

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, November 12, 2014

Present: Dan Klatz, Penny Leveritt, Deirdre Arthen, Jess Berrien, Amy Aaron, Susannah Howe, Kipp Armstrong, Laura Baker, Sam Charron, Jesse Belcher-Timme, Ellen Ferris, Scott Remick

Facilitator: Kipp Armstrong

Notetaker: Susannah Howe

Guests: Charles Wiemeyer, David Starr, Ronna Kullberg

Listkeeper: Kipp Armstrong

Timekeeper: Laura Baker

Penny read the mission statement.

Topic	Discussion	Action(if necessary)
Announcements/ Appreciations/Ac knowledgements	<u>Appreciations:</u> - Amy thanked the BOT for the gift to the coordinators	
Public Comment Period	Ronna Kullberg: Valley Gives Day - use all your different addresses. Can donate once from each unique email address. Can even split a gift across multiple emails - we get prizes for number of unique donors. Matching gift initiative: we are trying to get a matching gift of \$2500 (request to get \$500 between HCCPS BOT and FOH boards to get us to \$2500). Facebook users encouraged to create activity around this too!	Donate to Valley Gives Day on 12/10/14 (or starting 12/1).
OML Update/Minutes Protocol	Idea of Open Meeting Law (OML) is to keep public entities from making back room deals without transparency. No two board members from a given board may meet to discuss matters of the board without posting a meeting time/agenda in advance. "Reply-all" can bleed into this area; Kipp advises not to "Reply-all" to BOT list. Discussion between BOT members is limited to information gathering only. Goal to post minutes quickly to encourage efficiency and transparency. Last meeting ended awkwardly approving minutes at end of meeting. New plan to approve minutes section at the end of each section.	
Board Role Changes	Ellen Ferris can't be President next year; she will step down from VP. Susannah Howe put forward to be VP, stepping into President for 15-16, to be followed by Scott Remick for 16-17. Sam Charron submitted his resignation from the BOT effective at the end of November 2014. We need someone in the clerk role to file meeting dates, etc. with the state. Penny Leveritt volunteered to step into the Clerk role at least temporarily; Jesse Belcher-Timme will help her if needed. Permanent clerk staffing to be revisited in December.	BOT voted all in favor for Susannah Howe to be VP now. BOT voted all in favor for Penny Leveritt to be temporary clerk.
Give2Grow Update	Have collected nearly \$100,000 so far (\$77k from a matching grant). Goal is \$200k, hope to be done by the end of this academic year, but the campaign will continue into subsequent years if needed. Aim to cultivate a culture of philanthropy at the school - there will be more focus on the Give2Grow campaign at various school events. Sonja is pursuing connections with alumni and the Easthampton professional	

	community. Andy/Kipp/Sonja meet bi-weekly, Sarah Bittenweiser has joined too. Sonja put together a brochure/menu of fundraising opportunities at HCCPS.	
DC Evals Update	Kipp sent out request for input on coordinators from BOT, committee members, and staff. Process moving, but slowly.	
FOH/BOT Joint Gathering	<p>Social gathering is Tuesday Nov 18 at Scott's office: Felt Building in Northampton (136 West St, unit 201). Primary goal is to get the BOT and FOH members to get to know each other. Agenda: introduce ourselves, discuss how these 2 boards can connect and move together going forward.</p> <p>Another discussion topic is the 2002 FOH consultant report. Note, because there will be discussion connected to the school, this is a public meeting.</p>	Penny to post gathering date with Easthampton and state.
Site Update	<p>Update: feels like we are rounding a corner: Reds classroom is all set, class is back in the room! Process took longer than hoped but we didn't have to pay for any of it.</p> <p>Five classrooms already have acoustic panels - \$2000 in materials. More in progress.</p> <p>Charles is beginning to install an art display system.</p> <p>On-Site committee is great - some very active new members. Spent much of last meeting doing jobs around the school.</p> <p>One of the owners is helping move along punch-list items.</p> <p>HVAC system is a challenge for this year - it is not straightforward and will take some time to figure out, sometimes by trial and error. Do not know what our utility expenses actually will be yet. So great to have this year to get on top of it - we do have a one year warrantee.</p> <p>On-Site/Amy will revisit overall finances re site in the next month or two to see where we stand.</p>	
Q1 Financials	<p>Amy sent fiscal audit to BOT last month; no management issues and we are in much better shape than we were at the end of last year. Suggestions from auditor revolved around checks and balances within a school as small as ours. Several Finance Committee members met with the auditor and Scott, as Treasurer, signed off on the audit; it was submitted by the end of November. Kudos for having a clean audit year after year.</p> <p>Discussion of Q1 financials - all looks reasonably good. PPE is now being paid monthly instead of quarterly (which is good); first 3 payments have been consistent and slightly higher than we had expected. (Reconciliation is still done quarterly.) Cleaning services, real estate taxes, and insurance costs will be higher than originally estimated. Electricity costs have been high so far, but getting better perhaps as we better understand the HVAC system. We're still balanced overall, but Finance will likely come to the BOT with a budget revision request (after Q2 revenue comes in). Question re whether there is an "occupancy contingency" line.</p>	<p>Laura motioned to approve the audit, Ellen seconded. Approved by consensus.</p> <p>Scott motioned to approve Q1 Financials, Kipp seconded. Approved by consensus.</p>
Renewal Visit Update	Four visitors here for renewal visit - started at 7 AM today, lasted all day. (One member of the team had been part of a visit at our previous site.) They have been observing various classrooms, visited the resource room, held several teacher focus groups. Protocol is very specific but seems like they are	

	<p>enjoying the process. Tomorrow is BOT focus group, parent focus group, meeting with students. We will get draft report in 30 days, then have time to correct any factual inaccuracies and write a response.</p>	
LRP Updates	Submitted by Dan, Amy, and Deirdre.	GABS to file LRP updates.
Cummington School Inquiry	<p>Someone from Berkshire Trail Elementary school in Cummington approached Dan re likely closing of their school in its current form whether we want to have a conversation with them about having a role in their school in the future. Question for BOT: do we want to engage in preliminary conversations?</p> <p>(Note, a new charter school is not an option for them for next year because state deadlines have passed; any conversations would be for future years.)</p> <p>Mixed discussion re concerns and excitement for opportunity. Concern that the timing is terrible; we have no capacity to do anything additional right now. We could benefit longer term if conversations gave us an input of energy into our school. Some question about the timeline and their sense of urgency. This could be an excellent opportunity for dissemination. We had a tough time leaving the Hilltown location, so having a connection there is appealing. We have also had some discussion re possible expansion to Holyoke, which would increase diversity. Suggestion that if we do have the conversation, it should include BOT members too (Kipp and Laura volunteered). Concern that it could be a courtesy meeting because we are so busy now. Suggestion to have a meeting later, not now. We are part of a community, want to give back. Having a meeting is not a commitment to something more. Want to be careful not to over-promise what we can deliver.</p>	Kipp moved that we have an information gathering meeting with representatives from the Berkshire Trail Elementary school; Jess seconded. Approved by consensus.
Wine at Booksale Presale question	<p>Last year the Winter Fair had an evening event the night before for parents to shop and socialize. Winter Fair crew would like to have wine at the event this year. Students would not be present, people would bring wine (not purchased with school funds), and remove bottles afterwards. General discussion in favor from the BOT, as a one-time approval, not as a precedent for future events. Good idea to try this out as a pilot. Deirdre to report out at the next BOT meeting.</p>	
Teacher Appreciation	<p>From Personnel: teachers/staff have been so great during the move process; would be nice to do something to appreciate their above-and-beyond efforts. Even a small gesture would go a long way. Suggestion to have a lunch for them, bringing food from a local restaurant. BOT can allocate money for an event.</p> <p>Similar conversation in the Community Team - perhaps with focus on fixing up the staff room.</p>	Jess will look into pricing for Easthampton catering options.
New Business	<p>BOT packets came out electronically this month - very helpful when it is one pdf. Need to streamline the process to include hard copy items distributed at the meeting. All info to be sent to Kipp in advance and he will forward it to Monique to collate.</p> <p>Discussion of moving along process to hire someone to take minutes. Deirdre to post request in the newsletter. Ellen agreed to help with interview.</p>	Deirdre to post minute-taker job to newsletter.
Committee Reports - Questions only	<p>Notice the SPED PAC meeting minutes are included in the packet.</p>	

Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation	<p>Felt a bit jerky approving minutes after each section, agenda was very long and with many items. Could include all updates as an attachment in the packet, rather than as discussion in meeting.</p> <p>Snacks: Jesse and Kipp</p> <p>Newsletter blurb: Penny</p>	Minutes approved during the meeting.
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Attachments: Oct 2014 BOT Minutes, Finance Committee Minutes Oct 2014, Q1 Financials, Site Committee Minutes Oct 7 and Nov 4 2014, LRP Updates (Dan, Amy, Deirdre), GABS Committee Minutes Oct 2014, HCCPS SPED PAC Minutes Sept 2014.

Agenda for next month (12/10): Site Update, DC Evals Update, BOT Book Updates, Permanent Clerk, Joint FOH/BOT Gathering update.