

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2021 at 6:00 PM

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

This meeting was held via Zoom and Telephone access in accordance with current State guidelines regarding the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn.

In attendance: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee, Mike Rooney, Frank Soleimani, Ann Kochis, A. Juliet Larke, Ying “Elaine” Wang, Peter Wood, Dan O’Shea, Faculty Representative Hannah Treworgy, and Student Representative Sebastian English.

Absent: Sujane Wu, Vice-Chair Edison Santana, and Gina Ocasion.

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn and Principal Kathy Wang.

There were also two parents that listened to the meeting. Attorney Russell Dupere was present from approximately 6:30pm to 7:23pm.

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:02 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members.

Public Comment: Sita Magnuson spoke to the Board regarding her concerns on the Delta variant of Covid-19 and the “Layered Strategy Approach” necessary to control outbreaks.

Administrative Items:

Minutes of the August 5, 2021 Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Mike made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Hannah. Roll call vote: Approval from: Cynthia, Betty, Juliet, Ann, Mike, and Frank. Abstaining from the vote due to not attending this meeting: Dan, Elaine, Peter, and Hannah.

Committee and Task Force Reports:

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine reported:

- ✓ At this time, there is no information from the committee.

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Betty reported:

- ✓ Editing of the Board Handbook is still pending while awaiting committee assignments for two Board members. It should be distributed in the next few weeks.
- ✓ The committee will hold a meeting in the next few weeks to elect a new Chair and develop a schedule for work to be completed this year.
- ✓ Ann spoke up to say that she would be interested in being a member of the Finance Committee – Committee Chair Elaine agreed to this committee assignment.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Peter reported:

- ✓ The committee will hold a meeting in the next few weeks to elect a new Chair and develop a schedule for work to be completed this year.

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- ✓ The End of Year Summary Report from Principal Kathy as needed for her 2020-2021 Annual Evaluation is being developed.
- ✓ ED Richard and Principal Kathy were both reminded about developing Annual Goals for the 2021-2022 School Year.

Principal's Report: Principal Kathy reported via a PowerPoint presentation:

- The Charter Renewal Request was submitted to DESE as required by July 30th. DESE expects to be on-site to complete classroom observations and a variety of focus groups related to the Charter Renewal on Tuesday, 10/26/21. One focus group will be set up for Board members – further information on time will be determined.
- School started for In-Person, five days a week instruction with a return to the longer school day using 3:30pm and 4:00pm as dismissal times. The start dates were New Teachers on 8/18, Other Staff on 8/23, and Students on 9/1/2021.
- The school will continue to have Shuttle and Busing services for students; After-School program at the YMCA; Middle School and High School Athletics.
- Virtual Parent-Teacher Conferences and Meetings will continue; Forms and Report Cards can be found on-line.
- School has many posters on classroom doors and hallway walls to welcome students back to the building.
- Covid Safety Measures, as developed in Spring 2021 and updated with DESE Guidelines published in July and August 2021, will be followed at school and on all bus services.

Board Training: Attorney Russell Dupere introduced himself and briefly spoke about his law practice with specific schools and various School Districts. His training for the Board covered two topics: (1) School Governance: Specific Duties of the Board; Joint Responsibilities with Administration; and, Specific Responsibilities of School Administration, and (2) Open Meeting Laws: Requirements and Purpose; Executive Sessions; Remote Participation; Minutes; and Enforcement. He allowed time for questions, answers, and comments from Board members.

Chair Cynthia asked if there was any follow-up to Principal Kathy's report. Questions were asked about (1) the possibility and probability of locker use during the winter; (2) schedules for Shuttle Bus and Regular Bus services; (3) future expansion of Route 9 from Middle Street to Home Depot as planned for next year, and (4) car lines and traffic issues for delivery and dismissal at school.

Executive Director's Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ The contract with Atty. Fred Dupere is for a specific number of hours per month – not a regular schedule. As he heads towards retirement, it is anticipated that his son Russell will take over his legal work with this Board.

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- ❖ Student enrollment is at 576 out of DESE allowance of 584. This is 16 students above last year. There were some “no shows” yesterday so backfilling at Kindergarten will occur to maintain 44 students in each class; grades 6 and 9 will be backfilled to allow 22 students per class rather than 24 in accordance with staff requests to maintain slightly smaller classes.
- ❖ Existing grants are being reviewed and written for renewal. A Grant aligned with special funding for Covid relief will be reviewed with this year’s Audit – these funds were used to purchase cameras and video equipment for remote instruction. It is anticipated that all Special Grants related to Covid will be reviewed in upcoming financial audits.

Evaluation of Executive Director: ED Richard stated:

He has been busy with other tasks and has not developed his “Binder of Evidence” for the 2020-2021 school year as needed for the completion of his Annual Evaluation. This document will be sent to Board members when completed.

For the position of Vice Chair: The current Vice-Chair was absent from this meeting. The Board’s consensus was to postpone the election for this position until the next meeting.

New Business:

- As discussed by Atty. Dupere in the Board Training, minutes from Executive Sessions may be approved at the conclusion of a regular meeting. This item will be added to future agendas when Executive Session minutes are pending approval.
- ED Richard indicated that the Annual Financial Audit of PVCICS will be done over the next several weeks. This must be reviewed by the Finance Committee, approved by the Board, and sent to the State by November 1st. He recommends that the October 7th Board meeting be changed to October 21st instead of holding two meetings during October. Consensus of the Board was to allow this change of meeting dates.
- The Family Handbook is annually reviewed by the Board. However, last year the Handbook was not updated due to school closure and remote learning. The last Board review and approval was done on October 3, 2019 which covered revisions completed as of August 24, 2019. The current Handbook 2021-2022 will be sent to the Board for review and action at the November Board meeting.

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia called for a motion to adjourn. Peter made a motion to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting; motion seconded by Juliet. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Hannah, Frank, Mike, Ann, Peter, Elaine, Juliet, Betty, Dan, and Cynthia.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on October 28, 2021

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