

APPROVED

ALMA *del* MAR

Alma del Mar

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time

Friday August 28, 2015 at 8:45 AM

Location

26 Madeira Avenue New Bedford MA 02746

Trustees Present

B. Cunningham, B. Unger, C. Arnold, D. Cabral, J. Baptist, J. Eagle, K. Tomlinson, L. Hicks, M. Blasdale, M. Kay

Trustees Absent

None

Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned

J. Baptist

Guests Present

W. Gardner

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Arnold called a meeting of the board of trustees of Alma del Mar to order on Friday Aug 28, 2015 at 8:50 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

Chris Arnold made the motion and it was seconded to approve the minutes taken at the Board meeting on 07-24-15. All board members present VOTED unanimously to accept the minutes.

II. Leader

A. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Will Gardner reported that recently there has been a \$100,000 reduction in our student transportation expense due to a change in the regulations by the New Bedford School system's busing policy. There has been a full week of exclusive training for Alma's new faculty. The following week the returning teachers joined them in preparation for the opening of school. This additional training time lead to a very smooth opening. Bids from General Contractors for our capital project came in below our expectations. Brittany Sousa has accepted the Dean of Culture position and Alice Sheehan is now our Director of Operations and Finance. Certain challenges remain as we wait to hear from the DESE about our PARCC results. We also are in need of a hire to fill our Reading Specialist position. And we are working to improve our operations as we grow.

B. Draft School-wide Strategic Goals for 2015-16

Will Gardner discussed with the board the School-Wide Goals for 2015-2016 (see presented List). The major theme is setting a high-bar for academic achievement in both language arts and math and how Alma can accomplish this goal.

III. Governance

A. Executive Session: Executive Director Evaluation and Compensation

At 9:30 AM Chris Arnold made the motion and it was seconded and unanimously VOTED to enter into Executive Session to review the Executive Director's Evaluation and Compensation. Will Gardner left for the duration of the Executive Session. At 10:00 AM the motion was made and it was seconded and unanimously VOTED to return to the regular Board meeting. Will Gardner returned for the regular meeting.

B. Alma Leadership on suggestion to look at later start times

J. Baptist left.

Will Gardner, Jeanne Eagle and others presented the thought about investigating the possibility of having a later starting time for the scholars. Several school systems have begun this later opening to enable children more sleep and perhaps better breakfasts.

These are two important facets of health and learning. We hope to review research results on studies of this new timing.

C. Parent/Board Communication: Additional Avenues?

Chris Arnold commenced a discussion on how the Board could learn to know the teachers and support their endeavors. It was suggested that we could possibly have a luncheon meeting. We also should make a better effort to attend the activities spotlighting the scholars and their achievements.

IV. Capital Plan Task Force

A. Capital Project Update

Will Gardner discussed the Capital Plan Task Force and the duties involved. Alice Sheehan will be notifying the neighbors concerning the building activities that are about to commence.

V. Capital Campaign

A. Capital Campaign Report

Will Gardner reported the positive news that Acushnet Foundation has pledged \$50K (\$10K per year) and several individuals almost \$10K. Previously pledged commitments have arrived adding \$150K. With the General Contractors bids coming in at a lower figure we are now able to add 4,000 square feet of most valuable educational space to the building.

B. Groundbreaking Ceremony Draft Agenda

Will Gardner encouraged us all to attend the Groundbreaking ceremony that will take place at 12PM on THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th. The Mayor will attend. And there will be a presentation by the scholars and short speeches by David Lucio, Feast President, and Steve Martins from the New Bedford City Council. PLEASE COME to show our support for the school!!

VI. Academic Excellence

A. Academic Excellence Report

Martha Kay reported that she met with Emily Stainer and one important new emphasis will be the focus on information transfer between teachers from one grade level to the next concerning the curriculum and students progress.

VII. Development

A. Development Director Search Update

Will Gardner reported that the search continues for a new Development Director. Several very good candidates have applied and all are being interviewed and their resumes assessed.

VIII. Finance

A. Approve Capital Budget Amendment

Will Gardner explained that due to a potential major change on 8/21/15 we will be able to take on a greater amount of Tax Exempt Bond debt and greatly reduce our need to take on subordinate debt. The motion was made by Cile Hicks and seconded by Bronwen Cunningham to approve the Capital Budget Amendment. The VOTE was unanimous to approve this motion.

B. July Financials

Bronwen Cunningham and Will Gardner discussed Alma's financials informing us that we are within our current budget with no major variances to report.

IX. Other Business

A. Board Retreat!

A reminder -- THE BOARD RETREAT will be on FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 25th from 8:30 to 1:00 (place to be determined) and the BOARD DINNER will be on THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 24th at Trish and Chris Arnold's home at 26 Ned's Point Road in Mattapoisett -- beginning at 6 PM.

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 10:45 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Blasdale