

Minutes of the Meeting Held on

June 10, 2009

A meeting of the Board of the Directors was held on Wednesday, June 10, 2009 at the offices of Moses & Afonso, Ltd., 160 Westminster Street, Suite 400, Providence, Rhode Island. The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 4:12 pm.

The following directors were present:

Daniel McKee (Chair)

Richard Lynch

Ramon Martinez

Martin West

Joe Williams

Also in attendance were Michael Magee, Daniel Waugh, Antonio Afonso, Jr., and Jeremy Chiappetta, John and Letitia Carter, and Sandy McCulloch.

Minutes of May 27, 2009

On motion of Mr. Martinez (seconded by Mr. Lynch), the minutes of the May 27, 2009 meeting were approved with the correction of the date of the meeting by striking "Monday" and inserting "Wednesday".

AYE – Lynch, Martinez, Williams; NAY – None.

Finance Committee Report

Mr. Magee reported that charter public schools are required to use the uniform system of accounting required of school districts. Although there are at least two firms that provide software capable of keeping and reporting the required accounts, the cost of software is, unfortunately, in the \$25-\$30,000 range, which is a substantial burden for an independent charter public school. Mr. Magee suggested that RIMA may want to acquire the software and make it available to Mayoral Academies.SM Schools operating as Mayoral AcademiesSM should also consider their sustainability, in order to avoid serious financial repercussions 5 years down the line. RIMA should encourage operators who are able to bring a sustainable operation to the state.

The chair asked when the board would have a budget to vote on. Mr. Magee said that it would make more sense to wait until foundation and legislative funding had been committed. These commitments were expected within the next couple of weeks. Once the commitments were received, Mr. West would convene a meeting of the Finance Committee, which could possibly make a report as soon as the next board meeting.

The prospects for a legislative appropriation for DPBV were discussed. The auditor general has met with several members from

Democracy Builders.

Mr. Magee reported on the search for errors and omissions insurance that would cover RIMA's board members and officers. He had made contact with Starkweather and Shepley, who had agreed to provide at least 4 quotes by the week ending June 19. He had also made contact with several other insurers, but they had not impressed him as to their ability to understand RIMA's operations. Mr. Martinez recommended that Mr. Magee also contact Babcock & Helliwell. Mr. Magee stated that, after the quotations had been received, he would refer them to the Finance Committee.

Election of Treasurer

The Chair deferred this item.

Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley

The Chair announced that at its meeting of Thursday, June 4, 2009, the Board of Regents had approved the charter for Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley. The Chair asked the Secretary to discuss the open meeting implications of the approval.

The Secretary stated that although the Board of Regents' action was conditioned on general assembly appropriation and project readiness, he was conservatively following the approach of full

compliance with the open meetings act. The agenda for the present board meeting had in fact been publicly posted at 1 Fatima Dr. in Cumberland and at 160 Westminster Street in Providence. In addition, the organization had been registered with the Secretary of State's office and the agenda posted there electronically as well. All postings had been accomplished by early Monday afternoon, well before the 48 hour deadline.

The primary requirements of the open meetings laws are that all discussion and action taken by the board or board committees should take place at meetings open to the public pursuant to agendas posted in 2 public places and at the Secretary of State's website at least 48 hours before the meeting. A board or committee member may not participate in a meeting unless physically present; thus, attendance by telephone or videoconferencing are not permitted. Board and committee members should avoid conferring with each other outside of formal meetings unless the conference consists of less than a quorum. They should also avoid sequential conferences that might involve a quorum. Board and committee members may confer with staff and non-board officers as long as the conferences are not used to pass messages through to other board or committee members who, in the aggregate, might constitute a quorum.

An exception applies for matters permitted to be considered in executive session. Executive session is permitted only for types of matters set forth in the statute, and the fact that a matter will be

considered in closed session must be noted on the agenda together with a reference to the applicable statutory exception. (A list of the statutory exceptions is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.)

Following the meeting, minutes must be prepared and made available to the public on request as well as posted at the Secretary of State's website. An exception to the public availability and posting requirements is available for minutes of executive sessions.

The requirements apply not only to the board of directors itself, but also to committees having more than one member. Thus, prior to the next meeting of the Finance Committee, an agenda will need to be prepared and posted and an individual charged with the responsibility of preparing and posting the minutes. The Secretary asked Mr. West to confer with him so that the logistical details could be worked out.

To facilitate compliance with the agenda posting requirement, the Secretary requested that members or officers having items they wish to place on the agenda notify him at least 4 business days before the meeting date. Thus, the Secretary should be notified of an item for a Wednesday meeting by the prior Thursday.

The Chair then asked Mr. Magee to make a presentation concerning Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley. A copy of Mr. Magee's written presentation is attached as Appendix B.

Additional comments (paraphrased) by Mr. Magee and Mr. Chiappetta

Magee: Democracy Prep-Harlem's results are all the more striking when it is realized that its students entering sixth grade are typically three grade levels behind.

Chiappetta: In addition, 95% of its students are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

Magee: Seth Andrew has made multiple visits to Rhode Island to facilitate the opening of the school and at least 4 other staff members of Democracy Builders have also made visits to the state. They participated in public hearings and state house events and provided professional insight and expertise needed as the school chartering process was getting underway. Anything Mike has asked them for, they have delivered that week.

In relation to the recommendations to partner with Democracy Prep, Mr. Magee noted that the charter application has already been submitted and approved. A strong school leader has been identified in Mr. Chiappetta, and RIMA is supplying salary support for him during the pre-opening period.

Lottery applications have begun to be accepted, and RIMA is providing support for that process in light of the short time-frame for soliciting them. 54 applications have been received. The cut-off date

for receiving applications is Friday, June 26, and the lottery itself will be held on Tuesday, June 30 at the Blackstone River Theater.

Mr. Lynch inquired how many applications had been received from Lincoln, and Mr. Magee said that 4 had been received so far and that a more intensive solicitation effort would begin in Lincoln within a couple of days. Canvassing in Lincoln would be concentrated in the Saylesville and Manville neighborhoods.

A board member asked to review a copy of the lottery application, which Mr. Magee supplied.

The Secretary requested that future applications for a Mayoral AcademySM; also include the following types of information:

- a statement whether the geographical coverage for the school satisfied the statutory requirement that each Mayoral AcademySM draw its students from at least one urban and at least one non-urban community
- a statement as to which mayors/elected town administrators of the covered communities supported the application

The Chair stated that DPBV is supported by (in addition to himself) Mayor Moreau (of Central Falls), Town Administrator Almond (of Lincoln), and Mayor Doyle (of Pawtucket).

Mr. Williams (seconded by Mr. Lynch) moved to approve the application of Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley to be a RIMA-sponsored Mayoral AcademySM. AYE: Lynch, Martinez, West, Williams; NAY: None.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Magee clarified that DPBV holds a charter for and is expected to grow to be a K-12 school.

Mr. Magee stated that he hoped to develop a set of criteria for vetting potential trustees. He also requested that all recommendations for membership on the board of trustees be passed through RIMA staff.

Mr. Martinez (seconded by Mr. Lynch) moved to authorize the establishment of the board of trustees for Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley and to solicit nominations therefor. AYE: Lynch, Martinez, West, Williams; NAY: None.

Mr. Chiappetta reported on his activities. The four principal areas he is working to accomplish are:

Building a Team: Word of mouth, advertisement, job fair on 20th, interviews, running sample lessons. These activities will be supported by staff from Democracy Builders.

Developing staff induction program: bringing teachers into the

no-excuses culture, developing on-boarding program.

Soliciting students: This function has largely been carried out by RIMA, but Mr. Chiappetta has been providing support as needed.

Running operations: transportation, food services, budget, emergency management planning, facilities, etc.

Mr. Chiappetta discussed a \$25,000 request for funds from RIMA to support DPBV's start-up costs. Approximately \$10,000 of the funds would be used to pay for site visits to high performing charter schools. The remaining \$15,000 would be used for teacher recruitment, including a job fair, advertising, and demonstration lessons.

Democracy Builders assisted in putting the request together.

Mr. Williams (seconded by Mr. Martinez) moved to authorize the Chief Executive Officer to manage up to \$25,000 in support of start-up activities for DPBV. AYE: Lynch, Martinez, Williams; NAY: None.

Intellectual Property

Consideration was deferred awaiting report from Finance Committee whether to commit funds.

Mr. Magee offered that the logo was designed specifically for RIMA

and that it was intended to combine tradition with 21st century learning.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for 4 o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, June 30, 2009 at the Mayor's office in Cumberland, Rhode Island. (Note special location for this meeting.)

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Daniel Waugh _____

Daniel Waugh, Secretary

“Mayoral Academy” is a service mark of Rhode Island Mayoral Academies.

Exhibits

A – R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)

B – Written presentation by Mr. Magee concerning Democracy Prep Blackstone Valley

Note: If the Exhibits are not attached, they may be obtained from the Secretary:

**Daniel C. Waugh, Secretary
Rhode Island Mayoral Academies**

**c/o Moses & Afonso, Ltd.
160 Westminster Street, Suite 400
Providence, RI 02903
Vox = 401-453-3600
Fax = 401-453-3604
E-mail: dwaugh@mosesafonso.com**

APPENDIX A

§ 42-46-5 Purposes for which meeting may be closed – Use of electronic communications – Judicial proceedings – Disruptive conduct. – (a) A public body may hold a meeting closed to the public pursuant to § 42-46-4 for one or more of the following purposes:

(1) Any discussions of the job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person or persons provided that such person or persons affected shall have been notified in advance in writing and advised that they may require that the discussion be held at an open meeting.

Failure to provide such notification shall render any action taken

against the person or persons affected null and void. Before going into a closed meeting pursuant to this subsection, the public body shall state for the record that any persons to be discussed have been so notified and this statement shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation.

(3) Discussion regarding the matter of security including, but not limited to, the deployment of security personnel or devices.

(4) Any investigative proceedings regarding allegations of misconduct, either civil or criminal.

(5) Any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public.

(6) Any discussions related to or concerning a prospective business or industry locating in the state of Rhode Island when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the interest of the public.

(7) A matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest. Public funds shall include any investment plan or matter related thereto, including, but not limited to, state lottery plans for new promotions.

(8) Any executive sessions of a local school committee exclusively for the purposes: (i) of conducting student disciplinary hearings; or

(ii) of reviewing other matters which relate to the privacy of students and their records, including all hearings of the various juvenile hearing boards of any municipality; provided, however, that any affected student shall have been notified in advance in writing and advised that he or she may require that the discussion be held in an open meeting.

Failure to provide such notification shall render any action taken against the student or students affected null and void. Before going into a closed meeting pursuant to this subsection, the public body shall state for the record that any students to be discussed have been so notified and this statement shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

(9) Any hearings on, or discussions of, a grievance filed pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement.

(10) Any discussion of the personal finances of a prospective donor to a library.

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