

# Academy of the City Charter School

## Board Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2012

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of The Academy of the City Charter School (the "School") was held on December 18, 2012 (October Board Meeting) at 5:00 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:

Dr. Richard Welles, Steve Zimmerman, Nancy Sills, Silvana Vasconcelos and Angela Howard

The following other staff members and visitors were present:

Desiree Galashaw (Asst. Principal), Adam Hunt (Director of Operations), Angela Mane, June Schwartz, Rachel Gladstone, Diane Biondo, Sarah Hill (PCO), and Dr. Frank Singuenza (Boys & Girls Club). Richard Lee attended by telephone and during the Finance Report, which he delivered.

Richard Welles called the meeting into order at 5:00 p.m. He began by noting that we all should give thanks for everyone who takes care of kids when they can't be with their parents.

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Board:

#### PRIOR MINUTES:

Angela Howard moved to waive the reading of the minutes of the November 27, 2012 meeting and accept them as written. Nancy Sills seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

### **Committee Updates**

Fundraising for the school is continuing through the letters being sent for past and prospective donors. James Traub sent his own version of the letters to prospective donors and offered it if any of the board members would like to see with Nancy providing them with a copy.

### **Teacher's Report:**

Rachel Gladstone led the discussion with a few points:

- The teachers are extremely happy to see the Board members present at all of the school events, e.g. "The International Festival" and "The Winter Concert."
- The teachers would like to extend an invitation to the Board members to attend the teacher's meeting because a two way communication would make them happy.
- The teachers are discussing ways in which they will be able to attend the board meetings. It is difficult for teachers to stay for the board meetings due to different life circumstances, such as, other jobs in the evenings, school, long travel time, etc.
- Teachers will meet before the board meetings in order to discuss any issues they may have and come up with a consensus of topics they would like to bring up in the board meetings.
- Some of the teachers' talking points are how to communicate with parents better; what should school assessments and reports look like; the child study teams; and the peace curriculum.

The board discussed the teachers jointly writing a report and then, if no teacher was able to attend, asking someone to deliver it on their behalf at the meeting. Angela Howard stated that she hopes to have teacher attendance from someone in the education committee in order for them to give their report which will let the Board know what is going on.

### **Parent Community Organization (PCO):**

Sarah Hill led the discussion by thanking everyone for attending "The International Festival," which had about  $\frac{2}{3}$  school attendance. She then proceeded with a few points:

- The book fair and bake sale were a success. They made \$2,666.79 in the book fair, \$641.45 from the bake sale, \$250.00 in donations, which will be used for children who do not have money to purchase books, and 90% of the teacher's wish lists were purchased by parents.
- The parent google group lit up over the weekend of December 15-16. They believe it has a lot to do with the incident in Connecticut.

- Parents are very happy that the school was very supportive of the parent's concerns and the email written by RL was very helpful in calming the situation.
- Beginning January 2, 2013, Sarah will begin to step down and ask other PCO members to step up. She will attend the January board meeting, but other members will begin to attend after that.
- In January they would like to hold some simple event, a literacy event involving a story activity where parents could come to school to read or to tell stories.
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### **School/ Management Report:**

Desiree Galashaw and Adam Hunt both led the discussion with the following points:

- There are 152 students currently enrolled, but after the Winter Break there will be 151 because one of our students is moving to Pennsylvania. There is a wait list for the 2nd grade, 6 open seats in the 1st grade, and 4 open seats in kindergarten.
- Vanguard has been a resounding success with 18 responses and 4 of them enrolled; 2 in kindergarten, 2 in 1st grade.
- There is a wait list of 65 for kindergarten. There are new applications from in district families, but we have to go through the out of district children who applied before the deadline and once we go through them we can move to the new in district applications.
- The education program is going strong with children in Kindergarten already reading. The school recently purchased 200 plus leveled books per classroom and just right books have been distributed to the classrooms. AoC wants to be known as the school that sends books home and we are working towards that goal.
- Many many thanks to Noel whose work and the work of others made "The Winter Concert" was a success with 75-80% of the children and families coming back for the evening performance.
- With regard to safety protocols, Richard Lee and Adam Hunt met with Voice's principal; Mr. Headley to discuss safety protocols. They came up with new plans for safety, such as new locks and safety lock down procedures (drills).
- The school has registered for an emergency robocall phone service. Tests will be done in January after the Winter break.

### **Math Committee Report:**

Desiree Glashaw provided an update on the math that is being taught in the school. At present (TERC) is being taught in the classrooms, but they have been looking into Singapore math and comparing the two in order to come up with a consensus as to

which math is better and ideal for our school. They are taking their time to decide which one is best in order to give the students the best.

### **Finance Report:**

Richard Lee was called on the telephone so that he could deliver the finance report prepared by Digant Bahl. He stated that they have worked on the budgets for years 3, 4, and 5 and reviewed the Budget Report prepared by Digant Bahl (Exhibit A hereto). At the current time, the enrollment is one over the number of students targeted in the budget.

### **Facilities Report**

Richard Welles and Steve Zimmerman both led the discussion with a few points:

- They were both invited to the Boys & Girls Club board dinner. The members are very excited to have a long term relationship with the school. They were very positive and complimentary of building the school and were happy with the families who attended "The International Festival."
- Steve wrote a letter to the Diocese of Brooklyn & Queens stating why they should go with Academy of the City Charter School rather than the Department of Education. They responded, offering us the school, but at the rent which had been negotiated with the DOE, which also was bidding for the school. The rent is still reasonable in light of prevailing market rent.
- Steve spoke with VOICE's board to ask for a 60 day extension of the December 31 date to exercise the option to renew. VOICE offered to extend the date for a payment of \$20,000.

### **VOTED**

Nancy Sills moves that the board approve the attached resolution authorizing the facilities committee to enter into negotiations to enter into lease negotiations which would obligate AoC to pay rent for Corpus Christi in accordance with the schedule attached thereto (Exhibit B). Angela Howard seconded the motion. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

### **Open School Project Report:**

Dorothy Bukantz, Richard Welles and Richard Lee all attended a charter school in Kingston Rhode Island. It was a school based on a progressive model which exists without any corporate funding. There is one class per grade and they have grades K-8. The grades were multi-aged. The children do well in the area high schools. The

teachers create the curriculum. They have 3 teachers on the board; three parents and three community members.

**Executive Session:**

Richard Welles moved that the board go into executive session to discuss a personnel issue. Nancy Sills seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. All but the board members left the room. There were no votes taken during executive session. The discussion of the board during executive session being concluded, Nancy Sills moved to resume the public meeting. Angela Howard seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

**RESUMED PUBLIC MEETING**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. at Academy of the City Charter School, 36-14 12th Street, Long Island City, NY 11106.

Respectfully Submitted

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Nancy Sills, Trustee

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