

**Rockford Charter School Organization Special Board Meeting Agenda  
February 23, 2023, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107  
In-Person and Virtual Meeting – Held VIA Microsoft Teams Meeting**

1. Call to Order – 11:32 a.m.
  - a. Present: William Cunningham, Carla Redd (arrived at 11:34 a.m.), Jacob Bradt, Tamir Bell, Antonio Turner, Anisha Grimmett, Executive Director Emily Wallen, Chief Financial Officer Rick Aylward, Attorney Jim Goodfellow (12:15 p.m.), Leary Morris of Sikich and Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski
2. Approval of Agenda
  - a. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Anisha Grimmett and seconded by Jacob Bradt.
    - i. Roll Call Vote:
      1. William Cunningham – Aye.
      2. Antonio Turner – Aye.
      3. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
      4. Tamir Bell – Aye.
      5. Anisha Grimmett – Aye.
    - ii. All ayes. Motion passed.
3. Discuss/Approve FY 2022 Audit Report from Sikich.
  - a. Leary Morris explained that Sikich is responsible for forming and expressing an opinion about whether the financial statements prepared by management are materially correct. She stated that the Board is responsible for overseeing the accountability of the organization, overseeing the financial reporting process, and discussing internal control with management.
  - b. Ms. Morris advised that the first audit report is the independent auditor’s report on the financial statements of the organization as of June 30, 2022. There was an unmodified opinion issued, which is the highest level of opinion you can achieve. In the next report, there were no problems with any major federal programs and there were no deficiencies found regarding compliance from the organization. In the last report, there were no deficiencies identified. The report states that the organization complied in all material respects with the specified requirements that are referred to in the audit report.
  - c. A motion to approve the Audit Report was made by Tamir Bell and seconded by Carla Redd.
    - i. Roll call vote:

1. William Cunningham – Aye.
    2. Anisha Grimmnett – Aye.
    3. Tamir Bell – Aye.
    4. Antonio Turner – Aye.
    5. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
    6. Carla Redd – Aye.
  - ii. All ayes. Motion passed.
4. Approval of Special Board Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2023.
  - a. A motion to approve the Special Board Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2023, was made by Jacob Bradt and seconded by Tamir Bell.
    - i. Roll Call Vote:
      1. William Cunningham – Aye.
      2. Carla Redd – Aye.
      3. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
      4. Tamir Bell – Aye.
      5. Antonio Turner – Aye.
      6. Anisha Grimmnett – Aye.
    - ii. All ayes. Motion passed.
5. Public Comment - None
6. New Business
  - a. Discuss Charter Renewal Meeting with RPS 205.
    - i. Executive Director Wallen explained that the meeting began with just a general performance overview because the other charters were present at the meeting as well. She stated that all charters were complimented on their performance and that they each deserved a minimum of a two-year renewal.
    - ii. Executive Director Wallen explained that Dr. Jarrett stated that RPS is interested in moving forward with a CMO governance model for all Rockford charter schools. She explained that a CMO is a Charter Management Organization, and it helps with the business end of running a charter school. She explained that a CMO would serve as an intermediary between the school district as well as the charter school.
    - iii. Executive Director Wallen explained that the district wants the charter schools to partner with a CMO rather than an EMO, which is an Educational Management Organization. The biggest difference between the two is that one is for profit (EMO), while the other is not-for-profit (CMO).
    - iv. Executive Director Wallen stated that if the Board chooses to pursue the CMO governance model, then Jackson Charter will receive a 5-year renewal. If the Board chooses to remain independent, then the renewal will still be received, but it will be a 2-year renewal instead and the school will have to make a 5% IAR growth in both reading and math within the two years.

- v. Attorney Sosnowski stated that there may be some advantage in considering partnering with a CMO. She explained that Jackson Charter has previously partnered with a CMO in the past for many years. Ultimately, the decision was made to move away from the previous CMO to put more money into the classrooms.
- vi. Executive Director Wallen explained that she was the only person present at the meeting who had experience working with both a CMO and an EMO.
- vii. Attorney Sosnowski explained that something the auditors have mentioned in the past is the small number of people at Jackson handling finance issues. She expressed that it may cost more to have a second set of hands, but maybe worth the 5-year renewal and a bit more breathing room on the educational piece and being able to hit the required numbers. Attorney Sosnowski suggested that the Board may want to consider at least exploring the CMO model.
- viii. Executive Director Wallen stated that it will also depend on how much control the CMO would have because gains are starting to be seen after bringing in a Director of Climate and Culture and because of being consistent with the academic intervention that has been done over time. Executive Director Wallen stated that the school wouldn't want someone to come in and completely revamp the place either.
- ix. Anisha Grimmett expressed her concern over the cost involved with working with a CMO.
- x. Jacob Bradt inquired if the district is allowed to force a contingency on their renewal. Attorney Sosnowski explained that what the district is trying to say is that it is fine if the charter does not agree to a CMO, but it just means that the charter agreement will be for a shorter extension.
- xi. Carla Redd asked if context was provided into why they wanted the CMO. Executive Director Wallen explained to the Board that there was a discussion in which the district feels as if they are the approver or provider of the charter, but they also want to have an amicable relationship with charter schools. The district feels that they cannot play both roles adequately while being the approver of whether they get a charter and working with them day-to-day. Executive Director Wallen stated that the district felt it has not been adequately overseeing the charters as they should be and is therefore not able to provide all the services, consulting, and assistance that they should be able to.
- xii. Executive Director Wallen stated that she pulled some of the research and could not find adequate research showing that there are significant improvements with a CMO running a charter school. As of 2020-21, only 35% of charter schools are managed by CMOs and EMOs, and 26% of those charters are run by CMOs. She stated that there's no evidence base that shows that being run by a CMO will make things better or worse.
- xiii. William Cunningham, Carla Redd, and Antonio Turner left the meeting at 12:18 p.m.

7. Executive Session – personnel and litigation (if needed)

Go into Closed Session to Review Closed Session Minutes and to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.

- a. A motion was made to enter executive session by Tamir Bell and seconded by Anisha Grimmett.
    - i. Roll Call Vote:
      1. Antonio Turner – Yes.
      2. Tamir Bell – Yes.
      3. Jacob Bradt – Yes.
      4. Anisha Grimmett – Yes.
    - ii. All aye. Motion passed. Entered executive session at 12:18 p.m.
  - b. A motion to exit executive session was made by Jacob Bradt and seconded by Tamir Bell.
    - i. Roll Call Vote:
      1. Antonio Turner – Yes.
      2. Tamir Bell – Yes.
      3. Jacob Bradt – Yes.
      4. Anisha Grimmett – Yes.
    - ii. All aye. Motion passed. Exited executive session at 12:51 p.m.
8. Old Business
- a. Discuss/Approve of HVAC invoice dated January 1, 2023, from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for services performed in the amount of \$14,482.38.
    - i. A motion to approve HVAC invoice dated January 1, 2023 from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for services performed in the amount of \$14,482.38 was made by Antonio Turner and seconded by Tamir Bell.
      1. Roll call vote:
        - a. Anisha Grimmett – Aye.
        - b. Tamir Bell – Aye.
        - c. Antonio Turner – Aye.
        - d. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
      2. All ayes. Motion passed.
  - b. Discuss/Approve of HVAC invoice dated January 29, 2023, from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for services performed in the amount of \$6,714.51.
    - i. A motion to approve HVAC invoice dated January 29, 2023, from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for services performed in the amount of \$6,714.51 was made by Antonio Turner and seconded by Tamir Bell.

1. Roll call vote:
      - a. Anisha Grimmiett – Aye.
      - b. Tamir Bell – Aye.
      - c. Antonio Turner – Aye.
      - d. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
    2. All ayes. Motion passed.
  - c. Discuss/Approve proposal from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for additional controls repairs in the amount of \$21,542.00.
    - i. A motion to approve proposal from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for additional controls repairs in the amount of \$21,542.00 was made by Antonio Turner and seconded by Tamir Bell.
      1. Roll call vote:
        - a. Anisha Grimmiett – Aye.
        - b. Tamir Bell – Aye.
        - c. Antonio Turner – Aye.
        - d. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
      2. All ayes. Motion passed.
  - d. Discuss/Approve proposal from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for repair of food disposal motor in the amount of \$4,965.00.
    - i. A motion to approve proposal from Helm Group Mechanical/HVAC for repair of food disposal motor in the amount of \$4,965.00 was made by Antonio Turner and seconded by Tamir Bell.
      1. Roll call vote:
        - a. Anisha Grimmiett – Aye.
        - b. Tamir Bell – Aye.
        - c. Antonio Turner – Aye.
        - d. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
      2. All ayes. Motion passed.
9. Discuss/Approve Appointment of New Board Member.
  - a. A motion to approve the appointment of Ricardo Montoya Picazo was made by Tamir Bell and seconded by Jacob Bradt.
    - i. Roll call vote:
      1. Anisha Grimmiett – Aye.
      2. Tamir Bell – Aye.
      3. Antonio Turner – Aye.
      4. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
    - ii. All ayes. Motion passed.
10. Discuss/Approve Selection of a Contractor to Provide Marketing/Website Support Services for Jackson Charter School –
  - a. Attorney Sosnowski advised the Board that when Jacob Bradt leaves the meeting,

there will no longer be a quorum and the Board will not be able to take any action on this item today. There was a Board consensus that this item would be laid over to the next meeting.

- b. Jacob Bradt left the meeting at 12:54 p.m.
- c. Tamir Bell stated that he runs a marketing agency and the number one thing that the client looks at is the proposal. It is important not to have a cookie cutter presentation for a company that is asking for help. Tamir Bell stated that for Jackson there is not a clear marketing plan and because of this it is required that a company come in and really understand Jackson Charter School and develop a marketing plan. Tamir Bell stated that RCSO wants to increase enrollment and highlight the good in Jackson and its programs and teachers.
- d. Tamir Bell stated that with Rockford Buzz being in the marketing meetings, they understood what RCSO wanted and gave a detailed proposal on what they wanted to do for Jackson Charter School.
- e. Attorney Sosnowski stated that in terms of cost all proposals are somewhat similar, KMK was the most expensive and RyCom was the cheapest but did not give a whole lot of detail in their proposal on what they intended to do.

#### 11. \Adjournment

- a. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Anisha Grimmertt and seconded by Antonio Turner.
  - i. Roll Call Vote:
    - 1. Antonio Turner – Yes.
    - 2. Tamir Bell – Yes.
    - 3. Anisha Grimmertt – Yes.
  - ii. Meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

**Next Board Meeting: April 20, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. (Meeting will be held in-person at Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107)**