APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday June 16, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85362866716
Meeting ID: 853 6286 6716
Dial in: (646) 558 8656

Trustees Present
Azalia Volpe (remote), Frank Santarpia (remote), George Winn (remote), Laura Timoney (remote), Laurel Gyimesi (remote), Rose Kerr (remote)

Trustees Absent
Amy Margolis, Maria Casale

Guests Present
Fahron Ebanks (remote), Francesca DiCanio (remote), Geena Kuriakose (remote), John Lee (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Rose Marie Illuzzi (remote), Tim Castanza (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. **Record Attendance**

B. **Call the Meeting to Order**

Laura Timoney called a meeting of the board of trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Wednesday Jun 16, 2021 at 7:07 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 05-12-21.
Laurel Gyimesi seconded the motion.
Azalia Volpe abstained from voting to approve the minutes as she was not present at the May 12, 2021 Board Meeting.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Welcome

R. Kerr welcomed the attendees; this is an exciting time of year - the end of school with resulting mixed emotions. We have a busy agenda tonight: board members' appointments, board officers' elections, approval of a new board member, as well as several board resolutions needing votes. Thank you to everyone for volunteering their time.

II. Elections

A. Board Member Appointments

L. Timoney stated that board member appointments being considered tonight are for current board members whose terms are expiring at the end of this month:

- Laurel Gyimesi
- Rose Kerr
- George Winn

L. Timoney asked each individually if they would be willing to serve another 3-year term as a Board of Trustee member; each responded that they will do so.
Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the appointments of Laurel Gyimesi, Rose Kerr and George Winn to 3-year terms as Board of Trustee members of Bridge Preparatory Charter School.
Frank Santarpia seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
L. Timoney stated that the Board of Trustees is happy to welcome a new board member:

- Geena Kuriakose

Ms. Kuriakose has been attending board and committee meetings and has completed all the necessary paperwork, passed the background check, and everything is in order to welcome her to our board via a vote at tonight's meeting.
Laura Timoney made a motion to approve Geena Kuriakose as member of the Board of Trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School for a term of 3 years.
George Winn seconded the motion.

THE FOLLOWING ALTERATION (ADDING THE PRECISE WORDING OF BOARD RESOLUTION #9) WAS MADE LATER FOLLOWING A DECISION OF THE BOARD AT THE MEETING OF 10/20/21.

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School ("Bridge Prep") deems it to be in the best interests of Bridge Prep that the following action be taken by the Board of Trustees of Bridge Prep pursuant to this Resolution:
WHEREAS, The Bridge Preparatory Charter School Board of Trustees, having conducted a thorough criminal history record check via fingerprinting which is deemed acceptable by NYSED, and having discovered no State or Federal criminal history, or having provided information regarding such history to NYSED, if found, and having verified that any academic and/or professional credential or qualification presented by the proposed member is genuine, and having reviewed the application in its entirety, has voted to select **Geena Kuriakose** as a member to its Board of Trustees, with a term expiring on June 2024 pending approval by NYSED. The resolution approving **Geena Kuriakose** is adopted upon NYSED's approval.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to applicable law, and the authorizing Charter, the undersigned, being a majority of the Members of Bridge Prep hereby consent to, approve, and adopt the aforesaid Resolution.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Amy Margolis	Absent
Laura Timoney	Aye
Azalia Volpe	Aye
Rose Kerr	Aye
George Winn	Aye
Laurel Gyimesi	Aye
Maria Casale	Absent
Frank Santarpia	Aye

B. Officer Elections (Executive Board)

A. Volpe volunteered to act as *Chair pro tem* and began tonight's officers' elections by opening up nominations for Board Chair:

- L. Gyimesi nominated Rose Kerr for Chair. There were no other nominations for that position. *As there are no other nominees and there being no objection, the Board approves Rose Kerr as Chair by unanimous consent*
- L. Timoney nominated Laurel Gyimesi for Vice Chair. There were no other nominations. *As there are no other nominees and there being no objection, the Board approves Laurel Gyimesi as Vice Chair by unanimous consent.*
- L. Gyimesi nominated George Winn for Treasurer. There were no other nominations. *As there are no other nominees and there being no objection, the Board approves George Winn as Treasurer by unanimous consent.*

- R. Kerr nominated Laura Timoney as Secretary. There were no other nominations. *As there are no other nominees and there being no objection, the Board approves Laura Timoney as Secretary by unanimous consent.*

R. Kerr believes that the Board of Trustees has really matured this year; this is due to the hard work of all of our committees, but especially the *Development & Governance Committee* who created a process for our board's maturation by utilizing Board on Track; they took a very professional path in moving our board forward; although young, we are now a significant board; looking forward to our progress and our strategic talks this summer regarding the next 5-year plan.

III. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee

R. Kerr said the following was discussed at the *Executive Committee Meeting*: End-of-year procedures; the other committees that have met; concentrations on developing and approving our budget, working with school staff, the *ED Evaluation and Support Committee*, and many other end-of-year projects were discussed.

B. Academic Committee

R. Kerr stated that the following topics were discussed at an abbreviated *Academic Committee Meeting*: there were flooding issues in our school building and damage to a ceiling causing some students to remain in remote learning mode however the school staff made it work.

She then gave the floor to T. Castanza to discuss the newly configured Dashboard: He thanked his staff for their work on the Dashboard as well as the results shown; the board viewed the most recent Dashboard data; there is growth evidenced in each grade, in each subgroup in both Math and ELA as as a result of the school staff's hard work; he thanked F. DiCanio for her assistance all year in aggregating the Dashboard data, as well as assuring that our assessments are done with fidelity and that our teachers are supported with inputting their data. The end of year (EOY) NWEA MAP Assessment data on the Dashboard will be submitted to NYSED for our *Local Assessment Initiative*, which will serve as a baseline for next year's data submission to determine our student's progress and proficiency. Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) data is also shown on our Dashboard showing significant growth; this is our first year using F&P data for assessment; we also saw significant growth in ELA and Math in every grade level and every subgroup; 1st grade ELA data indicates at EOY that 72% are reading at-or-above grade level, up from 48% at the beginning of year (BOY). This is due to in-person learning and the hard work of our classroom teachers. The growth in Math, particularly among the students with disabilities is very encouraging; when we started our school and wrote the academic goals, we would have not believed the proficiency levels we see today.

R. Kerr added that these are digital reports that are truly reflective of our student's Math abilities and this end-of-year data is trusted by NYSED; there is much to be celebrated. On behalf of the Board of Trustees she thanked the Executive Director, his team and the school staff for these very good numbers.

C. Finance Committee

G. Winn stated that the following was discussed at the *Finance Committee Meeting*:
The focus was the budget working in tandem with the *Executive Committee* and will be presented to the Board of Trustees tonight; it took a lot of time and effort; he thanked the administrative team, the Executive Director and the members of the *Executive Committee* that worked on the budget. in July we will begin looking at issues for next year, the organizational controls, how some decisions and investments are made; how to define and measure progress; strategy will need to be discussed. There is more federal money coming to the school from the Cares Act, about $367,000 to be used over a 3-year period. He welcomes any board member who wishes to join the *Finance Committee*. He also thanked A. Volpe for accepting his donation of 6 boxes of books.

D. Board Development & Governance

L. Gyimesi stated that the following was discussed by the B *oard Development & Governance Committee:*
We are focusing on succession planning as we all have term limits; we just had board appointments and elections and we are working on building the board; she invites anyone who is interested in joining the Board or the *Development and Governance Committee* to let her know; we hope by the fall we will have a more full board, as there are several prospective applicants we will continue to work with during the summer. We also did our annual review of the bylaws and had to make two minor changes: the Family Association bylaws were not in alignment with the Board of Trustee bylaws and regarding a board officer serving as a committee chair; those changes will be presented to the board tonight. The annual conflict of interest reporting is up to date and is not due again until next year; our board handbook is also available for new members to review online. The new member orientation will be held in the fall as a social gathering for dinner.
T. Castanza added that any bylaws changes that are non-material to our charter should be submitted to the NYSED portal. L. Gyimesi said she would review that later with the ED.
L. Timoney stated that the NYSED financial conflict of interest form was recently changed and our board members will need to complete it again; she will email the new form to each board member. A draft of next year's board meeting calendar was included in tonight's meeting packet of documents.

E. ED Support & Evaluation

L. Timoney stated that we are trying very hard get the *ED Support & Evaluation Committee* to complete the evaluation before the ED departs on Parental Leave on July 6th; there have been some difficulties scheduling meetings and to confirm quorum for

each meeting; in the meantime, the budget being reviewed and approved tonight has the ED salary at the same level as previously; any increases the board wishes to make would be retroactive to July 1st, the beginning of the fiscal year. This process is being done via Board on Track for the first time this year.

IV. Votes

A. By-Laws

Laurel Gyimesi made a motion to approve the changes to the Board of Trustees Bylaws under ARTICLE III C(3) and 5(b) [formerly 4(b)] as indicated below.
Laura Timoney seconded the motion.
The bylaws changes are as follows:
ARTICLE III: BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Section C(3) to be added in its entirety:
3. Term of Service of Family Association President on BOT.
The President of the Bridge Prep Family Association, upon election as President becomes a non-voting member of the BOT, and upon application and approval by the Charter authorizer the Bridge Prep Family Association member becomes a full voting member of the BOT. The term of service for the Bridge Prep Family Association member is aligned with the term of service as President of the Family Association.

5(b) [formerly 4(b)]. Term of Office to be changed as follows:
Add the text in *italics*:
Following the expiration of these designated terms, *except for the Bridge Prep Family Association member,* the term of each Trustee shall continue for three (3) years.
The term of service for the Family Association member shall be two (2) years, which aligns with the term of service as President of the Bridge Prep Family Association as stated in the bylaws of the Bridge Prep Family Association. Should the person elected President of the Family Association cease to perform that role, the term of service on the BOT will also cease.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
Laurel Gyimesi made a motion to approve the changes to the Board of Trustees Bylaws under ARTICLE VI C(2) and ARTICLE VII A 4(g) as indicated below.
Rose Kerr seconded the motion.
Bylaws changes are as follows:
ARTICLE VI: ACTION BY THE BOARD
Section C(2) Committees
Add the text in *italics:*
2. Standing Committees. The Board shall have four standing Committees: an Executive Committee (chaired by the Chair of the Board and consisting of the officers of the board plus a fifth member approved by the board), The Finance Committee *(the Treasurer is an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee)*, The Academic Committee and The Board Development and Governance Committee. Additional Committee members shall be appointed by the Chair of the Committee, subject to the approval of the Board.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

A. Officers; Section 4(g) Treasurer

Remove the crossed out text and add the text in *italics:*

g) ~~chair the Finance Committee~~ *be an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee;*

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Budget

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the Bridge Preparatory Charter School budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 as presented to the Board.

Azalia Volpe seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Insurance Renewal Contracts

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the insurance contracts for Bridge Preparatory Charter School as presented.

George Winn seconded the motion.

A listing of the following contracts and costs were presented to the Board:

General Liability; Employee Benefit Liability; Hired & Non-Owned Auto; Sexual Abuse/Molestation Coverage, Educators Legal Liability; Excess Liability; Property Coverage; Workers Compensation; Crime Coverage; Student Accident Coverage; Security Risk Management; Cyber Coverage; ERISA Coverage.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. edIT Contract Renewal

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve an extension of the contract between edIT Support Technology Services and Bridge Preparatory Charter School, as presented to the Board.

Rose Kerr seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Increase Year 3 Enrollment

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve an increase in the Bridge Preparatory Charter School Year-3 enrollment from 190 to 205 students for the 2021-2022 school year.

Azalia Volpe seconded the motion.

The following resolution was presented to the Board for approval:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School approves the increase in the school's Year-3 enrollment from 190 to 205 students in the 2021-2022 school year.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Executive Director Update

A.

ED's Report

T. Castanza gave the following update:

- NYSED Annual Report: 15 sections of information must be submitted to a designated NYSED portal relating to various elements of the school, such as Academics, Financials/Financial Disclosures, BOT and Staff Information; the report is submitted in 2 parts, with Part 1 due on August 2 and Part 2 due on November 21.
- Our FY2022 budget was approved by the Board of Trustees tonight; we plan to review the budget again in October and make any additional revisions that are needed.
- Additional federal funding is being provided via the state as part of the newly approved federal relief acts. Bridge Prep's total allocation of these funds is $367,168, which are to be used over a 3-year period.
- 2021-2022 School Calendar is being shared with the board tonight; student orientation for all students will be held on September 1st and 2nd; end-of-year family meetings will be held on June 17th for students entering 3rd & 4th grade and June 21st for students entering 1st & 2nd grade.
- Staff hiring will continue throughout the remainder of June, and we expect to have full staff hired by the end of the school year; all new staff positions for the upcoming school year have been run through various committees and are included in the budget approved by the board tonight.
- Parental Leave: I will be out on Parental Leave from July 6th through August 24th. Fahron Ebanks, Director of Operations, will be in charge of the all school operations and will serve as main point of contact; team members will be supported and checked-in with this summer.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, R. Kerr acknowledged the hard work of the ED, his team and school staff and wished T. Castanza a much needed rest and relaxation during his time off. The Board of Trustees has no reservations about Fahron Ebanks being in charge while ED is away.

B. Monthly Financials

VI. School Update

A. Family Association Update

A. Volpe gave the following update:
On June 5th the Family Association hosted a "Welcome to New Families" event at Willowbrook Park, it was a wonderful turnout and we were happy that school staff members also attended. We were excited to meet new families but it was a long day at the park.
Our last Family Association Meeting was held last week.
Drive-In Movie Night will be June 23rd.

The Family Association reminded parents that the EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) payments (to make up for missed school meals during the pandemic) will be released sometime in July.

R. Kerr added that she enjoyed seeing a recent school newsletter and all of the activities that take place, some with the Family Association and some with the staff; she recommends that everyone read the monthly newsletter.

VII. Other Business

A. New Business

Fahron Ebanks had a question for the board regarding who she could speak with if she has follow-up questions regarding the ED salary - she needs the information to process the continuation letter that all staff need to sign to confirm that they intend to continue to work at Bridge Prep for the upcoming year; she will need to complete one of these letters for the ED by June 30th and the letter needs to contain his salary amount for the upcoming year - since the board has not yet determined if there will be a salary increase for the ED, who can she speak to on the Board to get the updated ED salary information?
L. Timoney responded that she could contact Laurel Gyimesi or herself.

F. Ebanks said that A. Volpe was too reticent in speaking about the Family Association event at Willowbrook Park; it was very well attended, there must have been over 100 people there; it was a wonderful event and enjoyed by all.
T. Castanza added that the Family Association will be hosting a Drive-In Movie Night at Juicy Lucy on June 23rd; the movie is "The Sandlot". A. Volpe responded that she appreciates all the support shown to the Family Association.
L. Gyimesi said that we really love to hear about the kids; anything that tells us the kids are happy, makes us happy; it's sometimes easy to get preoccupied with the details of operating the school but it's nice to hear about enjoyable things involving the children. L. Timoney agreed and said that's why we all got involved in this, to help these kids.

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 8:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano