

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2023 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 Remote Board Meetings during the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn.

In attendance for this meeting: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Vice-Chair Mike Rooney, Ann Kochis, Greg Rota, Frank Soleimani, and Gina Ocasion

Absent: Ying “Elaine” Wang, Faculty Rep. Kim Lachance, and Student Rep. Augusto Schwanz

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, previous Board member Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee (meeting scribe), and Board Attorney Kim Roche (attended 6:10pm to 6:30pm)

Documents used in this meeting:

1. Agenda with information for Zoom and Phone access
2. Draft Minutes of the Board Meeting dated December 1, 2022
3. Email dated 12/14/22 regarding Financial Statements dated October 31, 2022
4. Email dated 12/20/22 regarding Financial Statements dated November 30, 2022
5. Email dated 1/2/23 with Letter of Resignation from Peter Wood

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:03 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members. Present were Ann, Gina, Frank, Greg, and Cynthia. Mike had connection issues and joined the meeting at 6:05pm.

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items: Minutes from the December 1, 2022 Board Meeting were presented for review. Corrections were noted: misspelled names, typos, and missing information regarding the vote on the November Board Minutes. Mike made a motion to approve the edited minutes; seconded by Gina. Roll call vote: Approval from Frank, Mike, Gina, Ann, Peter, and Cynthia. Motion passed.

Board Training: Robert’s Rules of Order presented by Board Attorney Kim Roche

Attorney Roche presented information regarding Quorums; Meeting Agendas; Points of Order; Making Motions; Counting votes by Simple Majority or 2/3’s Majority; and, Attending meetings but Abstaining from Votes.

Following her presentation, she answered questions from Board members regarding specific voting procedures as well as Board etiquette during debates and discussions.

Chair Cynthia thanked Atty. Roche for her presentation and announced that she would send a handout to Board members regarding the Rules of Order.

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ED Richard mentioned the “Communication Policy” for Board members as found in the Trustee Handbook. He will send this Policy to Board members for their review.

Chair Cynthia made note of the fact that Board Secretary Peter Wood had send a Letter of Resignation on December 7, 2022. She thanked him for his years of service to the Board and School.

Committee and Task Force Reports:

- Trusteeship Committee: Committee Chair Frank reported that the committee will be meeting before the end of this month. The Recruitment Process for new Board members will start in February so information on this matter will be forthcoming.
- Finance Committee: Committee Chair Elaine was not present. ED Richard stated that the Financial Reports continue to show a surplus; Tuition Payments have been adjusted downward by \$1000 for per pupil reimbursements from the State; ongoing costs and expenses have been lower than anticipated for both personnel (due to open positions) and utilities (due to warmer weather).
- Personnel and Grievance Committee: Committee Chair Gina stated that one in-person observation of Principal Kathy has been completed in this school year’s Evaluation cycle. The other three observations have yet to be scheduled.

Principal’s Report: Principal Kathy reported:

Power Point presentation covered the following topics:

- ✓ Witson’s Foods started school breakfast and lunch service on 11/28/22. Food was initially very bland but flavor has recently improved. Cereal will be available for breakfast to replace any offered food with possible allergens.
- ✓ Academically, 80 school days have elapsed (1/3 of school year); fall semester ends 1/23/23 on day 90; Student assessments start this month, MCAS starts in March, IB testing is done in May, and various Chinese testing will be done in January/April/May.
- ✓ Operations continues to have some issues with staffing; previous alumni (now college students) have returned as “subs” during their college breaks; two teachers from the National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) have been hired – they are expected to arrive at the end of January and will start work on February 1st.
- ✓ Lunar New Year will be on 1/22/23 – Year of the Rabbit. Students will have certain activities but no schoolwide or parental/family activities are planned.
- ✓ Athletics has started the winter season with basketball, alpine skiing, and a co-op wrestling team with Granby High. Phase 1 of installation for the vertical climbing wall has been completed and Phase 2 is scheduled for the end of this month. The Art Teacher has experience as a climber and will be starting a Climbing Club.

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Executive Director's Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ Financial Reports have been previously covered.
- ❖ An informational meeting was held with State Rep. Dan Kerry.
- ❖ A letter will be drafted and sent to Patrick Tutwiler, the newly appointed Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education, as an invitation to visit PVCICS and learn about the school's program.
- ❖ At this time, there is no update on the possible purchase of an additional school building.
- ❖ Purchase of a school bus for athletic and student activities has been put on hold due to the changes in tuition reimbursements and financial forecasts.

Board members asked ED Richard questions regarding the announced closing of the Paulo Freire Charter School currently located in Chicopee; formula for setting Charter School tuition reimbursements; and, relation of Charter School tuition rates to Vocational School tuition rates.

New Business:

- Betty questioned Principal Kathy regarding the lack of postings for approved Board minutes on the school website. Kathy indicated that she had not received the minutes to post – Betty will send her the missing postings.
- Cynthia indicated that the Board Secretary will need to be replaced because Peter had resigned. This item will be on the agenda for the February meeting.
- Principal Kathy announced that she would not be available for the scheduled February 2nd Board meeting and asked if the meeting could be moved to an alternate date. After discussion, the Board approved a change of meeting date from 2/2/23 to 2/9/23.

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia thanked everyone for their participation in tonight's meeting and called for a motion to adjourn. Gina made the motion; seconded by Mike. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Mike, Frank, Ann, Greg, Gina and Cynthia. The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on March 2, 2023

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