

Rockford Charter School Organization Board Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2022 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107

In Person Meeting

1. Call to Order – 11:34 a.m.
 - a. Present: Kenny Cunningham, Jay Ware, Tamir Bell (Left Meeting at 11:57 a.m.), Antonio Turner, Carla Redd, Anisha Grimmett (Joined the Meeting at 11:35 a.m.), Jacob Bradt (Joined Meeting at 11:48 a.m.), Executive Director Emily Wallen, Director of Climate & Culture Starla Copeland, Rick Alyward, Angie Smelter, Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski
2. Approval of Agenda
 - a. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Tamir Bell and seconded by Carla Redd.
 - i. All aye. Motion passed.
3. Anisha Grimmett joined the meeting at 11:35 a.m.
4. Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes of August 18, 2022.
 - a. A motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of August 18, 2022 was made by Tamir Bell and seconded by Antonio Turner.
 - i. All Aye. Motion passed.
5. Public Comment
 - a. Antonio Turner inquired as to whether the Agenda was posted on Dojo with a message that there will be a board meeting. Executive Director Wallen advised that they post on Facebook and teachers are advised of the meeting as well.
 - b. Antonio Turner requested that the Agenda and Notice of a Board Meeting be put on Dojo to advise parents of the meetings if they want to make a public comment.
6. New Business
 - a. Discuss/Approve Website Host, Facebook, IT, and Graphic Design work.
 - i. Executive Director Wallen advised the Board that RCSO utilizes Astute Web Group for their website, Facebook, IT and Graphic Design work. Executive Director Wallen advised that she was thinking about switching to different providers for those services.
 - ii. Executive Director Wallen advised that she did speak with HTML Company and found out that they are the host of RCSO's website and RCSO currently pays Astute Web Group and HTML to host the website. Executive Director Wallen advised that HTML Company can do the upkeep on the website and is willing to charge half of what Astute Web Group has been charging. The increase in cost to HTML Company would go from \$30.00 per month for hosting the website to \$100.00 per month for hosting the website and updating it as well.
 - iii. Executive Director Wallen requested that there be one company that could update Facebook, graphic design, shop for spirit wear so that it is all in one place.
 - iv. Attorney Sosnowski advised that the Board should send a termination letter

to Astute Web Group advising that RCSO is terminating services if that is the direction of the board. Executive Director Wallen advised that RCSO pays Astute Web Group a monthly fee. Rick Aylward advised that the monthly fee was \$300.00 plus additional charges for additional work.

- v. Anisha Grimmett inquired if there were other companies that Executive Director Wallen would seek for this work or if she was looking for someone to volunteer their time. Executive Director Wallen advised that she is looking for a company that can handle everything relating to these services.
 - vi. It was the consensus of the Board to terminate all services with Astute Web Group.
 - vii. Executive Director Wallen advised that it is very hard for Jackson's office professionals to be running the office and then take on the task of Spirit Wear orders. Carla Redd advised that Amazon has a program that could handle Spirit Wear orders and RCSO would get more than 50% of the proceeds back. Carla Redd advised that she would encourage the Board to consider utilizing Amazon for Spirit Wear orders once Jackson staff have the graphic design work completed.
- b. Discuss Charter Renewal status update.
- i. Executive Director Wallen advised the Board that she met with SchoolWorks to go over the process and procedures and identify what information was needed. Executive Director Wallen advised that SchoolWorks would be at Jackson Charter School on November 9th and 10th and she will need two board members to be present. Attorney Sosnowski advised the board that SchoolWorks would do a Board Session that would be about an hour and a half long and they will ask specific questions of the Board Members. Executive Director Wallen stated that they would provide the questions that SchoolWorks planned to ask the Board ahead of the meeting.
 - ii. Dr. Cunningham requested that an email be sent to the whole board to get some dates and times that everyone is available to attend.
 - iii. Jacob Bradt joined the meeting at 11:48 a.m.
 - iv. Executive Director Wallen advised that she met with Rebecca Watson from SchoolWorks and was advised that it would be November 9th and 10th from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and two people from SchoolWorks and three people from RPS205 would be present.
- c. Discuss creation of Committees within the Board of Directors.
- i. Attorney Sosnowski advised the Board that in the past couple of meetings there has been discussion about the creation of committees, but no formal action has been taken to put committees into place. Attorney Sosnowski advised that if this is something the Board would like to implement then the Bylaws would need to be amended to reflect this.
 - ii. Dr. Cunningham stated that per the Bylaws there was only the finance committee and he recalls discussing a marketing committee they have been doing that and inquired if the Board wants to recognize the marketing committee as a formal committee.
 - iii. Antonio Turner advised that the Board had come up with approximately four committees.

- iv. Tamir Bell left meeting at 11:57 a.m.
 - v. Attorney Sosnowski advised that there are actually two committees in the Bylaws which are the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee. Attorney Sosnowski advised that there are no Board Members that are assigned to the Executive Committee and they only meet when there is disciplinary matter and then any board member that is available can attend the disciplinary hearing.
 - vi. Dr. Cunningham stated that the Board would have to restructure the Bylaws and that he heard finance, executive, marketing and academics.
 - vii. Antonio Turner advised that he believed there was another committee dealing with community engagement. Antonio Turner stated they had previously discussed having two people on each committee.
 - viii. Jacob Bradt advised that he and Tamir Bell have a standing monthly meeting to discuss marketing for RCSO with the leadership team.
 - ix. Attorney Sosnowski inquired if there was a board consensus to amend the bylaws to include a marketing, academic, finance, executive, and community engagement subcommittees with the committees being comprised of a minimum of two board members that will meet on an as needed basis. The Board agreed.
 - x. Jacob Bradt stated that the committees should make it a habit of reporting back to the board.
 - xi. Dr. Cunningham requested that if there is a committee meeting that there be a report that is sent out to the Board regarding that meeting.
 - xii. Anisha Grimmatt suggested putting in the Bylaws that the committees meet at least once a quarter. Dr. Cunningham inquired that if you have committees such as the executive committee that meets as needed, does the board want to require that all of the committees meet or should only certain committees meet because if there is no discipline issue for the executive committee then there would be no reason to meet. Dr. Cunningham advised that he thought marketing, academics and community engagement should meet because those are necessary.
 - xiii. Antonio Turner advised that he felt all of the committees should meet even if there are no disciplinary issues for the executive committee because they can update what the committee is looking to achieve or continue so that the Board knows what is going on with the committees.
 - xiv. Dr. Cunningham stated that the Board is in agreement to pass five subcommittees that are going to meet with a minimum of at least once per quarter and comprised of two board members.
 - xv. Dr. Cunningham advised that there could be a rotation for committees reporting also where they report at certain meetings.
- d. Discuss 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Dates.
- i. There was a board consensus to continue meeting every other month on the third Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m.

7. Executive Director's Report

- a. Executive Director Emily Wallen presented her Executive Director's Report to the Board. Executive Director Wallen advised that there are 232 students that are currently enrolled and the goal was 225 students and the goal has been exceeded.

- b. Executive Director Wallen advised the board that a fourth grade teacher resigned without notice and reported that the reason was not the school and he enjoyed working at RCSO. This position has been filled. Executive Director Wallen advised that one of the third grade teachers also submitted a resignation. The In-House Substitute is filling that role until a replacement is found.
 - c. Executive Director Wallen advised the Board that they are still looking to hire a school social worker and none of the applications that they have received have the social worker qualifications. Executive Director Wallen advised the board that she is going to look into working with an agency to fill this vacancy.
 - d. Executive Director Wallen advised the Board that she did hire someone to work on truancy and have been working with parents to get them more involved. Anisha Grimmertt inquired if truancy has been high and Executive Director Wallen advised that it was. Antonio Turner inquired as to what the main reason was for truancy. Executive Director Wallen advised that a lot of times parents advise the school that the students are sick and the students do not come back with any documentation regarding the illness. Anisha Grimmertt inquired if a lot of the same kids were truant last year and Executive Director Wallen advised that many of the students were and she spoke with the families over the summer. Carla Redd inquired as to what the typical age is of truant students. Executive Director advised third grade students and up are the most frequent.
 - e. Executive Director Wallen advised that students recently finished NWEA testing and RCSO is still getting those results in so that RCSO can gear instruction to where it needs to be. The iReady Diagnostic assessment has been conducted which gives individual prescriptions to each student based on how they did during the assessment.
 - f. Executive Director Wallen advised that the fire department came and did their annual safety walk of the school and have advised that the building is in excellent shape, however, there are a few things that need to be fixed such as ensuring all outlets have the plastic covering and removing all props to keep doors open.
 - g. Executive Director Wallen advised that the school has conducted two fire drills and one lockdown drill for the year. The second fire drill had the fire department present and the school beat it's previous record of getting everyone out of the building in less than two minutes. Antonio Turner inquired as to how often lockdown drills are conducted. Executive Director Wallen advised that there are three drills per year with one of the drills being conducted with the police department.
8. Finance Committee Report
- a. Rick Aylward presented the Finance Committee Report to the Board. Rick Aylward advised that as of the end of September that there was \$1,400,000.00 in the bank account and this was after receiving the first tuition payment. Rick Aylward advised that budget to actuals had revenue at \$280,000 ahead of the budget and part of the reason for this is because the budget was based on 190 students being enrolled. Rick Aylward advised that so long as enrollment is up that RCSO will continue to be ahead in revenue. Rick Aylward advised that current expenses are at \$115,000.00 under budget. Rick Aylward advised that he anticipates that going forward RCSO will eventually catch up in expenses and may possibly go over budget because the budget is based on 190 students.
9. Adjournment
- a. A motion to adjourn was made by Carla Redd and seconded by Antonio Turner.
 - i. All Aye. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Next Board Meeting: December 15, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. (Meeting will be held in-person at Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107)