

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2022 at 7:00 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 Remote Board Meetings during the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn.

In attendance: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Vice-Chair Mike Rooney, Peter Wood, Gina Ocasion (joined the meeting at 7:15pm), Frank Soleimani, Ying “Elaine” Wang (left the meeting about 7:45pm), Student Representative Augusto Schwanz, and Faculty Representative Greg Rota.

Absent: Ann Kochis, Sujane Wu, and Edison Santana.

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, previous Board member Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee (meeting scribe), previous Board member Charles “Nick” Bagley, and, Director of Student Services Marilyn Kusek.

Documents used in this meeting:

1. Agenda with information for Zoom and Phone access
2. Draft Minutes of the Board Meeting dated February 3, 2022
3. PVCICS Financial Statements dated January 31, 2022
4. Application-Resume of candidate for vacant short-term Board position
5. Email dated 2/18/2022 from Trusteeship Committee regarding Recruitment of new Board Members for Class A 2022-2025
6. Email dated 2/11/22 from ED Richard regarding the anticipated acceptance of PVCICS’s Charter Renewal Application by the State Commissioner of Education and the Board of Education (BESE)
7. Email dated 2/26/22 from ED Richard regarding Enrollment Applications
8. Governor Baker’s updated Executive Order to allow remote meetings to continue until July 2022

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 7:05 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members (7 members present: Cynthia, Peter, Mike, Greg, Frank, Elaine, and Augusto).

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items: Minutes of the February 3, 2021 Board Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Peter made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Mike. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Cynthia, Peter, Mike, Greg, Frank, Elaine. No abstentions to the vote. Motion passed.

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Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Frank reported:

- ✓ The committee held a meeting on Thursday, February 17th. Topics covered included an interview with a candidate for backfilling a vacant Board position; upcoming Recruitment of New Board Members for 2022-2025; newspaper ad for applicants; next meeting(s) to be scheduled in March for interview(s) with new Board candidate(s).
- ✓ The recruitment and interview process of new Board candidates should occur in March. In accordance with the Bylaws, a slate of candidates is then presented to the Board at the Meeting in April. However, due to delays with getting the ad into the newspaper, he would like Board approval to change the presentation and vote on the slate from April to the May Board meeting; this extension would give time for the committee to complete their due diligence. Mike made a motion, seconded by Cynthia, to extend the 2022 Recruitment Process from the April Meeting to the May Meeting. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Cynthia, Peter, Mike, Greg, Frank, Elaine. Motion passed.
- ✓ The Board has a vacant position due to the resignation of Juliet Larke. Mr. Chung Liu is interested in filling this vacancy which expires on June 30, 2022. He was previously on the Board from 2013 to 2017. Mr. Liu was interviewed by the Trusteeship Committee at the last committee meeting; his resume was sent to all Board members for review. Based on the committee recommendation, Frank made a motion to approve Chung Liu as the candidate for the vacant position on the Board; motion seconded by Peter. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Cynthia, Peter, Gina, Mike, Greg, Frank, Elaine. Motion passed.

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine reported:

- ✓ The committee has not held a meeting. She has nothing to report.
- ✓ ED Richard spoke about the Financial Reports dated Jan. 31, 2022. He said funds from grants were drawn; tuition revenue is a bit ahead of expectations; and, operating costs show a surplus. Peter asked questions about line items that were highly overspent – consultants and paraprofessionals.
- ✓ Ed Richard stated that, given the current and anticipated ongoing amount of surplus funds, he may be recommending that the Board allow an end-of-year bonus to staff members.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Gina reported:

- ✓ As required by the Annual Evaluation Process, two members of the committee completed an Unannounced Observation of Principal Kathy. There is still one announced (scheduled for tomorrow morning) and one unannounced observation to be completed before the end of the school year. These four reports will be used at the end of the school year when Kathy's Annual Evaluation is being completed.

Principal's Report: Principal Kathy reported:

- Power Point presentation covered the following topics:
 - 111 school days have been completed; Covid cases continue to decline.

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- DESE, CDC, and DPH have changed Covid protocols; PVCICS has similarly updated their protocols; In-School Pooled Testing continues; Antigen Test Kits have been sent home with students.
- Some communities and School Districts are reviewing mask mandates. This is a complex issue for PVCICS because of the numerous communities that send children to PVCICS and their various hometown responses to the mask mandate. The school's Leadership Team and internal Health Committee will continue to have ongoing discussions of this topic.
- At the end of February, she participated in a virtual panel presentation for the National Charter School Alliance's (NCSA) Annual "School Leaders of Color" Conference.
- For the second year, she will be participating in a virtual panel presentation at the National Chinese Language Conference in April.
- Middle School students competed in the virtual "Math Counts" competition and received the second place award.
- She asked Athletic Director Greg Rota to speak about the sports program. He mentioned; (1) winter sports have been completed; (2) Middle School Basketball had dominated the season with only two losses; (3) Wrestling is a Co-Op Team with Granby – they had a championship season so a banner will be hung in the gym; (4) a PVCICS Grade 9 female wrestler earned fourth place in the State finals; (5) Skiing sent six students to the State championships; (6) spring season sign-ups are this week; (7) the purchase of the Student Activity bus has greatly helped the teams get to and from their games – another bus would be greatly appreciated!
- Academic testing starts in March and continues through May: ACCESS, PSAT, MCAS, STAMP, SOPA, and IB exams.
- Planning for our next school year has started; space for parking is a major issue; once again, parent parking at the mall during arrival and dismissal is creating problems.
- A photo of Kindergarten students on their first day of school (9/2021) was shown.

Executive Director's Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ The Taiwan Normal University Relationship is still being developed with ongoing conversations with school staff.
- ❖ At this time, no action has been taken on a possible Sister-School Agreement with Chengdu Shade High School.
- ❖ Charter Amendments are being considered for a variety of actions: (1) possible Exchange Program for International Students; (2) additional facility space near the current school; and, (3) future increase in headcount.
- ❖ PVCICS has received an email letter indicating that the Charter Renewal will not be questioned by the Commissioner or BESE. However, the formal notification of acceptance for renewal has not yet been received.

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Election of new Board Secretary:

Chair Cynthia indicated that a new Board Secretary has to be elected for the remainder of this school year because Betty cannot continue in that position since she has now completed six years as a Trustee on the Board.

Previous advice from Legal Council indicated that Betty could continue as the “meeting scribe” to assist a new Secretary in acclimating to the duties and responsibilities of the position. Peter self-nominated for this position; seconded by Cynthia. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Cynthia, Peter, Gina, Mike, Greg, Frank. Motion passed.

New Business:

The Governor has again extended his Executive Order regarding remote meetings during the Covid Pandemic. On February 15, 2022, Governor Baker signed the new law, Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, which included an extension from April 1, 2022 to July 15, 2022 of the remote meeting provisions as originally signed on March 12, 2020.

Discussion followed regarding the continuation of remote meetings until July. Concern was also raised regarding starting new Board members in July with a remote session rather than in person – unless the Executive Order is again extended.

Peter made a motion to continue remote meetings until July 1, 2022; In-person meetings resume in July 2022 unless the Governor extends the Order again; motion seconded by Mike. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Cynthia, Peter, Gina, Mike, Greg, Frank. Motion passed.

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia thanked everyone for their participation in tonight’s meeting. She then read the following statement: The PVCICS Board of Trustees will enter into Executive Session per Chapter 30A Section 21(a) 6 – To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property. Open session will not reconvene at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Cynthia called for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting and move into Executive Session. Gina made the motion; seconded by Peter. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, Greg, and Cynthia. The meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on April 7, 2022

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