partitions, cleaning supplies), increased custodial staffing, busing, and possible contact tracing.
- Trigger and Positivity Rates in the state, community, and/or school will determine necessity of closing down student attendance in the building.
- Kevin Lawson, Director of Operations, gave information on the School Lunch Program and meals for students during remote learning weeks.
- The video presentation will be posted on the school's website and can be e-mailed upon request.
- Questions were asked about getting information to parents and families; input from staff upon their return on August 12th; concerns of staff regarding their personal safety and health; and, services to “special need students”.
- At this time, no vote is required for re-opening options. If needed, a Special Board meeting may be called at the end of August to discuss and approve options for re-opening.
- Vacation Leave Policy for staff needs to be amended. This is being done after a legal review because the current wording is ambiguous and implies staff may be eligible for the full vacation time and pay after only one day of work. New wording insures that staff is vested before vacation time is granted. Betty made a motion to approve the new wording for the Vacation Leave Policy; seconded by Scott. Edison and Hannah abstained from the vote; motion passed with roll-call vote.
- Chair Paula thanked Kathy for her video presentation, work over the many months since school closure, and flexibility in handling the various changes and requirements.

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Executive Director's Update: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ At this time, there are approximately 200 students on the waitlist.
- ❖ Student recruitment for September 2020 continues. Follow-up is being done with all applicants and current students to determine acceptances and withdrawals as well as those that plan to actually return versus continue on remote learning..
- ❖ Facility Plan and Renovations have already been discussed. There are updates to the plans with the addition of tents for outdoor activity. Permits for construction have been slow due to the closure of the Hadley Town Offices.
- ❖ The Hadley Fire Chief and Police Chief did an inspection of the facility today.
- ❖ Grant money has been received to assist with the costs of summer 2020 instruction, basic COVID-19 supplies, and a new Ionization System for air quality in the building. Questions were asked about this Ionization System and possible health risks.
- ❖ The Annual Report has been submitted to DESE as required by July 31, 2020.
- ❖ Chair Paula thanked Richard for the work he has done over the past several months and decisions he made as related to safety for staff, students and the school.

Executive Director's Evaluation: Richard indicated that Dana had sent the 2018-2019 Summary Report to him for review and comment. It can be discussed at the September Board meeting.

Board Member Updates: None

New Business: Chair Paula stated:

- In previous years, the Board had started to develop "Goals" and she would like to re-visit this activity.
- Mentors for new Board members will be assigned.
- Board Rules, Roles, and Responsibilities will be discussed at an upcoming meeting. Betty mentioned that some of this information will also be covered in the Trustee Handbook which is currently being updated and should be delivered to the Board at the September meeting.
- She asked that all Board members be active participants in discussions and decisions during this school year.
- Board meetings have been held on the first Thursday of the month but may have to be changed, however, the September meeting will be scheduled for September 3rd.
- Betty asked about the selection of a Student Representative to the Board. Principal Kathy stated that selection will occur in the fall. The Faculty Advisor will work with the Student Council on this matter.

Having no further business, Paula made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Betty. This session of the Board of Trustees Regular Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on September 3, 2020

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