

Academy of the City Charter School

Board Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2012

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of The Academy of the City Charter School (the "School") was held on August 28, 2012 at 5:10 p.m. at the School (36-14 12th Street Long Island City NY 11106).

Notice of the meeting was given by submitting a notice electronically to the Queens Courier newspaper, posting the meeting's notice on the school web-site, and posting a paper notice on the bulletin board at Academy of the City Charter School, 36-14 12th Street, Long Island City, New York 11106

The following members of the Board were present:

Richard Welles, Steve Zimmerman, James Traub, Angela Howard, Nancy Sills, Silvana Vasconcelos

The following other staff members and visitors were present:

Richard Lee (Principal), Desiree Galashaw (Asst. Principal), June Schwartz, Dorothy Bukantz, Digant Bahl (CFO), Karen Granados, Kate Smallberg, Jessica Donatelli, Sarah Hill (PCO), Rachel Gladstone, Samantha Feigelson, Francois Nzi, Aisha Keller (UFT), Victoria Miller (UFT), and Angela Mane.

Dr. Welles called the meeting into order. He stated the School's mission and was very pleased to begin the second year of the school and thanked the parents and teachers and administration all for the support they had given the school and its students.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board:

VOTED:

To waive reading of the minutes and to approve the draft minutes of the last Board meeting held on July 31, 2012, in the form previously circulated.

Committee Updates

Facilities:

Steve Zimmerman provided an update of the plans for the new building located at The Boys & Girls Club of Western Queens. The feasibility study is completed and the architect presented several scenarios for a building project that would accommodate grades K-5. The project would require approximately \$11 million to be raised. The project will require approval of the B&G Club board. He also provided information on a new possible location (Corpus Christi Church), located in Woodside, Queens, which he and Dr. Welles had visited. The school has approximately 33,000 square feet, with rent to be negotiated. There was a discussion of the new space for the school. There are three possible locations:

- 1 Boys & Girls Club of Western Queens
- 2 Corpus Christi Church (Archdiocese of Brooklyn & Queens)
- 3 Voice Charter School (present location) with additional space to be rented to accommodate all the classes.

A decision for the future location needs to be made before December 2012.

Angela Howard and June Schwartz joined the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

VOTED:

Nancy Sills moved that the Facilities Committee be authorized to enter into immediate negotiation with the Archdiocese for Corpus Christi. James Traub seconded the motion. After a discussion for the plans for Corpus Christi and a potential amendment of the charter to expand to a middle school, which was led by Richard Lee and Steve Zimmerman, the committee voted and the motion was passed by unanimous decision.

Teacher's Report:

Samantha Feigelson led the discussion with a few points:

- Teachers are happy with the start of a new year. The school is off to a great start and all the teachers are feeling very positive. There are new faces that are welcome and the teachers and administration have been working together in a very collaborative manner, supporting each other. The community that was begun last year is still there and the teachers and administration are building on that right where they left off last year. It is too early to tell whether there was a fall off in academic skills over the summer.
- Responsive Classroom is being used in the classrooms and the teachers are sharing what they learned during workshops over the summer. The method uses positive reinforcement and anticipation of behavior before bad behavior starts. T
- New Student Handbook is updated and they are all happy with it.

- The uniforms look great and having uniforms have been a unifying force in the school. When the children arrive in their uniforms it means it is time to learn.

Silvana Vasconcelos joined the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Parent Community Organization (PCO):

Sarah Hill provided an update on parent involvement, special events, fundraising, and the use of the uniforms. The next week will be the first meeting of the PCO and a flyer will be sent home in the children's backpacks. They are anticipating a big turnout. Hoping for volunteers to act as class parents. There is a welcome back picnic scheduled for September 7. The PCO has talked a great deal about fundraising. They are considering asking parents to pay dues, which would be voluntary. The amount being discussed is \$10 per family. Samantha Feigelson suggested that another fundraising possibility would be to have the school logo on lunch bags, backpacks, t-shirt, mugs, pencils, etc. The PCO will meet with Richard Lee to set up an event calendar for PCO events. So far, the events discussed are: a Halloween fundraiser, December and Spring concert, a book fair, a science fair, an art fair, a school spirit month and an end of the year picnic. Sarah Hill noted that many parents wish to serve on board committees.

School/ Management Report:

Richard Lee provided an update on enrollment, recruitment efforts, after-school programs; New York Junior Tennis League (NYJTL) for Kindergarten and 1st grade & The Boys & Girls Club for 2nd grade. It is the 3rd day of school. The school records indicate that there are currently 155 students enrolled in the school (the target had been 150). Adam and Noel are currently making calls to see if the registered students will in fact be attending AoC. At the present time, the records show 50 children in kindergarten, 52 in first grade and 53 in second grade. There is a wait list of 191 for kindergarten, 15 for first grade. There is no wait list for second grade. There will be a mailing done for the second grade to recruit additional students for that grade. After much negotiation by Richard Lee, NYJTL will be running an on-site afterschool program starting September 24 for 30 children in Kindergarten and first grade. It will cost the school approximately \$20,000 plus \$4,000 for a security guard. There will be a charge for the program, which will be reduced depending upon whether the children are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The second graders will have the opportunity for an after school program at the Boys and Girls Club. The Club will provide transportation from AoC for 25 children. The cost for second graders will be \$25 per year, plus \$25 for transportation. The second grade program will run through 6:30, with the start date to be determined. The sign up for the afterschool program will begin on

Wednesday at 8 a.m. The negotiations for the afterschool program were long and hard and ended in a great win for the school, and the board thanked Principal Lee for a job well done. The school is preparing to submit its annual report to SUNY and NYSED, which Desiree Galashaw is working on. There are revisions to be made to the SUNY report. The reading scores from last year will be sent to the board electronically.

Finance Report:

Digant Bahl provided an update on the State auditors and the school's finance. Exhibit 1 is the budget and financial summary distributed to the Board. He and Richard Lee have reviewed the budget and implemented cost saving measures. Mr. Bahl reported that at the August 11 finance committee meeting, the committee voted to recommend the following changes to the budget: incorporating the cost saving measures determined by Mr. Bahl and Mr. Lee, providing for an increased student body of 153, budgeting \$14,000 for afterschool, providing for \$8,000 for a paid art intern. Other corrections reflect the actual health care benefit and the cost of the B&G Club feasibility study.

VOTED:

Richard Welles moved that the budget, as amended and revised be approved by the board. James Traub seconded the motion. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Dr. Welles suggested that discussion and articulation of enrollment and program issues and the long-term budget be directed by Richard Lee and a joint Education-Finance Committee. There followed a brief discussion about his proposed plan.

The board then addressed the issue of renewal of the contract between AoC and the OWN Foundation. During the discussion, all parties affiliated with the OWN Foundation were asked to leave the room, in particular board members Richard Welles and Steven Zimmerman. The non-interested board members discussed the contract, the fee, the performance of the OWN Foundation during the last year, the importance of the work currently being performed by the OWN Foundation for AoC and comparable fees for similar work. Upon completion of the discussion, James Traub moved that AoC renew the contract in accordance with the form negotiated by AoC and the OWN Foundation and that the increased fee be \$150,000, retroactive to July 1, 2012. Angela Howard seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed by all non-interested board members -- Nancy Sills, James Traub, Angela Howard and Silvana Vasconcelos. Following completion of the vote, the interested board members were invited to

return to the room. None of the interested board members participated in any discussion or voted in connection with this motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. at Academy of the City Charter School, 36-14 12th Street, Long Island City, NY 11106.

Respectfully Submitted

Nancy R. Sills, Secretary
