

PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL

MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on September 19, 2013 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.

Present: Su Almeida, Darline Berrios, David Burnham, Russell Carey, Tom Chen, Stefano Crema, Dorothy Fields, Crystal Gantz, Robert Kelley, Keith Mathews, Leeds Mitchell IV, Alex Molina, Kim Noble, Dorothy Patrick, Carolyn Pemberton, Earl Smith III, Babak Taleghani

Absent: Allyn Copp, Phil Gould, Joop Nagtegaal, Abraham Pinales, Gisele Polanco

Guests: Ivy Barclay, Margarita Gonzalez, Giandra Rivas, Heidi Silverio – PCS 12th grade students

Kathleen Hartrey, Nancy Safian – PCS Parents

Kristin Lehoullier – Strategic Planning Consultant

Paul Cuffee Staff: Derrick Ciesla, Jon Conklin, Maria Monteiro, Maria Palmgren, Wendy Randle

Absent: Becky Coustan, Nancy Cresser

President Russell Carey called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence. He then stated that, upon conclusion of the regular meeting, the Board would meet in executive session, pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 42-46-5(a)(1).

Mr. Carey noted that 4 student guests were invited and would make a presentation to the Board about their school service trip to Cape Verde. He then asked Mr. Earl Smith III and Ms. Maria Monteiro to introduce the students. Mr. Smith and Ms. Monteiro spoke of the high caliber of the students, noting they are scholar activists who excelled academically and earned 6 college credits, as well as exceptionally well-rounded and well-behaved.

School Service Trip to Cape Verde

The students presented on their learning experience during the 2-week trip to Cape Verde. They spoke about the cultural experience and the wonderful people of Cape Verde. Following the presentation, the Board asked the students several questions about them such as how long they had attended Paul Cuffee School, what it was like to not understand the language, the best food they ate. The students have attended Paul Cuffee for different amounts of time. Mr. Carey thanked and acknowledged the students for attending and presenting to the Board

Strategic Planning Process

Kristin Lehoullier gave an update on the strategic planning process.

She explained that the Strategic Planning Committee, based on feedback from staff, families, community stakeholders and the Board, had two proposed mission statements to be considered for finalization and presentation to the Board for approval at the November 21, 2013 meeting. The Board was asked to do a “gallery walk” to read the two mission statements and choose the one which most resonated with the School. Following the “gallery walk”, a discussion ensued regarding the mission statements, the timeline of the strategic planning process, the final outcome, and next steps.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Carolyn Pemberton made a motion to approve the June 20, 2013 minutes of the Board. Ms. Maria Palmgren noted that the draft minutes reviewed by the Board needed one minor amendment, to reflect that the minutes are from the Annual meeting. Mr. Mathews seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2013 meeting, amended as suggested.

Head of School Search Committee

Mr. Carey informed the Board that the Head of School Search Committee will convene before the end of the calendar year, and explained the Search Committee will be co-chaired by Kim Noble and Earl Smith III. He thanked Ms. Noble and Mr. Smith for agreeing to lead the search committee, and explained the process for the search, including the timeline.

Mr. Carey also thanked Ms. Wendy Randle and Mr. Derrick Ciesla for graciously assuming their respective interim roles.

(Interim) Head of School Report

Ms. Randle gave a brief report about activities in the school, citing the highlights in her written report. She noted various learning experiences for Paul Cuffee students which took place during the summer months, such as a sailing camp sponsored by the Herreshoff Museum in Bristol, a week-long maritime-themed expedition sponsored by the Block Island Maritime Institute. Additionally, she mentioned that the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) specialist, Ms. Stacy Gale, spent one week as part of the Nautilus Explorer “Educator at Sea” program. Ms. Randle further mentioned that many of the faculty took part in legally mandated Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training, related to English Language Learners, as well as Data Use training. At the conclusion of her report, Ms. Randle thanked Mr. Carey and the Board for their ongoing support of and continued commitment to the School.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Trusteeship and Governance (CoTaG)

Mr. Stefano Crema reviewed with the Board the meeting of September 5, 2013 and referenced the minutes of said meeting.

HR Committee

Ms. Carolyn Pemberton reviewed with the Board the meeting of September 3, 2013 and referenced the minutes of said meeting. A question arose regarding the referenced proposed new hiring process discussed at the HR meeting. The question concerns the decision to hire faculty from “fast-track” teaching programs such as Teach for America and Rhode Island Teacher Fellows. Ms. Randle responded that past administration chose these organizations, based on past positive experiences with teachers who completed such programs. Ms. Randle also noted that although a person has completed this program, the person does not necessarily obtain the required teaching certification in a timely manner. Ms. Randle’s concern is that some recently hired teachers lack the proper certification, and the school has had to make other arrangements for those teachers, in order to be compliant with State law. A discussion ensued regarding the future use of these programs, and their associated costs.

Finance Committee

Mr. Babak Taleghani reviewed with the Board the meeting of September 12, 2013 and referenced the minutes of said meeting. After highlighting the topics, Mr. Taleghani asked for a motion to approve the 2013-2014 budget. Mr. Joop Nagtegaal made the motion, Mr. Tom Chen seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the 2013-2014 budget.

Mr. Taleghani also asked for a motion that up to \$25,000 be

transferred from Board Designated Reserve – Capital Replacement to operating cash, to cover the costs associated with repairs and updates to the “old” playground. Mr. Keith Mathews made the motion, Ms. Crystal Gantz seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved \$25,000 be transferred from Board Designated Reserve – Capital Replacement to operating cash.

Additionally, Mr. Talghani asked for a motion that up to \$75,000 be transferred from Board Designated Reserve – Capital Replacement to operating cash, which brings the total approval to \$200,000. Mr. Joop Nagtegaal made the motion, Ms. Kim Noble seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved that up to \$75,000 be transferred from Board Designated Reserve – Capital Replacement to operating cash.

Other Business

Mr. Carey then made an open call announcing that the Board would move into executive session as per RIGL§ 42-46-5(a)(1)(personnel exception). Mr. Taleghani made a motion to hold the executive session closed and to keep the minutes of the executive session sealed, Mr. Bob Kelley seconded the motion and the Board unanimously voted to go into closed executive session and keep the minutes of the executive session sealed. Mr. Carey asked the Board Trustees to remain, Ms. Palmgren. Mr. Carey excused all other staff.

Executive Session - RIGL § 42-46-5(a)(1)(personnel exception).

There was one vote taken during the executive session, in which the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the executive session at the July 1, 2013 Board meeting. The minutes of the executive session are kept sealed in the Office of the Head of School.

Upon conclusion of the executive session, Mr. Leeds Mitchell made a motion to resume the open meeting. Mr. Alex Molina seconded the motion and the Board unanimously voted to resume the open meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business coming before the Board, Mr. Dave Burnham moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Molina, and the meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Palmgren