APPROVED



River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday January 17, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Location
River Valley Charter School, 2 Perry Way, Newburyport. Middle School Great Room

MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the River Valley Charter School is to provide a rigorous academic program based on the Montessori philosophy and rooted in the history, culture and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. Students will reach their full potential as scholars and become self-reliant, productive members of society. They will be adept at critical thinking and creative problem solving and will be fully prepared to succeed in future schools, careers and civic life.

Trustees Present
A. Fields, A. Ting, C. Getz, C. Martin (remote), C. Whitford, D. Herrera, E. Bradley, E. Rankin (remote), E. Seaton, E. Simone, M. Connerton, N. Durkee, T. Murdy

Trustees Absent
K. Jackman

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
A. Fields, E. Seaton, N. Durkee

Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned
N. Durkee

Guests Present
Lydia (RVCS hire for Grounds Re-design project) , Nell F. (MM public)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Herrera called a meeting of the board of trustees of River Valley Charter School to order on Wednesday Jan 17, 2024 at 7:04 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Public Comment

D. Approve Last Board Meeting Minutes

E. Bradley made a motion to approve the minutes from November Board Meeting on 11-15-23.
D. Herrera seconded the motion.
Add JLE for in attendance, Erin B. made non content spelling corrections
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Getz	Aye
A. Fields	Absent
N. Durkee	Absent
E. Seaton	Absent
E. Bradley	Aye
E. Simone	Abstain
D. Herrera	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
C. Martin	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye

A. Fields arrived at 7:07 PM.

II. Montessori Minute

A. Montessori Minute

"Tell me about the work" presentation on following the child by Nell Franchek.

- Excited to be able to present about the magic of Montessori.

- Presented multimedia look at child driven bird unit/project
- Explain the story telling, writing and conversation development that can happen from block building material in the classroom.

E. Seaton arrived at 7:15 AM.

III. Board Business

A. Board Expectations

Review of the new visual RVCS Board of Trustees Member Expectations
Developed in February 2023.
Denise lead brief discussion prior to reading the member expectation around the table by each members.
EC desires to introduce the post board meeting survey that each board member will be tasks with completing prior to leaving, brief but will allow us to have more productive meetings.
This will allow for the EC to have data about how to adjust agenda.
Denise read outload the brief
JLE-- makes suggesting that we consider adding "Did we abide by meeting expectation?"
AF-- Excited that we are doing this.

B. Grounds Update

Link to Lydia's slide show here:
https://app2.boardontrack.com/eventFile/other/68949#
Parts of the project highlighted--

- Grounds Redesign Scope
- Constituents and Professional Services Involved in Project

Significant work was done in the Fall-- reviewed that work which involved the foundation, development, middle school, staff, RVCS students. Mayor was here last week.
This month will focus on better understand of our space.

Ended with review of project priorities (see slide) and shared some of the examples students paired

Erin Seaton-- Wanted to highlight that we remain mindful of accessibility.
Lydia-- This is on the forefront of why we are utilizing a landscape architecture. Kimberly (school nurse) has been involved to ensure this as well. Additionally it will make this very clear on the RFP, we are a public school and need and want to be ADA compliment with a look to not only what that means now but also ensure we are foreword thinking.
Erin Seaton-- Rec'd looking at Temple University resource "Urban Think Tanks".

Catherine Martin-- Asked about timeline and where priority is being given?

Lydia-- The Detention ponds, the playground, parking.. there will many phases.
Chris Getz-- Ask about the impact of flooding?
JLE-- Confirmed there is flooding in her office. Neighboring business has admitted that there property has encroached on the drainage system
DH-- So has impacted our properties flooding?
JLE-- Likely yes, but there is no proof
CM-- Are grants available for environmental based education?
EB-- Asked about how the impact of properties around us no doing annual upkeep has impacted the RCVS property?
JLE/Lydia-- It is unclear given the number of variable and changes in landscape but making it a priority that all understand
Erin Seaton and several members echo'd- gratitude for involving so many stakeholders
N. Durkee arrived at 7:30 AM.

IV. EC Committee Business

A. Approve December EC Minutes

No one had questions regarding
E. Bradley made a motion to approve the minutes from Executive Committee meeting on 12-13-23.
T. Murdy seconded the motion.
Add JLE to attendance of meeting.
EB-- Should the entire board be voting to approve the EC meeting minutes as they are not present? For example: Eric did not vote, he abstained, as he was not present.
DH/AT-- Clarify this is more of a vote that you agree and understand the content of what was discussed as, recorded in the minutes presented, and were given a opportunity to asks questions.
DH-- We will vote
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

D. Herrera	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
E. Seaton	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
A. Fields	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
C. Martin	Aye
A. Ting	Aye

B. Approve January EC Minutes

D. Herrera made a motion to approve the minutes from Executive Committee meeting on 01-10-24.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
Is the holiday party still happening? Yes, COT will discuss.
Date Clarification/Editing-- Should read-- 1/24, 1/27, 1/31, 2/3
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Ting	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
E. Seaton	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
A. Fields	Aye
C. Martin	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye

C. Committee Descriptions

DH-- Executive Committee description has been updated, shared on screen
Shared this felt critical because w/ the expectation of Accountability Committee descriptions have not been updated since 2011/2012.

D. Director MidYear Review

This midyear review will be completed by EC and will utilize questions generated and tailor

JLE and DH reviewed question, edited slightly to tailor Montessori then EC reviewed them and what we see in front of us in a product of those customization

Why did we change This was a priority goal for chair as when she took on the leadership position, the evaluations were Inconsistent in approach and in timeliness

Tanya Murdy-- Applauded Denise for creating this mid year review tool, director eval-- recognizing this has been a source of contention and distraction for BOT.

Small BOT discussion-- Expressing gratitude to Denise for the work and many hours she has invested into implementing board on track and re-vamping out dated system that previously existed and made the less effective in their practice.

V. Director Report

A. Director's Report

JLE wanted to highlight--
Cat the art teacher will be doing a mural project in Amesbury
2% on tuition.
CW-- Finance perspective

Accountability- This school has been ID'd as a school w/ higher absentee rates.
Flu policy referenced by JLE-- we require kids diagnosed with the flu to be out for 4 - 5 days.
Meeting with the commissioner recently highlighted that this be examined closer.
This has the potential to be a charter renewal topic years to come.

VI. Accountability Committee

A. Approve Accountability Meeting Minutes

D. Herrera made a motion to approve the minutes from Accountability Committee Meeting on 01-08-24.
A. Fields seconded the motion.
No edits
Request to avoid using?
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

E. Rankin	Aye
C. Martin	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
A. Fields	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
E. Seaton	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent

B.

Accountability Update

Revisited committee description-- a few discrepancies identified and are being rectified and

Renewal summary was reviewed and discussed
Call for volunteers to work on the BOT dashboard.

EB-- Asked about the area on our renewal report where we (the Board) needed to strengthen our look at disaggregated and aggregated data

JLE highlighted that our review was excellent.

IT hiccups that need to be resolved

VII. Development Committee

A. Approve Development minutes

E. Simone made a motion to approve the minutes from Development Committee Meeting on 11-27-23.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Whitford	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
E. Seaton	Aye
C. Martin	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
A. Ting	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
A. Fields	Aye

N. Durkee left at 9:00 PM.

B. Development Update

Total amount raised to date-- $31,150
Notified recently Private family foundation donation $50,000
$29,000 coming in from RVCS community (surpassed end of year amount already)
$2,000 effortless giving

Big News--
Ground Re-design has been most of what has been discussed and energy.

Continue emphasis on 8's and our 25th year.

Read-o-thon-- Let's explore giving this a try.
AF-- Can I share info and ideas I have on this with you
TM-- Of course! JLE-- I can bring it fourth to you.
JLE-- Wondering if we will this interfere with raising money for ground re-design

JLE-- Clarified that Lydia has been hired and pay rolled by RVCS for.
JLE-- would like a clear go ahead from the BOT
AT-- We need numbers and timeline for the Ground Re-design project.
DH-- Lydia is ballpark 750K but a million would be great for the whole project
JLE- I really would like a nod from BOT and Foundation on this project, at least the detention ponds.
DH-- We need a number then?
DH-- There a lot of things that are important work-- policy updates,
ES-- An itemized plan and priority would be helpful

C. Leadership Giving

VIII. Finance Committee

A. Approve Minutes

C. Whitford made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance Committee Meeting on 12-06-23.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

N. Durkee	Absent
T. Murdy	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
E. Bradley	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
A. Fields	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
E. Seaton	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye

Roll Call

C. Martin	Aye

B. Finance Update

IX. Committee on Trustees

A. Approve Minutes

A. Fields made a motion to approve the minutes from Committee on Trustees November Meeting on 11-08-23.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Connerton	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
N. Durkee	Absent
C. Getz	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
E. Seaton	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
C. Martin	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
E. Bradley	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
A. Fields	Aye

B. Approve Minutes

A. Fields made a motion to approve the minutes from Committee on Trustees Meeting on 01-10-24.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. CoT Update

We have completed our committee updates and all members feel good about this

Holiday/Project dates for Doodle Pool--
Wednesday 1/24
5:30 - 8:30

Saturday 1/27

10 - 12

Wednesday 1/31
5:30 - 8:30

Saturday 2/3
10 - 12

** Adult community members invited as well

D. Board Survey

E. Board Executive Session

D. Herrera made a motion to Go into executive session.
E. Bradley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Whitford	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
M. Connerton	Aye
K. Jackman	Absent
E. Seaton	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
N. Durkee	Absent
C. Martin	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
A. Fields	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye

X. Closing Items

A. Public Comment

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Herrera

Documents used during the meeting

- BoT Expectations 2_7_23.pdf