APPROVED

Bridge Preparatory Charter School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday June 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Location
Bridge Preparatory Charter School
715 Ocean Terrace
Building A - Atrium (Main Floor)
Staten Island, NY

201 Pondfield Road
Bronxville, NY 10708

300 Cromwell Avenue
Staten Island, NY

Trustees Present
Amanda Wolkowitz, Geena Kuriakose, George Winn (remote), Laurel Gyimesi, Maria Casale (remote), Mark Harmon-Vaught, Rose Kerr

Trustees Absent
Rebecca Peters

Ex Officio Members Present
Tim Castanza (remote)

Guests Present

Christine Volpe (remote), Heba Nassef-Gore (remote), Kathy Baldassano (remote), Traci Frey (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

As per Public Officers Law, Article 7, § 103-a *(Videoconferencing by public bodies),* board members George Winn and Maria Casale are attending via videoconference from locations posted on the public meeting notice/agenda and therefore open to the public; they are considered to be in attendance for purposes of quorum and are permitted to vote.
QUORUM IS MET FOR THIS MEETING.

Board members Heba Nassef-Gore and Traci Frey are present via video conference from locations not posted on the public meeting notice/agenda and therefore not open to the public; they cannot be counted towards quorum and are not permitted to vote.

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Geena Kuriakose called a meeting of the board of trustees of Bridge Preparatory Charter School to order on Tuesday Jun 20, 2023 at 7:01 PM.

C. Welcome From Chair

L. Gyimesi thanked Executive Director T. Castanza, school staff and the students of Bridge Prep for a joyous wonderful Graduation Day; she said we all enjoyed it and there were so many good things happening this year; we truly appreciate all of the hard work done by all. She then said that there was always a touchstone in the foundation of Bridge Prep, which some of the board member may not be aware of, which is our connection to the "fractal". She asked R. Kerr to give an explanation of what the fractal means to us at Bridge Prep.
R. Kerr presented a head of broccoli to demonstrate fractals by breaking off small florets from the main stalk of the broccoli crown, and asking what each floret has in common with the whole crown; as each floret is a smaller version of the full broccoli crown, it is a fractal of the whole while at the same time each floret is whole in and of itself. In the same way, each student, staff member, parent, board member and anyone else who is involved in our school is a fractal of the whole community of Bridge Prep. The concept of fractal has always been a part of our fundamental belief of what we wanted to create with Bridge Prep. From the first day of establishing our school we used this concept as a way of seeing that each individual is whole and at the same time combines together to make our whole school community.

II. Approve Minutes

A.

Approve Minutes of Board Meeting 05/16/23

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 05-16-23.
G. Kuriakose stated if there is no objection, the motion to approve the minutes of the 05-16-23 meeting will be adopted.
As there was no objection, the motion is adopted and the minutes are approved by unanimous consent.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Approval of Budget

A. Approval of Budget FY 2024

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve the Bridge Preparatory Charter School Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 as presented to the board.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Approval of Charter Renewal Resolutions #27, #28, #29

A. Approval of Revision to Educational Program, Resolution #27

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve the revision of the Bridge Preparatory Charter School Educational Program.
Amanda Wolkowitz seconded the motion.
WHEREAS ,it is the responsibility of the Board to set the educational program for Bridge Prep Charter School;
WHEREAS, the School wishes to revise its educational program, which is reflected in the version attached hereto; therefore, let it be
RESOLVED, that the educational program shall be updated based on the version attached hereto.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Laurel Gyimesi	Aye
Rebecca Peters	Absent
Geena Kuriakose	Aye
Amanda Wolkowitz	Aye
Rose Kerr	Aye
Mark Harmon-Vaught	Aye
George Winn	Aye
Maria Casale	Aye

B. Approval of Revision to Calendar and Schedule, Resolution #28

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve a revision to the Bridge Preparatory Charter School Calendar and Schedule.

Laurel Gyimesi seconded the motion.
WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Board to set the calendar and schedule for Bridge Prep Charter School;
WHEREAS, the School wishes to revise its calendar and schedule, which are reflected in the attached calendar for 2023-2024, schedule for 2023-2024, and revised charter document titled “Calendar and Schedule” hereto; therefore, let it be
RESOLVED, that the calendar and schedule shall be updated based on the versions attached hereto.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Maria Casale	Aye
Geena Kuriakose	Aye
George Winn	Aye
Amanda Wolkowitz	Aye
Rose Kerr	Aye
Laurel Gyimesi	Aye
Mark Harmon-Vaught	Aye
Rebecca Peters	Absent

C. Approval of Revision to Key Design Elements

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve revision to Bridge Preparatory Charter School's Key Design Elements.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Board to set key design elements for Bridge Prep Charter School;
WHEREAS, the School wishes to revise its key design elements, which are reflected in the version attached hereto; therefore, let it be
RESOLVED, that the key design elements shall be updated based on the version attached hereto.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
George Winn	Aye
Rebecca Peters	Absent
Maria Casale	Aye
Rose Kerr	Aye
Laurel Gyimesi	Aye
Geena Kuriakose	Aye
Mark Harmon-Vaught	Aye
Amanda Wolkowitz	Aye

V. Approval of Contracts between BPCS and Service providers

A. Approval of Pilot Program with Superpower Mentors

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve the Pilot Program with Superpower Mentors as presented to the board.
Mark Harmon-Vaught seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Renewal of Bridge Prep School Insurance Policies

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to approve renewal of school insurance policies as presented to the board.
Laurel Gyimesi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Renewal of Contract with Board on Track

Geena Kuriakose made a motion to to renew the contract between Bridge Prep Charter School and Board on Track.
Rose Kerr seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Elections of Members and Officers

A. Board of Trustees Officers' Elections

M. Harmon-Vaught nominated L. Gyimesi for the position of **Chair** of the Board of Trustees. There were no other nominations from the floor. L. Gyimesi accepted the nomination.
Vote was taken: 7 YES; 0 NO; 0 Abstentions; 1 member absent.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to elect **L. Gyimesi as Chair of the Board of Trustees.**

##
L. Gyimesi nominated M. Harmon-Vaught for the position of **Vice Chair** of the Board of Trustees. There were no other nominations from the floor. M. Harmon-Vaught accepted the nomination.
Vote was taken: 7 YES; 0 NO; 0 Abstentions

The board **VOTED** unanimously to elect **M. Harmon-Vaught as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees.**

##
M. Harmon-Vaught nominated G. Kuriakose for the position of **Secretary** of the Board of Trustees. There were no other nominations from the floor. G. Kuriakose accepted the nomination.
Vote was taken: 7 YES; 0 NO; 0 Abstentions

The board **VOTED** unanimously to elect **G. Kuriakose as Secretary of the Board of Trustees.**

##
M. Harmon-Vaught nominated G. Winn for the position of **Treasurer** of the Board of Trustees. There were no other nominations from the floor. G. Winn accepted the nomination.
Vote was taken: 7 YES; 0 NO; 0 Abstentions

The board **VOTED** unanimously to elect **G. Winn as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees.**

##

VII. Committee Reports

A. Academic Committee

R. Kerr said that the *Academic Committee* met on June 13th and gave the floor to C. Volpe to discuss the following items covered at that meeting:

- **OG Data** - C. Volpe said that much of the OG data collected is used by teachers and we see overall growth in the data in all areas; we are establishing a 2nd tier of OG instruction for struggling students; this will be done either in the after-school program or during the school day in RTI. R. Kerr added that OG is the fundamental underpinning of reading; we really want everyone to understand what the OG data tells us about the reading readiness of our students and what the other types of data tell us about their preparedness to take state standardized tests.
- **Summer Program** - We are on target with our summer program, which begins July 5th and ends on August 4th with a total of 46 seats and a wait list of 10-12 students. A discussion followed regarding what can be done to open up the program to accept more students from the wait list. E.D. said that he will look into it with C. Volpe; the summer program class size is 10 students and they don't want to make the classes too large, but perhaps additional classes could be opened up.
- **Focal Points** - Each member of the *Academic Committee* will be working along with C. Volpe to combine talents during the summer and next school year.
- The *Academic Committee* will continue to virtually meet over the summer via Zoom or phone.

B. Finance Committee

G. Winn stated that the *Finance Committee* met on May 30th and the following items were discussed:

- School budget voted on tonight will be submitted by the end of June; there are sufficient funds available for items which might come up over the summer months;

this school budget includes funding for professional development sessions for the entire year
- We are making progress with investments of cash assets
- Looking into possible insured Money Market idea which is used by other schools
- The Finance Committee expects to meet again in July, date TBD.

He thanked everyone for getting us here.

C. Board Development & Governance

- M. Harmon-Vaught said that we have 2 new board members, already approved by NYSED.
- We would like to set up a board strategy session for July to discuss many topics regarding our board development moving forward; also we need to discuss fundraising plans for the future.

D. Renewal Task Force

- L. Gyimesi said that a planned board strategy meeting in July would satisfy our need to meet in July. A discussion followed regarding the board members' availability in July and they agreed to meet on July 18th from 4 PM to 7 PM.
- Pasek Consulting would like our renewal narrative changes by July 3rd; the board needs to review the narrative before that date and make suggestions and comments; each board member will concentrate on a section of the narrative that is in their area of expertise while reviewing the entire 40 page narrative.
- A regular meeting schedule for August would have our board meeting on August 15th. T. Castanza said that will be too late for the board to approve the charter renewal application and submit it by the August 15th deadline. Discussion followed regarding when to hold the board meeting in August in order to meet all the deadlines for renewal and ;L. Gyimesi suggested we hold the regular board meeting on August 1st at 7 PM to approve the necessary documents for renewal. The board agreed that the August board meeting will be held on August 1st at 7 PM.

VIII. Executive Director Report

A. Executive Director Report

T. Castanza offered the following update:

- The last day of school is June 23rd; school building will be closed from June 30th until July 5th when we reopen and start summer school programs; teachers will have professional development on August 21st; staff will be coming in several times during the summer for various projects.
- The theme for this summer is planning, planning, planning; we will be working on instinctual planning with teachers, curriculum mapping and a redesign of period

zero; the annual report will be submitted to NYSED; we will begin to prepare for the financial audit coming in the Fall; we will finalize hiring for open positions; this summer we are moving out of the E building into the A building at the Petrides Campus. Part of the redesign will include an executive space where the board will be able to hold meetings and strategy sessions.

- He thanked everyone for their work that led to Graduation Day; the students and families were so happy with the event.
- Our school was featured in an article in *Education Week* in a profile about specialized public schools for students with dyslexia: https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/schools-for-students-with-dyslexia-also-promote-social-emotional-resilience-heres-how/2023/06
- Our school was also praised at education events captured in two videos:

1. NYC Schools Chancellor David Banks spoke highly of us at the April *Panel on Educational Policy* Meeting (beginning at 1:08 at https://learndoe.org/pep/archive-pep-apr19-2023/)
2. NYS Education Commissioner Dr. Betty Rosa spoke about our school at *Dyslexia Awareness Day*, (go to 7:10 at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KPS_bwEADI)

IX. New Business

A. New Business

M. Casale suggested that during the building renovation, a wall be created that is dedicated to our school's accomplishments, the graduating class, etc. with photos, awards and plaques. Something where people come into the building and can admire our achievements. T. Castanza responded this idea is already in the works and they have ordered some items for the display.

X. Family Association Update

A. Family Association Update

A. Wolkowitz gave the following update:

- Thanks to everyone for their help with Graduation Day; it was beyond the parents' wildest dreams and a wonderful event;
- The day after graduation, the school hosted a 5th Grade Breakfast event; each 5th grader was given a yearbook; the *Parent Association* gifted yearbooks to the entire school staff with a personalized bookmark which said, "Thank you for all you do, the world needs more people like you."
- The *Parent Association* has begun planning for next year and will hold a meeting in July.

- The *Parent Association* will present a check to the school for the new library from funds raised during Read-a-Thon.

XI. 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 8:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Baldassano