



**Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation
Minutes for Meeting of the Board of Trustees
December 8, 2014
410 East 100th Street, New York, NY 10029**

Meeting Minutes

1. Roll Call

Chairperson Frank Saia called the meeting to order. In addition to Mr. Saia, Board members Ivan Fraser, Sona Karia, and Stacey Gauthier were present. Also present were Eboni Kirkland (PTO President), Stephen Falla Riff (Executive Director), Matt Boyle (IT Manager), Pablo Torres (Director of Student Life & Community Engagement), Dru Collins (Vice Principal), Debbie DaGiau (Associate Director of Finance/Human Resources), Mike Jolley (Development & External Affairs Coordinator), Terence Joseph (Principal), and Brendan Boerbaitz (Board/Advisory Board Candidate)

2. Filing of Notice of Meeting

In accordance with the law, a notice of the meeting was published on the school's website, sent via fax to the New York Times and also posted publicly at the M99 School Building where Innovation HS is located, at 410 East 100th Street, New York, NY 10029.

3. Review and Approval of Prior Board Minutes

The Board reviewed the Board minutes from the October meeting. Ms. Karia motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Fraser seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. Update on accounting firm search

Ms. DaGiau gave an update regarding the current accounting firm search. Based on recommendations from Charter School Business Management and the NYC Charter School Center, a list of 10 to 12 accounting firms that might be a suitable fit for Innovation was compiled. In accordance with nonprofit best practices, Ms. DaGiau, the SMT, and the Finance Committee have decided that Innovation will retain one vendor to assist with day-to-day financial management and another to serve as independent auditor and to complete fiscal reports. Given their high level of expertise and experience, Charter School Business Management will continue to provide day-to-day financial management services. The team has thoroughly vetted the list of potential independent auditors and has scheduled meetings with several that seem to be the best fit. It is expected that a decision will be reached and finalized by the end of January.

5. Update on website and Google Drive/Apps migration

Mr. Boyle gave an update regarding the migration of Innovation's website, Google Drive/Apps, and other digital assets to a new domain. Innovation has now purchased and registered the domain "innovationhighschool.org" and will start to test the migration process with help from a third party

vendor. Innovation has received access to the necessary server from its IT vendor, Tech Officers, and the engagement with that consultant will be concluded soon. The migration will take place over the holiday break and Mr. Boyle will work with the School Management Team to craft the necessary messaging and training for staff.

6. Charter Renewal Update

Mr. Falla Riff gave an update on the status of the charter renewal process. The DOE Renewal Report provided to Innovation contained factual mistakes that the School Management Team sent back for correction. The NYC Department of Education (DOE) Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) has not yet returned the corrected Renewal Report.

The DOE OSDCP also provided a draft Goals and Conditions document containing academic, parent engagement, and governance goals different from those in the previous charter term. The Board expressed concern over these new goals given the challenges faced by Innovation in serving such a high-need population. The Board requested that the SMT provide the DOE OSDCP with a revised version of the goals and an explanation as to why the revision more appropriately aligns with the School's mission and population. The Board also requested that more mission-driven and qualitative goals be added.

7. Board Candidate Updates

Mr. Jolley gave an update on two candidates for the Board currently under consideration.

Jon Jelley is the Executive Director of Boys Town NY, an organization whose mission is clearly aligned with Innovation and already working in partnership with Innovation. Mr. Jelley expressed an interest in serving on the Board and creating stronger partnerships with the Harlem community. He had an initial meeting with Mr. Jolley and Mr. Falla Riff, is scheduled for a visit to the school, and will attend an upcoming Board meeting for an interview.

Dan Fanelli has been a teacher at the Renaissance Charter School in Jackson Heights for six years with leadership experience in the Science department as well as school leadership training and education. Mr. Jolley and Mr. Falla Riff held an initial meeting with him to discuss his possible candidacy and he will schedule a visit to the school and meeting with the Board. Mr. Falla Riff mentioned that, while Mr. Fanelli has a number of useful qualities, his lack of board and nonprofit governance experience might make him a better candidate for the Advisory Board.

8. Board and Advisory Candidate Interviews

Eboni Kirkland serves as President of the PTO and is a parent to a 9th grade student at Innovation. The Board asked Ms. Kirkland about her goals and expectations of the school, ways she would contribute to the Board, and how she would serve as a voice for parents. She said she would serve well as the link between parents and the school – given her current PTO President position – keeping in mind the line between serving on both the PTO and the Board. Her primary goal for students is rigorous academic performance – specifically achieving Regents goals. She will be dedicated to the Board given that her child still has 3.5 more years with Innovation.

Brendan Boerbaitz is currently with Deloitte Consulting in New York City and previously interned at D.C. Public Schools for one year. The Board asked him questions about his prior Board experience as well as how he envisions contributing to Innovation and the Board. Mr. Boerbaitz said that his strong suit is program and strategic planning including online communication strategy. The Board asked if he would be interested in serving on the Advisory Board and working in partnership with the School Management Team and Board to define the Advisory Board's role, structure, and goals.

9. Formation of Advisory Board and appointment of members

Mr. Saia moved to add Ms. Kirkland to the Board of Trustees as Parent Representative, Ms. Gauthier seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously. Mr. Saia moved to add Mr. Boerbaitz to the Advisory Board, Ms. Gauthier seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

10. Other New Business

Mr. Joseph and Mr. Torres provided the following updates:

- The Boys JV Basketball team is going to the finals championship game in their division
- Innovation won a grant from Verizon for the Software Engineering Program and will be presented with a check during a ceremony in mid-December as well as a press release
- In January, Innovation students will hold an Arts showcase developed by the new Arts department

11. Adjournment

Ms. Karia motioned to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Saia seconded, the motion was carried unanimously, and the meeting was concluded.