APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday December 15, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Location
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85362866716
Meeting ID: 853 6286 6716
One tap mobile +16465588656,,85362866716# US (New York)
Dial by your location 646 558 8656

Trustees Present
Azalia Volpe (remote), Frank Santarpia (remote), Geena Kuriakose (remote), George Winn (remote), Laura Timoney (remote), Laurel Gyimesi (remote), Maria Casale (remote), Mark Harmon-Vaught (remote), Rose Kerr (remote)

Trustees Absent
None

Guests Present
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 Dec 15, 2021 at 7:03 PM.

C.

Approve Minutes

Laura Timoney made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 11-17-21.
Frank Santarpia seconded the motion.
The motion was approved with 1 abstention: A. Volpe.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Laurel Gyimesi	Aye
Frank Santarpia	Aye
Rose Kerr	Aye
Maria Casale	Aye
Mark Harmon-Vaught	Aye
Azalia Volpe	Abstain
George Winn	Aye
Geena Kuriakose	Aye
Laura Timoney	Aye

D. Welcome from the Chair

R. Kerr welcomed the attendees and thanked everyone for their dedication to the school, students and board. She reminded everyone to review the meeting packets that are distributed before each board meeting; this month's packet contains a comprehensive overview of the authorization timelines; she thanked the Executive Director and his staff for putting together the timeline. Also, she emphasized reading the executive director's report each month, it is an informative overview which can help the board to keep our meetings moving forward. She wishes everyone a very happy holiday season and new year; remember our children during this time; there are many children who have real pain and sadness during this season.

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R. Kerr added that as we end this year, we want to thank outgoing Borough President James Oddo for his support of our school and the many things he has done for Bridge Prep; BP Oddo and his team were involved in supporting our school even before our charter was written; he often speaks of Bridge Prep fondly; he is responsible for helping to site our school at Petrides and supported our expansion; for the record, we just want to say that we could not have done it without him; thank you, James Oddo.
F. Santarpia stated that without Jimmy Oddo there would be no Bridge Prep school; he financed us and he fought for us every step of the way.
T. Castanza added that he knows the Borough President is humble and does not want to draw attention to his good deeds, but he is our school's champion; we want to honor him at the school soon and show our thanks with a small token of our appreciation; he is welcome to visit at any time and we are looking forward to hosting him and celebrating the work he has done for Bridge Prep.

II. Committee Reports

A.
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Executive

R. Kerr said that she does not think it necessary to cover the individual committee reports from the last *Executive Board Meeting*, since that information will be offered by each committee chair at tonight's meeting; instead she would like to move forward with tonight's report by the *ED Support & Evaluation Task Force.*
The next Executive Committee Meeting will be January 11th at 7:45 AM.

B. ED Support & Evaluation

L. Timoney gave the following report on the *ED Support & Evaluation Meeting* held on December 8th to check-in with the Executive Director; they discussed key areas of focus for the ED this year and the paradigm shift of the ED taking the reins and driving the agenda for board meetings. We plan on having the official goals to the ED by next month; we will also be meeting next month with *Board on Track* to review the formal annual evaluation for the Spring. We will check-in with the ED again in March to support him, see what he might need and keep the dialogue going.
R. Kerr thanked L. Timoney and M. Harmon-Vaught for agreeing to work on this task force and to coordinate with *Board on Track.*
M. Harmon-Vaught has agreed to co-chair this task force; he said he was excited to be engaged in this area; he added that one of the topics discussed last week was making sure that the ED reports given at board meetings are substantive and useful for ED, his team and the board; we may see some changes in the reports to make sure that they are most effective for what the board is trying to accomplish. L. Timoney added that we discussed interim reports from ED regarding what is happening at the school.
M. Harmon-Vaught said there are 3 kinds of information that the board needs from the ED:

1. How are we doing towards our goals (operational or budgetary) and what steps are being taken to meet those marks?
2. What are the key issues or situations the board needs to know as fiduciaries in order to respond effectively?
3. What is the good news about the school? (programs, events, things to celebrate); the good news we can share.

C. Board Development and Governance

L. Gyimesi reported that the following was discussed at the *Board Development & Governance Committee Meeting* of 12/02/21: a debriefing from the special board strategy meeting held in November and finalized goals reached at that meeting; creating a more structured approach to board development and lock down the fundamentals; create a "job description" that we can post online to reach out to more people and broaden our search; we'd like to make this an annual process and do a self-evaluation of the board's needs each year; Pasek Consultants will be coming on board in January and will be doing a monthly check-in with us; they will provide us with timelines, tips/hints regarding our charter renewal, so we can focus on academics; looking forward to working with the

consultants; we also need to get all policies and manuals reviewed, updated and vetted by our legal advisor.
The next *Board Development & Governance Committee Meeting* will be January 13th at 8:00 AM.

D. Finance

G. Winn reported the following was discussed at the *Finance Committee Meeting* on 12/13/21: there are some things important to our planning of the budget cycle; as we look at the overall operation of the school from a compliance standpoint; the budget cycles begins in January for June 30th; ED and staff are developing a "compliance planner" containing a timeline on tracking deliverables; the *Financial Policies & Procedures Manual* was reviewed and is more effective than we thought it was.
Regarding double signatures needed for purchases over $5,000, the board already approves contractual expenses over $5,000; the board can pre-approve those outlays in the beginning of the year for recurring expenditures, which then would not require an additional approval signature when repeated during that year; we discussed checks & balances regarding monthly expenses.
L. Timoney spoke about the *"Check Request"* form being revised to show whether something is a contractual expense or non-contractual expense, indicating the approval budgetary amount for the expense, and what we've paid year-to-date, so that the person signing off on the expenditure will know more about the situation regarding the check request. These kinds of checks and balances will put tighter controls in place. The ED will share the 3-5 year outlook also discussed at the meeting.
The next *Finance Committee Meeting* will be January 10th at 4:30 PM.

E. Academic

R. Kerr & M. Casale gave the following report: the highlights of the *Academic Committee Meeting* of 12/08/21 are contained in the Executive Director's Report; review the ED report for more information on what was covered; we are looking forward to working with the new *Director of Teaching & Learning* (DTL) Christine Volpe, especially regarding data, meaningful use of data, significance of data and how to intervene using what data tells us; also what does data tell us regarding readiness for re-authorization by NYSED; this May we will have a NYSED mid-level visit and report.
M. Casale added that we really want the data to be about what goes on throughout the academic school day; data collecting will go on simultaneously with teaching and be concise so that it can be a natural extension of the learning day; collecting data can be a daunting task.
The next *Academic Committee Meeting* will be January 12th at 9:15 AM.

III. Executive Director Report

A. ED Report

T. Castanza will cover some of the bigger items in his report during monthly board meetings, but asks the board to read the entire report for specifics; we had a terrific *ED Support & Evaluation Committee Meeting* last week; we are moving forward and working well together; especially found the 3 points mentioned by board member M. Harmon-Vaught very helpful.

- Goals: our actual goals are some we set for ourselves as well as assessment goals set by Regents; since we have no state assessment data right now, other academic goals are critical; our school will also be measured on non-academic goals; how we are progressing on each of those goals, what needs to change or adapt; NYSED will help us know what to adapt when they visit in May; we are also looking forward to working with Pasek Consultants on these goals.
- Need to know: we had a different week than usual due to the effect of social media and how that impacts school safety; outside issues can affect us; pleased in how the school team reacted appropriately to a concern. Schools must complete 12 safety drills each year: 8 evacuation drills and 4 lock-down drills; we have completed 8 of those drills as required by 12/31; we are handling these things well.
- Good news: We know that this time of year can be difficult for children; we have a situation concerning the death of a parent of one of our students; our school team and social workers immediately responded to the family to offer help; our social workers stepped up; we are also participating this year with the local branch of the American Cancer Society to adopt the family of a pediatric cancer patient; our staff is contributing to purchase holiday gifts for the children of the family.

Met today with R. Illuzzi to discuss where we are going, our external partnerships; our admissions launch; how we are doing outreach in the community; what types of events do we need to hold; looking forward to working with our new DTL, Christine Volpe, who will start working officially on January 3rd; Ms. Volpe will attend the OG refresh training in January led by Jill Edwards; Ms. Otterbeck will take on the role of *Director of Specialized Instruction.*
Attended *Finance Committee Meeting* with board member G. Winn to discuss where we are now and where we are going with our 3-5 year financial plan; this is also part of the charter renewal process; have been working with Josh Moreau of boostED Finance, our financial partner, and would like to have a special board of trustees meeting in January to review our financial strategies for now and in the future; we need to find out where we are before we make any decisions on our annual budget due June 30th; want to involve the board members fully in the planning of financial decisions. Further information to follow.

B. Monthly Financials

T. Castanza said the 3-5 year budget plan is our long-term finances; the monthly financials are the snapshot of where we are in a given month; we are looking at the format of monthly financial report; Josh Moreau and ED will be working on giving a clearer overview narrative and will revamp the first page of the monthly financial report; the report shows budget vs. actuals where we expect to be in a particular month and

where we actually are; we have more of a surplus in November; we can use these savings for more professional development; to offer training to teachers before the NYSED visit in May; board of trustee members are invited to attend the training where they can learn about how data affects our goals. Looking forward to 2022.

IV. School Update

A. Parent Association

A. Volpe met with the *NYS Charter Parent Council* on 12/06/21; spoke to *National Parents Union* and will meet monthly with both groups to discuss advocacy and how to organize charter school parents here and in Albany; the families of our school are donating money so we can purchase gifts and breakfast on 12/20/21 as a *Holiday Breakfast* event for the teachers at our school.
R. Illuzzi added that next week is *School Spirit Week*; Tuesday, 12/21/21 is Pajama Day at school and also *"PD with a Twist"*, a painting party for staff - board members are invited to attend.
T. Castanza said that Parent/Teacher Conferences and report cards are being offered this week; teachers need a break and appreciate what the *Parent Association* does.

V. 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 8:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano