APPROVED

F.W. Parker Charter Essential School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday November 14, 2024 at 6:45 PM

Location
Parker School

http://parker.school/boardoftrusteesmeeting

Trustees Present
B. Harrigan, C. Beasley, C. Soderman, E. Sturgis, F. Fernau (remote), J. Fredericksen, L. Hayner, M. Beam (remote), M. Lindsey, M. Turnbull, N. Odekirk Hatlevig, P. Gordon (remote), S. Razzetti, S. Reinhorn, T. Testa

Trustees Absent
E. Moura, M. Edgar

Guests Present
D. Van Patten, K. Tedstone, M. Beganski, M. McKenna

I. Meeting Notes

A. Meeting Objectives

1. To discuss our response to hate speech on campus
2. To make progress on Year 1 implementation of the Strategic Plan
3. To develop a targeted list of candidates for BOT

B. To prepare for this meeting, please do the following...

1. RVSP through Board on Track
2. Read the agenda and Head of School Report

II. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

S. Razzetti called a meeting of the board of trustees of F.W. Parker Charter Essential School to order on Thursday Nov 14, 2024 at 6:52 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

C. Soderman made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 10-10-24.
S. Reinhorn seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

F. Fernau	Aye
N. Odekirk Hatlevig	Aye
S. Reinhorn	Aye
P. Gordon	Aye
S. Razzetti	Aye
M. Turnbull	Aye
M. Beam	Aye
M. Lindsey	Aye
T. Testa	Aye
L. Hayner	Aye
B. Harrigan	Aye
J. Fredericksen	Aye
C. Soderman	Aye
E. Sturgis	Aye
C. Beasley	Aye
E. Moura	Absent
M. Edgar	Absent

III. Head of School Report and DEI Committee

A. Head of School Report

Brian shared photos from the Div 1 Halloween party and the Fun Run.
Brian said the sense of community at Parker pays off every time it's needed. He reflected on the recent election and incidence of hate speech and said teachers and the work in advisories helped create a safe space for students.

Brian said enrollment is chartered at 400 and budgeted 370. The current enrollment is 387. Brian said keeping enrollment in the mid 380s would allow for January staff bonuses. He presented the information contained in his Head of School report - included in the meeting packet.

Christina Soderman asked if the mid-year lottery would increase enrollment to 400 and necessitate more staff which would make bonuses more difficult. Brian said staying in the mid 380s is the goal.

B. DEI Committee

Brian said the most recent DEI meeting was entirely devoted to the recent incident of hate speech. This incident was the fourth over the past two years. Tiff said the committee worked on ideas including: an inter-faith all school assembly, having local State police come in to educate, putting up symbols of inclusion and anti-hate. Tiff invited feedback and suggestions from the Board. The Board discussed how important this work is and the challenges involved. Caroline Beasley said that the concept of intersectionality can highlight the complexity of identity. Brian said he would like to stay in conversation - this is work to be led by the school with the support of the DEI Committee and the Board.

IV. Governance Committee

A. Governance Committee

Matt Lindsey said the Committee is considering a bylaw amendment regarding Board composition and specifically in regard to the designation of current parents on the Board. Matt said a bylaw amendment would require review by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). He said DESE recently changed procedural requirements for amendments and potential changes now require review. Matt said the changes cannot be sent to DESE until after January 1st.

Matt said that the Committee is looking at bylaws around Board composition and considering what would be good practice.

Fletcher Fernau said at most schools parent participation on Boards is unconventional and not recommended; however, this has always been a Parker practice as it's in line with our values and principles. Fletcher shared the text of the proposed amendment. Fletcher said the Committee spoke about requiring that the Board include one Parker alum. He asked if the current composition prioritizes parent voices over alums. Flectcher asked if including an alum should be part of the amendment or should it be a consideration instead of a requirement.

Marie Beam said parent participation important for fundraising objectives, leadership capacity, volunteering, support, and insight. Marie said leaving language around composition flexible is important - prescriptive language may be limiting. Tiff said that the original language arose out of Parker's student -teacher-parent focus.

Fletcher shared a Board on Track article arguing the case against parents on the Board. He acknowledged that there is no current appetite to eliminate parents and asked if the current bylaws serve needs. Brian suggested continuing the conversation in Committee

and bring it to a vote. Fletcher invited Board members to share feedback with the Committee.

Nicole Hatlevig said Financial, Legal, and Facilities skill sets are current priorities for Trustee recruitment. Nicole said there may also be a need for a faculty Trustee and a current parent.

Nicole and Matt shared an electronic form and Trustees were given time to share ideas for potential members.

V. Strategic Plan Implementation and Hiring a Development Consultant

A. Strategic Plan Implementation and Hiring a Development Consultant

Brian presented the work that would be asked of a Development Consultant. Brian said the timeline is aggressive. He said the six proposals that were submitted will be screened and three will be interviewed.

Brian asked Marie to reflect on the submitted proposals. Marie said there is a range of experience in development and there are many good options. Katrina echoed this. Brian said the timeline may need to be adjusted. Fletcher asked if conversations with proposers has yielded any additional specificity about deliverables.

Stef said some of what is differentiating proposals is what they are offering to deliver. Fletcher asked about engagement of stakeholders. Brian said consideration is being given to how much time will be needed from staff.

Marie said the open ended-ness of the RFP separates the viable contenders -viable contenders can read between the lines, determine what it needed, and provide an actionable pathway.

Brian said the proposals range in cost. The Board will vote tonight on allocating $75K toward this work. Brian said the total amount may not be needed but the approval of $75K from reserves makes the funds available if the decision is made to go with the a proposal at the upper end of the range.

Michelle McKenna said the Finance Committe discussed what would need to be known to make a decision about this. Christina said the Committee wanted to see the whole picture so there is understanding about what is being asked and what can be afforded. The Committee voted this evening to recommend to approve the expenditure of up to $75K from reserves.

Martin said currently there is a hold on Facilities projects that be funded from reserve funds. Current projects will be funded with raised money (Sumner Sidewalk) or donated

funds (interior courtyard). Martin said the next large projects will be dictated by the Strategic Plan.

Christina said the Committee is looking closely at reserves and will discuss potential unexpected expenses with Facilities. She said the Committee is reviewing known and possible funding requests and looking to balance short term goals with saving for future needs.

Stefanie said the Strategic Plan is about sustainability and growth and the development work is needed to build sustainability. She said the development work will hopefully pay for itself.

VI. Committees

A. Committee Reports

Facilities

Martin Turnbull said the sidewalk project has been submitted to Devens for review and approval before it can go out for bidding. He hopes this will happen before Thanksgiving.

Development

Katrina said Annual Fund mailers have been sent. She said the new graphic designer and photographer are doing good work.

Katrina said the Development Committee now has three subcommittees which allows for more targeted, meaningful work. The subcommittees are: Events, Annual Fund, and Alumni Engagement .

Julie Fredericksen said that in preparation for Parker's 30th celebration event, items are being collected for raffle baskets raffles and potentially a live auction.

Stefanie Reinhorn shared ways for Members to support the 30th celebration event: purchase tickets, buy tables, sponsor faculty tickets, donate items to the raffle and auction. She also encouraged Members to connect with Katrina to communicate their commitment to the Parker Fund.

Enrollment Committee

Pam Gordon said there is the possibility of a mid-year lottery. Students would start second semester. She said the lottery would target spots for 7th and 8th graders and especially.

VII. Other Business

A.

Comments from the Public

There were no comments form the public.

B. Investing Reserves into Strategic Plan

T. Testa made a motion to approve investing reserves in Strategic Plan.
M. Turnbull seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

E. Sturgis	Aye
B. Harrigan	Aye
S. Razzetti	Aye
L. Hayner	Aye
C. Beasley	Aye
S. Reinhorn	Aye
J. Fredericksen	Aye
M. Lindsey	Aye
N. Odekirk Hatlevig	Aye
T. Testa	Aye
M. Turnbull	Aye
E. Moura	Absent
P. Gordon	Aye
M. Edgar	Absent
C. Soderman	Aye
F. Fernau	Aye
M. Beam	Aye

C. Amending the bylaws

This vote will be taken at a future meeting.

VIII. 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 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Lindsey

Documents used during the meeting

- 2024 November Head of School Report.pdf

- Q1FY25 Dashboard.pdf