

# 先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

April 7, 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 (joined the meeting about 7:09pm), Peter Wood, Gina Ocasion, Frank Soleimani, Chung Liu, Student Representative Augusto Schwanz, and Faculty Representative Greg Rota (joined the meeting about 7:13pm).

NOTE: Edison Santana resigned from the Board of Trustees on March 3, 2022

Absent: Ann Kochis, Sujane Wu, and Ying “Elaine” Wang

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, previous Board member Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee (meeting scribe), and previous Board member Charles “Nick” Bagley. Other guests were Natalia Shcherbakova and Krista Toronto.

### Documents used in this meeting:

1. Agenda with information for Zoom and Phone access
2. Draft Minutes of the Board Meeting dated March 3, 2022
3. PVCICS Financial Statements dated February 28, 2022
4. Email dated 3/21/2022 from ED Richard regarding official notification from DESE’s Commissioner Riley for approval of the PVCICS Charter Renewal Application
5. Email dated 4/1/2022 from ED Richard regarding initial conversation with Brenton Stewart from the Charter School Office to discuss the process for developing a new school as well as a student exchange proposal
6. Email dated 4/1/2022 from ED Richard regarding social media post from Chengdu Shade School about the pen-pal exchange with PVCICS
7. Email dated 4/1/2022 from ED Richard forwarding the email dated 3/26/2022 from Rosie Cowell regarding the topic of changing PVCICS’s mask mandates
8. Email dated 4/4/2022 from ED Richard regarding changes to the School’s Mask Policy
9. Notification from DESE for approval of Chung Liu as a new Board Trustee until 6/30/22

While waiting for a meeting quorum, Chung Liu spoke about his pleasure in again being a Board Trustee and also gave his apologies for not being able to continue beyond June 30, 2022. He had planned to continue but his 90 year old Mother, living in Taiwan, needs his assistance so he will be spending time there and not be available for Board Meetings beyond his current term.

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 7:04 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members. 6 members were present: Cynthia, Peter, Mike, Frank, Chung, and Augusto. Mike then joined the meeting about 7:09pm and Greg joined about 7:13pm.

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page 2 of 4

Public Comment: Natalia Shcherbakova expressed her appreciation for all the efforts of the school leadership and recent changes that have been made to the school's Mask Policy.

Administrative Items: Minutes of the March 3, 2021 Board Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Gina made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Frank. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Cynthia, Peter, Gina, and Frank. Chung abstained from the vote because he was not a Board member at the time of that meeting. Motion passed.

## Committee and Task Force Reports:

*Trusteeship Committee:* Chairperson Frank reported:

- ✓ The committee held a meeting on Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup> and has another one scheduled for Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup>.
- ✓ During the Recruitment Process, two people submitted Letters of Interest for a Board position (Class A 2022-2025) but neither individual completed the application process. There was one additional application that was submitted and completed; that person will be interviewed at the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- ✓ With the resignation of Edison, there is a one-year (Class B until 6/30/2023) position that can be filled at any time if a viable candidate is identified.
- ✓ Two current Board members have indicated that they will not be completing their terms beyond the end of this school year. Faculty Representative Greg Rota will be retiring from PVCICS so a new election by the Faculty will have to occur for that position. Ying "Elaine" Wang and family will be moving to Eastern Massachusetts so she indicated that she will not be able to attend meetings; this creates another one-year (Class B until 6/30/2023) position that can be filled upon her resignation.
- ✓ The committee intends to make recommendations for new Trustees and bring a slate of candidates to the May Board Meeting for consideration and a vote by the Board.

*Finance Committee:* Chairperson Elaine was absent so ED Richard reported:

- ✓ The committee has not held a meeting.
- ✓ ED Richard spoke about the Financial Reports dated Feb. 28, 2022. He said there were no issues at this time; both accounts were showing a surplus of funds; funds would be needed for consideration of any school expansion so the current surplus was a good indication of financial stability for future expansion.
- ✓ Ed Richard will be working with Finance Committee member Nick Bagley to complete the quarterly review of credit card receipts and report on that matter at the next meeting.
- ✓ The committee will be scheduling meetings to review budgets and plans for expenses during the upcoming fiscal year.

*Personnel and Grievance Committee:* Chairperson Gina reported:

- ✓ As required by the Annual Evaluation Process, two members of the committee completed the final Observation of Principal Kathy during her Administrative Team Meeting last

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Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of April 7, 2022

page 3 of 4

week. The four Observation 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:
  - 135 school days have been completed; Grades K to 11 have 45 school days and Grade 12 has 33 days to complete the school year.
  - An In-Person Open House was held for students and families that will be entering Kindergarten and Grade 6 in the fall of 2022.
  - High School students have been completing community service projects and participating in charitable volunteer work.
  - As of April 11<sup>th</sup>, PVCICS will have an "Optional Mask" Policy for students and staff. This information has been shared with staff and families.
  - Pooled Testing at school and At-Home Antigen Testing Kits will continue to be used.
  - Key elements being stressed at this time are: RESPECT for each other, PEACE without bullying or harassment, and, SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT for all.

## Executive Director's Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ He had an initial conversation with Brenton Stewart from the Charter School Office regarding the possible development of an International Student Exchange Program. This would be for a full academic school year rather than what currently occurs during the summer under the National Summer Language Exchange (NSLE) Program. Items to be further discussed include: (1) how to guarantee enrollment space for students upon their return to PVCICS; (2) how to duplicate the financial process (as used in Public Schools) and modify regulations under current laws for Charter Schools; (3) how to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with any exchange schools.
- ❖ The Springfield and Lawrence Public Schools currently have a third party financial agreement for funding separate schools within their Districts. A similar arrangement would need to be developed for PVCICS to accept tuition funds from any exchange student's sending school district.
- ❖ Educational Services via remote learning may be a future possibility. The successful PVCICS model could be duplicated in another part of the State where Chinese Language Instruction and/or IB Programs are not currently available but may be desired. This project may require a new school site out of the Western Mass area.
- ❖ A relationship with the Taiwan National Normal University is still being developed. This relationship would anticipate having their college students at PVCICS for practicums with the intention of possibly hiring them as PVCICS Teachers upon their college graduation. However, issues of housing and H1 VISA's would need to be resolved.

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page 4 of 4

Following ED Richard's presentation and discussion by Board members, a series of motions were offered:

- (1) Mike made a motion to allow ED Richard to further investigate the possibility of having International Exchange Students at PVCICS and how to develop protocols for third party financial transactions; motion seconded by Greg. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, Chung, Greg, and Cynthia. Motion passed.
- (2) Peter made a motion to allow PVCICS High School students to participate in an International Exchange Program for up to one school year; motion seconded by Cynthia. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, Chung, Greg, and Cynthia. Motion passed.
- (3) Mike made a motion to allow ED Richard to further investigate the concept of developing remote educational services; motion seconded by Gina. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, Chung, Greg, and Cynthia. Motion passed.
- (4) Peter made a motion to allow ED Richard to investigate the possibility of acquiring a new school facility and site; motion seconded by Mike. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, Chung, Greg, and Cynthia. Motion passed.

New Business: None

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. Mike made the motion; seconded by Gina. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, Chung, Greg, and Cynthia. The meeting adjourned at 8:09pm.

Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on May 5, 2022

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