

Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

**Minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting
April 9, 2008**

Board Members Present: Lennitt Bligen, Keeana Saxon, Nia Jacobs, Carolyn Corbe, Karen Jeong, Edna Carrasco

Board Members Absent: Jackie Sinclair, Dan Mulhern, Albert Pless

Board Foundation Members Present: None

Staff Present: Kevin Cherry, Craig Engelman, Jillian Nesgos, Alexandra Buckmire, Beverly Pina, Amy Carignan, Roger Harris, Robyn Vioria

Keeana Saxon, Chair in J. Sinclair's absence

Meeting was called to order at 4:36 pm

I. Chairperson's Report – (K. Saxon for Ms. J. Sinclair)

❖ Approval of January 9, 2008 Minutes

VOTED: With a motion by N. Jacobs, seconded by K. Jeong, the board unanimously voted to accept the minutes of the January 9, 2008 Trustee Meeting.

N. Paleologos and T. Saxon have resigned from the Board and will move to the Foundation Board.

❖ Committee Updates (All)

○ Nomination Committee – K. Saxon for Ms. J. Sinclair

Introduction of board nominee Lance Houston. L. Houston was recommended by T. Saxon. Board members reviewed his resume and L. Houston introduced himself.

Discussion - L. Houston was asked by Chair to step out of meeting.

Board members discussed L. Houston's nomination.

VOTED: With a motion by R. Harris, seconded by E. Carrasco, the board unanimously voted to accept L. Houston's nomination to the board.

L. Houston asked to re-enter the room.

Introduction of board nominee Ernest Washington. E. Washington was recommended by R. Harris. E. Washington was not present to introduce himself. Board members reviewed his resume and discussed the nomination.

VOTED: With a motion by R. Harris, seconded by K. Jeong, the board unanimously voted to accept E. Washington's nomination to the board.

A board picture was taken.

K. Saxon gave a brief summary of the retreat. Committee chairs were assigned as follows:

R. Harris – Development Committee

L. Houston – Human Resource Committee

L. Bligen and E. Washington – Finance Committee

K. Saxon – Vice-chair of Nomination Committee and Development Committee

K. Jeong to serve as Clerk

○ Human Resources Committee – Ms. K. Saxon

There will be an executive session after the staff leaves to discuss salary bands and salary schedules for teachers and paraprofessionals. The intent is to address concerns about the 4% increase and step.

Resolution: 2% increase for Year 1
 3% increase for Years 2-3
 4% increase for Years 4-7
 5% increase for Years 8-12

Effective August 2008 – 2011.

VOTED: With a motion by R. Harris, seconded by K. Jeong, the board unanimously voted to accept the new schedule for teachers.

VOTED: With a motion by R. Harris, seconded by E. Carrasco, the board unanimously voted to accept the new schedule for paraprofessionals.

There was a recommendation from the Human Resources Committee that the staff salary band be amended for all staff.

VOTED: With a motion by R. Harris, seconded by N. Jacobs, the board unanimously voted to amend the salary bands for all staff.

○ Academic/Curriculum and Instruction Committee – Ms. N. Jacobs

The committee was unable to meet and will reschedule for May.

○ Finance Committee – Mr. K. Cherry

The state has fully committed to its revenue estimates, which were higher than anticipated. For the year, the school maintained enrollment of 1,240 students. Financially, the school's performance has improved due to salary management, higher than anticipated revenue, some expense savings. Professional services expense has increased due to the relocation efforts. The legal and due diligence costs of \$450,000 will be capitalized as part of the acquisition costs.

Audit statements for 2007 have been completed for the school and the Foundation. The report has been forwarded to the DOE and the State Auditor's office.

The FY09 Budget was reviewed. Revenue is based on historical reference from the state (Projected state revenue of \$15.5 million vs. Current budget of \$15 million). There is a 3% salary increase for administrative staff, teacher, and paraprofessional scales. Five full time paraprofessional positions have been restored, and two reading first facilitators were retained. The Reading First Grant was eliminated due to federal cuts, so the school will

retain the facilitators and make reductions elsewhere. There is a 10% increase in health benefits, instead of passing cost increases to employees. The school should receive more revenue from the state than originally projected; additional positions not included in the budget would be covered by the additional state revenue.

VOTED: With a motion by R. Harris, seconded by C. Corbe, the board unanimously voted to accept the FY09 budget with \$17,319,000 revenue.

○ Development Committee – Ms. K. Saxon

The committee has not met, but there was a discussion at the retreat about the board becoming more active in fundraising. The school has verbally agreed to contract with Sam Solomon of Solomon Associates for the capital campaign and fundraising goals. K. Cherry gave an update on the financial portion of relocation project. Total costs are \$38 million. The school has roughly \$19.4 million in equity after the sale. The sale is structured with an escrow to prepay three years of rent, allowing the school to build a surplus of \$4.5 million. Net proceeds from the sale will be \$13.9 million. The capital campaign requires \$1 million (10% of the QZAB amount). The proposed \$10 million QZAB only requires principal payment; interest is paid by the government. The target moving date is 9/2011. If we can move sooner, we can save \$1.7-2.7 million. Fundraising must be accomplished. The board is being asked to work to raise \$5 million in three years. Names and addresses of targeted contributors will be collected at the next meeting.

❖ Foundation Board

The Foundation board still needs to be developed to penetrate donor networks. R. Harris is asking the staff to participate in the capital campaign from their networks.

Announcement: R. Vilorio will be leaving the school for a doctoral program in Washington.

II. Relocation Update – (R. Harris)

Purchase and sale agreements have been signed. An extension was requested for the 90-day due diligence period to continue digging and testing the soil at the Hyde Park Ave. site. An additional two week extension will be requested with an action plan. In the event the soil is found to be too contaminated, we will try to negotiate for the seller to reduce the price if the cost of removing and replacing the soil is too high. Goldman environmental is doing the soil testing. Chlorine, heavy metals, and lead have been found, and we need to make sure the soil is strong enough to support foundations and playing fields. The owner has some responsibility for some oil contamination that was found; it must report it to the DEP. It was suggested that we contact the DEP early in the process to avoid disruptions later.

III. Headmaster's Report – (R. Harris)

R. Harris acknowledged the efforts of the principals and assessment & instruction technology team for preparation of the students through the Saturday enrichment program. Graduation will take place June 23rd at Park Plaza. Board members are asked to attend and give congratulatory remarks. About 35-38% of the 6th grade class passed the IC exam. The pass rate is usually around 25%. The results, however, are misleading as

only 60 of 85 students took the exam, and about 30 students passed. This is the exam taken for admittance at Boston Latin and other schools. Over 50% of our students who took the exam passed and were admitted to the exam schools.

R. Harris asked K. Cherry to provide a financial projection for the next four years. Human resources is working on recruitment by advertising locally, electronically, and through the Massachusetts Charter School publications. Although attrition is expected, it is a major challenge. New candidates are needed for August. A professional is needed to handle public relations and advertise the history of the school and the anticipated relocation.

IV. Parent Trustee Update – (E. Carrasco)

\$25,000 was raised through the cookie dough fundraiser. 50% went back to the cookie company and 50% went to the Kinder School. From the Kinder School portion, \$1,000 went to the library; \$1,000 went to the Voices of Renaissance for the Washington, D.C. trip and the remainder was placed in the account.

There is one member interested in joining the Trustee board, but he/she has not been contacted.

At the May meeting with principals, they will discuss the next year and parent involvement, roles, and responsibilities.

V. Finance Update – (K. Cherry)

Discussed during Finance Committee report.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

There is still a focus on board recruitment and quality, specifically, the roles and responsibilities of each board member. A new board member orientation will be developed. The potential orientation would encourage new members to tour the school, read the board member packet, ask questions, and designate an existing board member to do an additional packet review. An additional retreat might be planned continue the discussions around challenges, opportunities, roles and responsibilities. 75% of last year's goals were achieved; new goals need to be created and discussed at the June meeting.

The Foundation budget should be presented at each board meeting.

VIII. Open Forum

No additional topics to discuss.

IX. Adjournment

With a motion by K.Saxon, seconded by R. Harris, board unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:05pm.

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