

**Rockford Charter School Organization Board Meeting Minutes  
August 24, 2023  
11:30 a.m.  
Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107  
In-Person Meeting**

1. Call to Order – at 11:35 a.m.
  - a. Present: William Cunningham, Carla Redd, Jacob Bradt, Tamir Bell, Ricardo Montoya Picazo, Antonio Turner (arrived at 11:48 a.m.), Executive Director Emily Wallen, Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski
  - b. Not Present: Anisha Grimmett
2. Approval of Agenda
  - a. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Carla Redd and seconded by Tamir Bell.
    - i. Voice Vote: All members voting aye.
    - ii. Motion passed.
3. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2023.
  - a. A motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2023, was made by Carla Redd and seconded by Ricardo Montoya Picazo.
    - i. Voice Vote: All members voting aye.
    - ii. Motion passed.
4. Public Comment – No Public Comment.
5. New Business
  - a. Discuss/Approve performance related assessments for school management.
    - i. Discussion/Approval of performance related assessments for school management was laid over to the meeting on October 19, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.
      1. A motion to approve the layover of the Discussion/Approval of performance related assessments for school management was made by Jacob Bradt and seconded by Carla Redd.
        - a. Roll Call Vote:
          - i. Tamir Bell – Aye.
          - ii. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
          - iii. Carla Redd – Aye.
          - iv. Ricardo Montoya Picazo – Aye.
          - v. William Cunningham – Aye.
        - b. All ayes. Motion passed.
  - b. Discuss/Approve Resolution to Approve Election of Board Officers for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year.
    - i. A motion was made by William Cunningham and seconded by Tamir Bell to

Approve the Resolution for the Election of Board Officers for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year as follows: William Cunningham as the Board Chair, Tamir Bell as the Vice Chair, Carla Redd as the Secretary, and Ricardo Montoya Picazo as the Treasurer.

1. Voice Vote:
  - a. Tamir Bell – Aye.
  - b. Carla Redd – Aye.
  - c. Ricardo Montoya Picazo – Aye.
  - d. William Cunningham – Aye.
  - e. Antonio Turner – Aye.
  - f. Jacob Bradt – Abstain.

2. Motion passed.

c. Discuss/Approve Statement of Work/Engagement Agreements from Sikich for services related to Audit Services for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2023.

i. Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski informed the Board that the price for the Annual Financial audit is at \$17,200, the opinion related to the GATA reporting is at \$1,545, and the Uniform Guidance Compliance audit is at \$4,120. Finance Director Rick Aylward informed the Board that the tax return is at \$2,700 and stated that the numbers are all in line with the Sikich proposal.

1. A motion to Approve Statement of Work/Engagement Agreements from Sikich for services related to Audit Services for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2023, was made by Ricardo Montoya Picazo, and seconded by Jacob Bradt.

a. Roll Call Vote:

- i. Tamir Bell – Aye.
- ii. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
- iii. Carla Redd – Aye.
- iv. Ricardo Montoya Picazo – Aye.
- v. William Cunningham – Aye.
- vi. Antonio Turner – Aye.

b. All ayes. Motion passed.

d. Discuss/Approve tentative Board Retreat dates.

i. Attorney Sosnowski advised the Board that it would make sense to set the retreat out in the event that there are new board members. She advised that the Board should think about setting in November in order to give some allowance for new board members to attend. Attorney Sosnowski explained that November is a month without a meeting, so perhaps it may be a good time to have a retreat.

ii. William Cunningham inquired about doing the Board Retreat in January if it was not held in November. He explained that scheduling in January would be after the holidays and allow the new members to become more familiar with the school. William Cunningham also expressed that processes and changes from the retreat can be implemented in the new school year with the retreat being held in January.

iii. The Board agreed upon a tentative date of January 18, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for the retreat.

6. Executive Director's Report

a. Executive Director Emily Wallen informed the Board that as of closing time on Tuesday,

August 22, 2023, the school has met the enrollment goal for the year already. She explained that enrollment has already hit 220, with at least 10 more pending.

- b. Carla Redd inquired about the capacity for enrollment. Executive Director Wallen explained that classrooms are capped at 25. Antonio Turner asked if 300 students is the capacity given that there are two classes per grade. Executive Director Wallen confirmed that 300 students is the maximum number.
- c. Attorney Roxanne Sosnowski reminded the Board that in some grade levels the school is close to capacity. She explained that both 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are there. Kindergarten, however, there is some work to be done considering that Kindergarten feeds into the other grade levels and is currently at about 25 students.
- d. William Cunningham stressed that looking at 5<sup>th</sup> grade, he does not want the school to go beyond capacity for a classroom. Executive Director Wallen explained that in past years, that has been done, where students are pushed in over the 25-student capacity and a T.A. is added in to balance it out. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that the capacity of 25 students should be where it is capped, with exceptions on a case-by-case basis, and then anything past the 25 is where the waiting list should be implemented.
- e. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that the school is fully staffed. She explained that as it goes for curriculum and instruction, all of the curricular materials that needed to be purchased or updated have been taken care of.
- f. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that she has completed the 5-hour training and paperwork that allows her to get the continuing education units to her teachers. She explained that it could even be opened up to the community to where the units could be provided to those in the community on behalf of Jackson Charter School.
- g. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that the building opened up on July 31, 2023, and that it has gone through a lot of upkeep since opening. She explained to the Board that the school's sprinklers were tested, and the school passed the test with all but one sprinkler working.
- h. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that there was an audit performed on the technology and the school did not need to order any student devices for the upcoming year. She informed the Board that there were six Jackson staff MacBooks that needed to be ordered. Executive Director Wallen stated that all classrooms and offices have been equipped with new phones.
- i. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that the school's Open House is on August 28, 2023, with the first day of school being August 31, 2023. In addition to those events, there is a Parent/Guardian bootcamp on September 21, 2023, for the parents to come in and have questions answered on policies or procedures.
- j. Attorney Sosnowski inquired if a reminder for letters of interest to be submitted to join the Board could be posed at the Parent/Guardian bootcamp. Executive Director Wallen stated that it could be done.
- k. Executive Director Wallen informed the Board that Rockford Buzz is doing a great job in terms of marketing. She explained that social media presence has grown substantially and has garnered quite a bit of interest towards Jackson Charter. Tamir Bell added that the branding inside of the building has played a part as well as the social media marketing.
- l. Executive Director Wallen shared the school data and equity audit that she drafted. She stated that within the population of the school, the English Language Learner population is 5.1%, students with IEPs are approximately 19%, homeless students are 6.5%, white students are 9.8%, black students are 72.6%, Hispanic students are 7.0%, and students with two or more races are 10.2%. She explained that the purpose of finding this data was to

look at all of the areas of the student population and discuss with the audit team. Executive Director Wallen explained that participation in an audit team should represent a diverse cross-section of the school community. She explained that herself, the executive director should be involved, as well as teachers, school social workers, school psychologists, parents, guardians, students, the director of climate and culture, as well as a community representative. Executive Director Wallen stated that the purpose is to try to bring people to look at what Jackson Charter is doing, look at all the populations of the students that are involved, and to see what can be done to provide an equitable learning experience for all students attending Jackson Charter.

7. Ricardo Montoya Picazo left at 12:27 p.m.
8. Finance Committee Report
  - a. YTD Budget to Actuals
    - i. Finance Director Rick Aylward informed the Board that the bank account is at \$2.3 million as of the end of June. He stated that the final numbers for revenue are \$564,000 with expenditures being at \$294,000. He informed the Board that the bottom-line number that the school ended up with is \$304,000.
    - ii. Carla Redd inquired about the possibility of getting air conditioning within the school. Finance Director Rick Aylward explained that there are quotes being collected for air conditioning in the building.
  - b. YTD Cashflow Update
9. Executive Session – (if needed)
  - a. Personnel - 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.
10. Adjournment
  - a. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Tamir Bell and seconded by William Cunningham.
    - i. Roll Call Vote:
      1. Tamir Bell – Aye.
      2. Jacob Bradt – Aye.
      3. Carla Redd – Aye.
      4. William Cunningham – Aye.
      5. Antonio Turner – Aye.
    - ii. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

**Next Board Meeting: October 19, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. (Meeting will be held in-person at Jackson Charter School, 315 Summit Street, Rockford, IL 61107)**