



**Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
February 23rd, 2015
410 East 100th Street, New York, NY 10029**

Meeting Minutes

1. Roll Call

Board Chairperson Frank Saia called the meeting to order. Board members Ivan Fraser, Sona Karia, Stacey Gauthier, and George Sarkissian were also present, constituting a quorum for purposes of conducting business. In addition, Jon Jelley and Eboni Kirkland, voted onto the Board as Trustees but awaiting final approval from the Department of Education, were present. Also present were Stephen Falla Riff (Executive Director), Terence Joseph (Principal), Mike Jolley (Development & External Affairs Coordinator), Pablo Torres (Director of Student Life & Community Engagement), Matt Boyle (IT Manager) and Debbie DaGiau (Associate Director of HR/Finance)

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 email to the New York Times and also posted publicly at the M99 School Building where Innovation High School is located at 410 East 100th Street New York, NY 10029.

3. Review and Approval of Prior Board Meeting Minutes

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

4. Domain Change and Google Drive Migration (IT Manager)

Mr. Boyle informed the Board that the Google Drive migration was completed prior to Winter Break in December. The database has been backed up; however, Tech Officers is still hosting the site for a fee over the next few months to account for anyone still attempting to visit the site under the old domain name. A new IT Specialist has been hired to assist Mr. Boyle with a wide variety of IT-related duties including optimization of the new site, ensuring that the site serves as a resource for students, parents, and teachers, and maintenance of Innovation's computers and IT system. Ms. Karia asked about the broader strategy and how the site will be dynamic and nimble enough to showcase Innovation to all constituents. Mr. Boyle said the team is approaching the website build strategically and the working plan can be shared at the following Board meeting.

5. 2014-2015 Working Budget (Associate Director of HR/Finance)

Ms. DaGiau discussed major changes from the previous version of the budget including long-term absences ("LTAs", which are not counted for purposes of the Per Pupil Invoice) and underestimation of the total number of students enrolled, which impacted the Per Pupil funding. Ms. DaGiau also flagged some of the increased expenses such as staffing and the new student information system. Next year enrollment will increase to offset increasing expenses and the team is working with CSBM to ensure an accurate budget and finance process going forward. Although cash reserves are more than adequate, Mr. Saia and Ms. Karia asked that Innovation Finance staff identify projected deficits and inform the Board in advance.

6. Approval of Revised and Restated Bylaws (Executive Director)

Mr. Falla Riff summarized changes included in the Revised and Restated Bylaws. The Board discussed powers delegated to Committees and Mr. Falla Riff will provide draft Committee charters in the following meeting. Mr. Sarkissian motioned to approve the Revised and Restated Bylaws, Ms. Gauthier seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Karia signed a formal resolution documenting the motion.

7. Independent Auditor Selection (Chair of the Finance Committee)

Ms. Karia explained to the Board that the Auditor selection process consisted of standardized pre-screening, interviews, and reference checks. Ms. DaGiau and Mr. Jolley walked the Board through the process and explained why Loeb & Troper were selected over other possible firms, for their organic approach, high standards, and emphasis on process. Mr. Saia recommended instituting an end-of-year review process to ensure that the relationship is working well and to decide about continued engagement.

8. Elections of Trustees and Officers

a. Trustees

Mr. Fraser moved to nominate the following slate of members whose terms will expire: Mr. Saia, Ms. Karia., and Mr. Fraser. Ms. Gauthier seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Sarkissian motioned to elect Mr. Saia, Ms. Karia, and Mr. Fraser, Ms. Gauthier seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Officers

Mr. Fraser nominated Mr. Saia for Chair. Mr. Sarkissian seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Fraser moved to elect Mr. Saia as Chair. Mr. Sarkissian seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Gauthier nominated Mr. Sarkissian for Vice Chair. Mr. Saia seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Gauthier moved to elect Mr. Sarkissian for Vice Chair. Mr. Saia seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Saia nominated Ms. Karia for Treasurer. Mr. Sarkissian seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Saia moved to elect Ms. Karia as Treasurer. Mr. Sarkissian seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Karia nominated Mr. Jelley for Secretary pending his approval as a Trustee by the Department of Education. Mr. Fraser seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Karia moved to elect Mr. Jelley as Secretary pending his approval as a Trustee by the Department of Education. Mr. Fraser seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

c. Committees

Mr. Saia motioned to create an Executive Committee. Ms. Gauthier seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Saia motioned to nominate the following slate of Board members for the Executive Committee: Mr. Saia, Mr. Sarkissian, and Ms. Karia. Mr. Fraser seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Gauthier motioned to elect Mr. Saia, Mr. Sarkissian, and Ms. Karia to the Executive Committee. Mr. Fraser seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Saia motioned to create a Finance & Audit Committee. Mr. Sarkissian seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Saia motioned to nominate the following slate of Board members to the Finance & Audit Committee: Mr. Fraser, Mr. Jelley, and Ms. Karia. Ms. Gauthier seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Saia motioned to elect Mr. Fraser, Mr. Jelley, and Ms. Karia to the Finance & Audit Committee. Mr. Sarkissian seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Karia motioned to create a Personnel Review Committee. Mr. Saia seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Karia motioned to nominate the following slate of Board members to the Personnel Review Committee: Ms. Gauthier, Ms. Kirkland, Mr. Sarkissian, and Mr. Saia. Ms. Gauthier seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Karia motioned to elect Ms. Gauthier, Ms. Kirkland, Mr. Sarkissian, and Mr. Saia to the Personnel Review Committee. Mr. Fraser seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Charter Renewal Update and Next Steps (Executive Director and Principal)

Mr. Falla Riff provided an update on the recent charter renewal process including his visit to Albany for the meeting of the State Board of Regents with Mr. Joseph. He also discussed the difficulty Innovation leadership encountered due to the fast turnaround for charter goals required by the Department of Education and the feedback they are receiving from the Center for Educational Innovation that will be used to further refine Innovation's approach. Mr. Joseph shared that he is working to clarify the school's core values including input from staff. Ms. Karia encouraged Mr. Joseph to identify key focus areas that can be tied to school goals as part of this process. The Board voiced their excitement over initiation of this project and stated that they will provide further input as it progresses.

10. Board Retreat Update (Development and External Affairs Coordinator)

Mr. Jolley updated the Board on the search for a retreat consultant including submission of brief proposals by several candidates. The previous two retreats were facilitated by the Acceleration Group and Mr. Sarkissian noted that there may be some advantages to continuity. The Board discussed scheduling and determined that the retreat should take someplace in mid-June. Mr. Jolley will poll the Board and School Management Team to determine exact retreat date.

11. Parent Engagement Presentation (Director of Student Life and Community Engagement)

Mr. Torres presented a snapshot of parent engagement at Innovation including successes and areas in need of improvement. This snapshot included partnership with organizations like Boys Town, a summary of parent-facing events, and plans to adopt an advisory system for all students.

12. Other new business

No other new business was discussed

13. Adjournment

Mr. Sarkissian motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jelley seconded, the motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was concluded.