APPROVED

River Valley Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday March 19, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Location
River Valley Charter School Middle School Great Room

River Valley Charter School welcomes your participation at Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees (“Board”) is to conduct the affairs of the organization in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our school and assists the Board in making the best decisions for our school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, guidelines are provided at the bottom of this agenda. All materials for all board and committee meetings, are available on our Board on track public portal found at rivervalleycharter.org.

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Trustees Present

A. Godino (remote), A. Ting, B. MacQuade, C. Getz, C. Whitford, D. Herrera, D. Mitchell (remote), E. Bradley (remote), E. Rankin, E. Simone, J. Nickerson, N. Durkee, P. Ganley, T. Murdy

Trustees Absent
M. Connerton

Ex Officio Members Present
K. Kuse

Guests Present
A. Wetmore, Alison Salerno

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Herrera called a meeting of the board of trustees of River Valley Charter School to order on Wednesday Mar 19, 2025 at 7:02 PM.

C. Public Comment

ASalerno - When are the committee meeting dates posted?

DHerrera walked through where they are posted on the RVCS website.

ASalerno - Is there going to be an opportunity for families to comment on the report cards, conference changes, or calendar?

DHerrera - Some of these things are management. KKuse can consider the feedback. Hearing that she is thinking about these things might be important for the community to hear.

DHerrera and KKuse show gratitude for Alison's comment.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Accountability Committee

B. Development Committee

C.

Executive Committee

D. Committee On Trustess

E. Finance Committee

F. Vote on Consent Agenda

E. Bradley made a motion to Approve the consent agenda as presented.
C. Whitford seconded the motion.
Note: Development Meeting's minutes are missing.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

E. Rankin	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
C. Whitford	Aye
M. Connerton	Absent
P. Ganley	Aye
C. Getz	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
N. Durkee	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
B. MacQuade	Aye
D. Herrera	Aye
E. Simone	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye

III. Director's Update

A. Director's Update

DHerrera would like to see the above foundation rates for each sending district. CWhitford is confident that it is in the $200-300 range difference between districts.

Grounds have been quite frustating. The Community Preservation Act group deliberations were a few weeks ago and we were offered $150K to take our playground public. For 11 of the projects, the votes were unanimous to support funding. Only 3 people were willing to fund the RVCS project. Is the 150K worth it? A public playground ups liability and maintenance.

Conservation Commission has a lot of demands. They want the field.

Derek - How long does the easement last and what does it do to the value of the property? DHererra - Will clarify if it can be written that the easement will expire upon sale of the property.

NDurkee - Can we get financial help with the maintenance? KKuse - No. And we need to agree to lots of scheduled maintenance.

CWhitford - Is all of this only for the funds? KKuse - Some is, some isn't. At this point, the city is involved in the project.

KKuse - We are going to try to permit the whole project and then do it in phases.

ATing - What were the outcomes of the Conservation Committee meeting? KKuse - It was a hearing. We are all set with the City of Newburyport. The biggest problem is the back parking, it's an encroachment on wetlands. They also want us to get rid of the phragmytes in an approved manner. We can't use salt to melt snow.

ATing - This is very typical of wetlands. There are other options, like swaps for other areas.

KKuse - In the last 24 hours, we have reworked the parking spots.

DHererra - At the next meeting, could we have a list that shows the contingencies for ConCom and CPA, etc?

NDurkee - Could we show a good faith effort to go forward with them? Agreeing to seed mix and sand vs. salt.

CGetz - What does Lisa Mead say about this?

KKuse - The submittal to ConCom is 5/8 for a 5/15 hearing. We will start to put together a bid package for the summer construction. Has a playground company that she would like to use for install.

TMurdy - Why are they so interested in the fields? DHererra - They are looking for more public playground and field space in the area of town.

IV. Accountability Committee

A. Accountability Committee

ESimone. The response rate to the caregiver survey was higher than normal. It paid off to truncate the survey. There were no major surprises overall. The overall results were positive. Main concerns included playground and math instruction.

There were over 20 written responses about early release. It has been flagged as a concern.

A lot of strong responses from children on IEP and/or other surveys. They were emotional. Concerns were raised about communication between classroom about students. Some specific classes were mentioned. E2 was where most of the concerns were. A lot of respondents wanted foreign language earlier.

ERankin - Will the school address these concerns? DHererra - That is the plan.

KKuse - Will be proposing 5 early release Fridays at noon.

ERankin - What professional development has happened during the early release? KKuse - Listed a few programs. DHererra- I don't think that the school needs to report out on that. ERankin - This could be viewed as an opportunity for communication.

BMacQuade -The middle school would like more time with the students. Having half day on Friday, I predict that families will take kids out.

ESimone - Did anything come up about the start of the school year? KKuse - The earlier we get students back to school, the sooner they settle into the routine.

Winter Assessments - Looked at data focused on E1 and E2. This is an easy way to see inconistencies between classrooms. The lower performing classes did track with classes with more IEPs.

DHerrera wants to see what MCPSA shares as to what a dashboard could/should look like.

V. Committee on Trustees

A. Committee On Trustees

At the end of the retreat, we all had take away goals and tasks.

COT has not missed that it never comes up in committee agendas.

JNickerson did a lot of work to list dashboard topics along with coordinating SMART goals. This could be a list for committees to pick some of these for each committee. We can then explore where the data is accessible.

Board Retreat - After speaking to the facilitator, we feel that it would be useful to have KKuse's company. In order to include her, we are asking for the retreat to happen on Saturday, May 31st from 9-2.

Update on board recruitment, have had some interest.

B. Board Education: Board Meeting Structure

Dhererra pointed out the files to access information about the Open Meeting Law and Open Meeting Law webinar.

She then reviewed the Open Meeting Law as it applies to Massachusetts Charter Schools.

Chair requests better visibility of meeting postings on the website.

Please double check that the website is set up for screen readers.

ERankin: Should we be voting to accept the Director's Report? DHererra - I will look into that.

VI. Development

A. Development Committee

Readathon is going well. It has raised $18.5K. More kids are participating and more minutes are being logged.

Jabberwocky is giving a $25 gift to each classroom.

The Committee plans to reconnect with the annual fund and how to generate more revenue for that.

It would be helpful to speak with KKuse to find out what we need each year.

TMurdy gave an overview of the Parents' Alliance's upcoming activities.

VII. Finance & Facilities

A. Finance Committee

In the excell files, we are running at about a 200K surplues. Caveat being: this is timing based with expenses. We are in a good position.

DESE released projections at positive 4.5%, but we are going to look at a budget with +3%.

All of this is subject to change depending on federal and state governments.

CWhitford left meeting at 8:57.
ESimone left at 9:02.

VIII. Executive Committee

A. Executive Committee

DHererra reviewed upcoming dates, including Celebrations of Learning and the Middle School graduation.

The next meeting will finalize policy work. There will be some voting on policies coming up to update them for the new director.

If anyone has any ideas on what the next board education topic could be, please be in touch.

IX. Other Business

A. Other Business

Upcoming MCPSA workshop:

New Board Member Roles and Responsibilities.
D. Mitchell made a motion to adjourn.
N. Durkee seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Connerton	Absent
C. Getz	Aye
E. Bradley	Aye
A. Ting	Aye
E. Rankin	Aye
A. Godino	Aye
P. Ganley	Aye
D. Mitchell	Aye
J. Nickerson	Aye
T. Murdy	Aye
C. Whitford	Absent
D. Herrera	Aye
E. Simone	Absent

Roll Call
B. MacQuade Aye
N. Durkee Aye

X. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Herrera

B. Board Meeting Survey

Documents used during the meeting

None

THE ORDER OF BUSINESS MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT NOTICE Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice.

REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY The Board Chair reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.