

Maine Charter School Commission Meeting - June 4, 2013

Minutes

The Maine Charter School Commission held a meeting on June 4, 2013, at the Cross State Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME.

CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair, Jana Lapoint called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

The following members were present: Dick Barnes, John Bird, Jana Lapoint, Shelley Reed, Heidi Sampson, William Shuttleworth

Ande Smith – excused; arrived at 1:30 p.m.

Bob Kautz, executive director; Deanne Lavalley, administrative assistant.

Attendees: Roger Brainerd, Lois Kilby-Chesley, Noel Gallagher (Portland Press Herald)

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was moved by John Bird, seconded by Heidi Sampson, and unanimously voted by those present to approve the meeting minutes from May 7, 2013.

OFFICERS' REPORTS:

A. Chair, Jana Lapoint:

- Chair and Vice Chair of Commission – nominations and voting July 2 business meeting.
- Record Dick Barnes' letter of resignation in today's minutes:

June 3, 2013

*Ms. Jana Lapoint, Chair
Maine School Charter Commission*

182 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Jana:

I am writing to officially decline a re-appointment to the Maine Charter School Commission for a second term. As you know, I vacillated on this decision for several months, as I have enjoyed my tenure on the Commission, and feel honored and privileged to have been one of its founding members. It has been a source of pride and accomplishment to play, along with each of my colleagues, an integral role in the start-up of public charter schools in Maine.

We can thank the Governor, the bi-partisan support from the 125th Legislature and the tireless advocacy of the Maine Assn. of Charter Schools and other public charter supporters for creating what was hailed as “the best charter school authorization law” in the nation. But the responsibility to breathe life into the law and set the stage for the first true publicly accountable alternative to the traditional public school structure fell to our Commission. Although the tasks at times seemed daunting, we dove into our work with zeal and common purpose. Looking back, I am amazed at what we accomplished during our first seven months before we had a staff of our own: the development of our administrative rules for procedure, an RFP process for applicants, proposal review procedures, a charter school approval process, and contract development process. Despite some mistakes along the way, we authorized two schools to open. They appear to be off to a promising start as each nears the end of the first year of operation. This year, with the addition of two dedicated, overworked and underpaid part-time staff, we made significant improvements to all of the above processes, and began an all-important monitoring program, while still managing to approve three more schools.

Our decisions have sometimes been controversial, as could be expected when implementing a new public program at a time when additional financial resources are almost non-existent. Despite controversy, hardly anyone has questioned our integrity and our commitment to implement the law as it was envisioned.

The Commission is about to enter a second year of monitoring charter school operations as two existing schools expand and three new schools open. And the Commission must consider moving forward on a third cycle of school applications and possible authorizations. Only you, our fellow Commissioners, and our two part-time staff members can appreciate how much work this will entail. I know in good conscience that I cannot commit the amount of time and attention that all these tasks and challenges deserve were I to remain for a second term.

I will continue to serve on the Commission until my replacement is appointed, and offer my support and experience in the future should it be helpful to your work.

I want to thank you, my fellow Commission members past and present, the Commission’s staff, the Commissioner of Education and a host of other MDOE staff members, and the

many charter applicants, advocates and thoughtful critics who have made this work worthwhile. As I have stated above, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve.

Sincerely, Richard E. Barnes

Jana Lapoint: Motion to regretfully accept his resignation. Seconded by William Shuttleworth and Heidi Sampson. All in favor; none opposed.

Process to fill the position: State Board of Education Members: Heidi Sampson, Ande Smith and Jana Lapoint nominate candidate, interviewed and reported on by Education and Cultural Affairs Committee and candidate is approved by a majority vote of the State Board of Education.

B. Vice Chair: None

C. Executive Director:

1. Update on LD's. Legislative tracker provided to members and discussed.
2. Monitoring Process. Monitoring-reporting schedule for Cornville.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Vote for Commission adoption of Rule 001.

- Motion to adopt: John Bird. Seconded: William Shuttleworth. 6-0: Unanimous.

B. Vote for Commission adoption of Rule 002.

- Motion to adopt: Heidi Sampson. Seconded: John Bird. 6-0: Unanimous.

C. Review, discussion, vote on RFP for non-virtual public charter schools.

- No vote as Sarah (Forster) has reviewed and suggested many changes that will need to be considered.
- The Commission discussed whether or not to issue an RFP given the need to monitor five schools next year.

D. Accept Bid for Payroll Services for Temporary Resource.

- Motion to accept Tri-State: John Bird. Seconded: Dick Barnes. 6-0: Unanimous.

E. Evaluation of Executive Director and Administrative Assistant – Executive Session.

- 3 p.m. Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss evaluation of Executive Director: Dick Barnes. Seconded: Heidi Sampson.

- 3:15 p.m. Motion to close Executive Session: William Shuttleworth. Seconded: John Bird. 6-0: Unanimous.
- Take home evaluations and return them to Jana Lapoint July 2, 2013.

F. Action on the Positions of Executive Director and Administrative Assistant.

- Motion to extend contract for one year and open up in January for a full-time Executive Director position to begin July 1, 2014: Jana Lapoint. Seconded: William Shuttleworth. 6-0: Unanimous.

OTHER:

Commission members notified of the increase of hours from 30-40, as needed, for Administrative Assistant for the last six weeks of FY 2013.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Expense Account Vouchers were turned in at the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn 3:20 p.m.: William Shuttleworth. Seconded: Heidi Sampson.