

**Rockford Charter School Organization
Board Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2020
12:30am – 2:00pm
Swedish American Hospital, 1340 Charles Street, Rockford, IL 61104
Conference Room 1**

1. Call to Order – 12:33 a.m.

Present: Carla Redd, Scott Anderson, Anisha Grimmertt, Nathan Bryant (arrived at 12:35 p.m.), Kenneth Cunningham (arrived at 12:45 p.m.), Executive Director Michael Williams, Principal Shavina Baker, Rick Aylward, and Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski

2. Public Comment – None

3. Approval of Consent Items – Motion by Board

(Members may request individual Consent Items to be pulled for discussion)

a. Minutes of prior Board Meeting – 12/19/2019 and 01/15/2020

- i. Motion to approve the consent items was made by Anisha Grimmertt and seconded by Carla Redd. All Aye. Motion passes.

4. Engagement Agreement for Franczek Law and Kendra Yoch (Action Item)

- a. Attorney Sosnowski provided a brief overview of the Engagement Agreement with the hourly rate being \$285.00 and associate rate being \$245.00. Franczek Law was recommended to assist in the ongoing Due Process Complaint by RPS 205 and Attorney Kendra Yoch's focus is on special education.
- b. RPS 205 has hired Attorney Lewis Rodriguez to represent them in this matter.
- c. Executive Director Williams stated that he has contacted the insurance company about possibly accepting this claim so this cost could potentially be covered by insurance.
- d. Motion to Approve the Engagement Agreement made by Nathan Bryant and Seconded by Carla Redd. All aye. Motion passes.

5. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee –

- i. YTD Budget vs. Actual

1. Overview provided by Rick Aylward through the end of January. About \$185k over budget for revenues. The tuition amount per student went up.
 2. The expenditures are at \$152k, which is under budget.
 3. Rick Aylward stated that with the revised projections, RCSO is looking at \$120-126k deficit which has gone down from the \$390k deficit in the approved budget.
- ii. Revised/Projected FY2020
1. Rick Aylward provided a summary of the revised/projected FY 2020 budget.
 2. Rick Aylward provided a preliminary budget summary for FY2021 that should be ready for approval at the April meeting.
 - a. The FY2021 budget under the contract services does not include psychologist services in the contracted services. The contract services budget line item includes social worker services for 20 hours as opposed to 40 hours that was previously budgeted in the FY2020.
 - b. Rick Aylward stated that if RCSO were to reinstate the social worker to full-time status, it would only increase the budget by \$20-25k for the remainder of the year. On a full year basis, it would increase the budget by about \$50k.
 - c. Principal Baker said that they currently have a Kindergarten teacher who is currently enrolled in an MSW program now and they would like to do a direct hire of her for the social worker position, moving the social worker position from the contract line of the budget.
 - d. The full year fiscal impact to add a school psychologist would increase the budget by \$75-80k.
- iii. IFF Loan
1. Rick Aylward stated that if RCSO wanted to defer the principal balance payment of the loan for one year, then the interest rate on the loan will increase from 5% to 5.75%. If RCSO moves forward, it will save RCSO \$140k for the year, but RCSO would be required to pay additional interest of about \$10k per year.

2. Rick Aylward indicated that IFF has not put the new terms of the loan up for approval at this time and there is no guarantee that it will be approved because it is not something that they do very often.
3. Kenneth Cunningham inquired as to what RCSO's payment is currently and what will it be going forward in terms of budgeting. Rick Aylward stated that if RCSO were to do a one year deferral RCSO would be saving \$140k, but RCSO would be paying an additional \$10k in interest and then going forward the payments would increase to about an additional \$10k per year in interest once RCSO goes back to paying principal with the principal payment being increased as well to about \$500.00 per month.
4. Principal Baker provided a summary of the impact on the school from having to cut social worker services down to 20 hours per week due to the social worker only being able to focus on the kids that have an IEP with her. At the beginning of the year, other students were meeting with the social worker that did not have an IEP if they showed signs of anxiety, had some loss or depression. Since this change, there has been an increase in behavioral problems and absences/truancy. Principal Baker is handling behavior more than she is in classrooms, where she is not able to offer coaching or feedback to her teachers in a proper way, but she is making it work. Principal Baker stated that RCSO has lost some students because their parents do not feel that their students are safe in the building and have sought alternative placement for their students.
5. Carla Redd inquired as to what would be done with the funds that were saved and would moving forward with the new loan be sustainable for RCSO. Rick Aylward stated that the funds would probably be spent on staff or expenses as opposed to capital. That being said, RCSO has not done anything capital for a while and those things could come up. Principal Baker stated that some portion of those funds are reimbursable through Title 1 and the 1003A Grant.
6. Kenneth Cunningham inquired of funds that would go to bringing back staff members, and how much of those funds would be reimbursable. Principal

Baker stated all of those funds would be reimbursable and covered by the grant.

7. Executive Director Williams stated that all funds for capital improvements have been frozen because of the budget situation. The big expense that's looming capital wise is the roof. Executive Director Williams has filed a claim with the insurance company. A roofing contractor that was hired by the insurance company was at RCSO on Tuesday and did a report without getting up on the roof.

8. A motion to approve the additional resources of a psychologist and social worker for the balance of FY2020 and FY2021 was made by Kenneth Cunningham and seconded by Carla Redd.

a. Nathan Bryant suggested that RCSO start dipping into reserves over the next three years because if enrollment stays where it is at, RCSO will not get enough revenue to put into the school to get the outcomes that are needed.

b. Rick Aylward suggested putting together a budget where RCSO would be able to see outcomes and then it could be discussed going forward.

c. All Aye for Motion. Motion passed.

9. A motion to approve the refinancing of the IFF Mortgage loan was made by Kenneth Cunningham and was seconded by Nathan Bryant. All Aye. Motion passed.

6. New Business

a. Board Member Visit Share Out (discussion)

i. Carla Redd visited the school and was very impressed with the Kindergarten class.

ii. Scott Anderson encouraged each Board Member to visit the school on a bi-monthly basis.

iii. Kenneth Cunningham visited the school in January. It was good for the kids and staff to see Board Members at the school.

7. Old Business –

CHARTER SCHOOL ROCKFORD CHARTER SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

a. Charter Application

- i. Attorney Sosnowski stated that the application was submitted and turned in by the deadline. Attorney Sosnowski stated that she has not heard back from the district yet and indicated that RCSO is just waiting for the next step.

b. Dashboard Report – Educational Outcomes, Curriculum, Classroom, Testing

- i. Principal Baker provided a summary of the Dashboard report. This report is updated weekly and includes information on all current students. Principal Baker stated that she has reached out to every family that has over ten absences and put the parents on notice regarding the importance of the kids being at school each and every day and addressed those students that were coming to school tardy.
- ii. Principal Baker indicated that the last round of NWEA testing is scheduled for March for grades three through five and test preparation has begun with those students.
- iii. Principal Baker stated that she met with NIU regarding professional development and they are tailoring a program for RCSO, to start with a need based analysis for teachers. NIU is going to come into the school during planning meeting times to help co-teach, plan and facilitate instruction while they are in the classrooms which will help with the stem accreditation that RCSO is working towards.

c. Strategic Plan YTD Results

- i. Executive Director Williams indicated that RCSO was practicing in all of the areas that were identified previously. After the renewal process Executive Director Williams hopes to have more sessions with staff.
- ii. Executive Director Williams stated that he is looking at bringing in some organizations to get kids excited about stem.

d. Facility, Safety, & Security

e. Marketing Student Transportation

f. Board Member Vacancies

- i. Scott Anderson stated that they are looking to recruit new board members for the vacancies.
- ii. Attorney Sosnowski stated that RCSO needs to have a RCSO parent as a board member.

- iii. Principal Baker stated that she has a parental candidate in mind and that candidate is currently getting fingerprinted and a background check is being conducted.
 - iv. Executive Director Williams has another person in mind for the board vacancy.
8. Calendar of Events
 9. Next Board Meeting Date and Location – 4/22/2020 – 11:30 p.m. to 1 p.m., Swedish American Hospital
 10. Executive Session – 5 ILCS 120/2(c) – 1 – Personnel/Student Discipline
 - a. Kenneth Cunningham Motioned to move into Executive Session at 1:33 p.m. and was seconded by Carla Redd. All Aye. Motion passed.
 11. Report Out of Closed Session
 12. Adjournment: Motion by Kenneth Cunningham and seconded by Anisha Grimmer.
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.