

**URBAN CHOICE CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – MINUTES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2013**

- Present:** Nelson Blish, Megan Bosco, Edward Cavalier, Sidney Moore, Joan Moorehead, Christine Murray, John Page, Frank Rossi, Antwan Williams, Spiro Ziogas
- Absent:** Thomas Felton, Jr.
- Guest:** Arian Martin, Prospective Board Member
- Media Notification:** Erica Bryant of the Democrat and Chronicle was notified of the December 5, 2013 Board of Trustees meeting on November 25, 2013. Public notice was also posted in the school and published in the school newsletter.

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Frank Rossi and the mission statement was shared.

Motion 131205.1 Upon a motion by Sidney Moore and duly seconded by Nelson Blish, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees formally approve the November 7, 2013 minutes.

Voting in the affirmative: Nelson Blish, Megan Bosco, Sidney Moore, Joan Moorehead, Christine Murray, John Page, Frank Rossi, Antwan Williams

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 131205.1 passed 8 to 0

Leadership Team Report – Ed Cavalier, Christina Schermerhorn, Dan Deckman, Miriam Steinberg, Nicole Berg, Eric Robinson

Ed Cavalier:

- Dan Deckman shared the dashboard
 - It has been updated to include staff demographics
 - ATS numbers decreased for November and is comparable to the previous year
 - Attendance is averaging 95.7%

- Attrition – total of eight students (2%)
- Healthy waiting list has grown – currently at 243
- Charter goals
 - ✓ Percentage of students on honor roll – 40% (grades 3-8)
 - ✓ Percentage of families attending conferences – 72% have attended at least one conference to date – significantly higher than last year
 - ✓ Number of volunteer hours - 912
- Staff has been researching and reviewing available real estate so that we will be ready for an expansion proposal once a rechartering decision is made
 - Our waiting list is growing without advertising or soliciting
 - Exploring K-8 expansion
 - There are very nice spaces available on Humboldt Street with landlords willing to accept us
 - Discovered document online confirming that if we want to increase enrollment by September 2014, we must seek approval by December 15. Therefore, we need to be looking at a September 2015 timeline.
 - ✓ Must involve staff in the planning
 - ✓ When steps are in place, we will be ready to share our recommendation regarding how we want to expand and what properties are available for us

Christina Schermerhorn:

- SED Site Visit Review
 - No surprises during the State visit
 - ✓ Observation strategies and follow up
 - ✓ SED visited all classrooms
 - ✓ Leadership focus group was focused on our mission
 - ✓ Parent involvement was addressed
 - ✓ PBIS and Dignity for Student Act review
 - ✓ Assessments for growth in summer school
 - UCCS was thoroughly prepared
 - Confident in responses and follow up
 - Teachers shared highlights from the Student Focus Group:
- Renee Catlin shared student focus group highlights
 - They like and trust their teachers and have at least one adult they can go to
 - Other schools are not as safe
 - Other academics are not as challenging
 - Students would like a gym
 - Safety – shared information regarding fire drills
 - Shared information regarding classroom management – dojo – positive and negative points – rewarded all day long – consistency throughout the school
 - Discussed report cards and grading
 - Expressed that they would like more sports
 - They think they have more than enough help
 - They find ELA and Math Modules boring
- Josephine Horton shared some highlights from the parent focus group:

- Felt it was the most positive and most attended based on all of her other experiences
- Review of mission statement and what is important to families
- Safety is a priority
- Teacher/student relationships are critical
- Addressed the part of the mission statement related to an authentic effort at family involvement
- Discussed the classrooms and teachers
- Reviewed common core and curriculum
- Positive teacher and staff support
- Reviewed Special Education, but there were no parents involved in the focus group that could share personal experiences
- Discussed the school community
- Lack of a gym, sports and extracurricular activities was a topic for review
- State noted low turnout at Parent Forums
- Parents discussed desire for UCCS to expand to grades 9-12
- Several teachers shared some highlights from the teacher focus group:
 - Basketball team details shared
 - Mission statement discussed – shared how we live it – 15 shared personal stories
 - Reviewed common core and the K-2 pilot program – students are further ahead compared to previous years
 - Test scores were addressed
 - ✓ Improved results expected this year
 - ✓ Results from last year were not acceptable
 - Interested in the process of how NTI training was shared with the larger teaching population at UCCS
 - Shared details about Professional Development led by Bob Zimmerli and future plans
 - Reviewed authentic efforts at family involvement through open house process, curriculum night
 - Interested in home visits
- SED acknowledged that there was a large turnout of board members, parents, and teachers for focus groups
- Board members shared some highlights from the board member focus group:
 - Discussed the mission statement and mission statement moment
 - Shared our efforts to recruit English language learners
 - ✓ Specifically advertise
 - ✓ Reported that there are bilingual charter and public schools that draw these students
 - Responded to inquiry related to expansion for a 9-12 school
 - ✓ It was a prior goal
 - ✓ Money was put aside for this purpose
 - ✓ Currently focused on the school that we have so that students can successfully transition to a high school
- Additional discussions related to:
 - Academic program
 - Professional development
 - New math program

- Implementation of Common Core
- K-2 Pilot Program
- Test scores
- Every board member addressed an area of expertise
- Participation was impressive

Dan Deckman:

- Payroll
 - UCCS has outgrown the payroll system
 - It is an inadequate system requiring manual effort every two weeks
 - After shopping around, decision made to go with Paychex to take over as of January
 - Paychex offered improvements:
 - ✓ Customer service
 - ✓ A platform for running payroll
 - ✓ Will decrease the effort of managing benefits – health and dental insurance and retirement accounts
 - ✓ Will assist with elements related to tracking teacher certifications
 - ✓ Track teacher PD hours
 - ✓ Will provide for mass updates to the state’s website
 - ✓ Enhanced services for less than we were paying for the current system
- Health and Dental
 - Medical will increase 13% (budgeted for 14%)
 - Continuing to pursue a consortium – unsure if this will develop
 - High deductible plan offered – very few that participate

Miriam Steinberg

- Daisy Marquis Foundation Grant for \$18K has been awarded
- Newsletter and ROC the Day information shared with board members

Nicole Berg:

- Practice assessments– teachers are flexible and willing to help the students in three phases
- K-2 program is making a difference
- Continuing to anticipate better results
- Highland Hospital held a book drive and delivered four boxes of books
 - Will distribute the books via book bags for exchanges – read, bring back and send them back
- Therapy dog program
 - Held every other Friday
 - Four dogs visit
 - Working well for small group of students
 - Rotating students
 - Exploring the option of obtaining a therapy dog full time for our school – many students would benefit

Eric Robinson:

- Next PBIS school-wide event planned:
 - Holiday Store
 - ✓ Students will have the opportunity to shop for three different items to give as gifts to their family members
 - ✓ Staff has been generous donating to the store
 - ✓ Incentive – throughout the month of December, students earn dojo points for positive behavior which translate into “cash” to use as spending “money” on different gifts they can select for family
- Kindergarten students will be going to The Cheesecake Factory for a special holiday breakfast
 - Each student will receive a gift that was specifically selected for them - personalized
 - This opportunity developed as a result of our relationship with the Center for Youth
- Basketball teams for girls and boys
 - Practices to be held at the Sports Garden in Henrietta from 4:30-6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
- Fifth grade will perform (sing) at a conference held at Double Tree
- Part-time bus drivers hired
- STEM program
 - Five week sessions
 - First session to end this Saturday with a field trip to the Rochester Museum and Science Center
 - Will incorporate a field trip to MCC for the next session
 - 49 students are currently participating

Ed shared that the visit by SED was a very involved activity that involved teamwork. Dan spent nights writing the report, Christina was the point person, teachers took on a tremendous amount and Brandi was instrumental in meeting with the teacher and student focus group participants.

Brandi added that students traveled to The College at Brockport. This field trip helped students to think about college in their futures. Programs and sports were discussed, students visited classrooms, and UCCS students were polite, engaged, and asked great questions. It is planned for middle school students to visit several colleges throughout the year.

Chair Report – Frank Rossi

- Nothing to report this month

~ Teacher Quality Committee Report – Christine Murray

- Committee will be put together
- In the process of determining the appropriate direction for involvement of board members with staff members
- Meeting will be scheduled to look at the format and focus of the committee

~ Parent Involvement Committee Report – Joan Moorehead and Antwan Williams

- Will be connecting with Miriam to determine plans after the holidays

Governance Report – Megan Bosco

- Self-evaluations in progress – will send link online and request completion prior to the next board meeting
- Arian Martin is a prospective board candidate and in attendance
 - Arian shared that she works at MCC for Science and Technology entrance program
 - She was a New York City School public school teacher
 - Appreciates the interaction and transparency observed at the meeting this evening
 - Shared that Passion and commitment at UCCS is evident

Finance Committee Report – Spiro Ziogas (Refer to Attachment A)

Public Comments - None

Motion 131205.2 Upon a motion by Nelson Blish and duly seconded by Spiro Ziogas, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Voting in the affirmative: Nelson Blish, Megan Bosco, Sidney Moore, Joan Moorehead, Christine Murray, John Page, Frank Rossi, Antwan Williams, Spiro Ziogas

Voting in the negative: None

Motion 131205.2 passed 9 to 0

Next Board Meeting:

Thursday, January 9, 2014 at 6 p.m.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Finance Meeting on Thursday December 3, 2013

As of Oct. 31, 2013	YTD Actual	2013-2014 Annual Budget	% of Annual Budget
Revenue	\$1,648,032	\$5,612,922	29%
Expenses	\$1,664,840	\$5,564,605	30%
Net Income	(\$16,809)	\$48,317	
Cash on Hand	\$1,371,452 (Savings account has \$658,053)		

The topics of conversation were as follows:

1. Review of October Financials
2. Health/Dental Insurance Open Enrollment
3. Payroll Service
4. Freed Maxick support

Meeting Notes

1. In reviewing the balance sheet we looked at the following accounts; Fund Raising (\$19,640), Savings (\$658,053), the Dissolution account (\$76,882) and the security deposit account (\$35,000). We learned that the fund raising account is tied to our web site's donate button which accounts for some of the growth we have seen here. The savings account will start to grow because this is where our title money is deposited to. The dissolution account is required to be at no more than \$75,000 so we will transfer the interest that has been earned to the savings account (\$1,882) and the security deposit account has been earning interest since it was established by the church. The interest belongs to us. We are reaching out to learn how much has been earned over the years and will ask to transfer that to our savings as well.
2. We had budgeted for an increase in Health Care costs of 14%, estimated. The actual increase came in at 13% with Dental & Vision remaining flat. We have 87 employees who have access to healthcare.
3. We have been using the same payroll service since we opened the school and as of the past few years the service being provided had begun to slip. The needs of the school seem to have outgrown their capabilities. The Business office invited the current provider, Paychex and ADP to bid for the business. After some negotiation Paychex was chosen. Paychex will provide a greater array of service than we are currently receiving and the cost will remain the same.
4. Freed Maxick CPAs have begun supporting the Business Office. They are working closely with us to make sure that we are audit ready on an ongoing basis.