

APPROVED



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

Minutes

Board of Trustees December Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday December 13, 2022 at 6:00 PM

Location

PVPA 3rd Floor Conference Room
15 Mulligan Drive
South Hadley, MA

Virtual:

Topic: December Board Meeting
Time: Dec 13, 2022 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82382141205?pwd=aCtQY0FHTW1DVXB5Q28yUTFobExDQT09>

Meeting ID: 823 8214 1205

Passcode: PVPA

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Trustees Present

David Potter (remote), Jenna Sardella (remote), Mindi Winter, Neil Hede, Shannon Materka, Shino Pichette

Trustees Absent

LATRINA DENSON

Ex Officio Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner

Non Voting Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner

Guests Present

Danielle Joujoute, Fiona Yates (remote), Kamali Joseph (remote), Sasha Viands (remote), Vanessa Ford (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Shino Pichette called a meeting of the board of trustees of Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Dec 13, 2022 at 6:05 PM.

C. Read the Mission Statement

D. D. Approve Minutes

David Potter made a motion to approve the minutes from November Board of Trustees Meeting on 11-08-22.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Shino Pichette	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Absent
Shannon Materka	Aye
Jenna Sardella	Aye
David Potter	Aye
Neil Hede	Aye
Mindi Winter	Aye

E. Public Comment

No public comment.

II. Head of School Report

A. Brent's Report

Current enrollment is 396; this means that we are 4 students short of our cap. The final lottery for this year will close January 10th and will include grades 7, 10 & 11. New students would start the first day of the new semester after doing a shadow day during Paideia. Hopeful that we will be at capacity after the lottery. Feb 15th is the last day that we can take in new students for the year. Recruitment efforts took more work than usual.

For next year, the application window is open and the lottery will be on Feb 17th. We will be accepting 70 7th grade students. There are currently 14 applications - close to where we were pre-pandemic. More 7th graders than at this point last year - lower in numbers for high school. Our recruitment focus will focus on high school students in hopes of increasing applications. Open houses are part of this focus; on Wed there were 14 families in attendance and last Sat there were 25 families. Frank was present along with Fiona, Erin and Henry who gave testimony and tours.

Staffing is good and the school is running smoothly. This week is Paideia sign ups with Paideia running Jan 17 - 27. Admin is working hard getting Paideia set up.

Since last meeting:

We Came to Play Tour visited schools in Chicopee, Holyoke & Springfield. Social media hits have quadrupled. Dr Margaret Boucack - Native American History presentation was

received extremely well by students. Nov 16 & 19 Sr Dance Thesis. Tomorrow MS Mock Trial will be at the Holyoke District Court at 4:00pm - this event is open to public. Winter pop up gallery in the PVPA theater will be on Thursday - free admission - art for sale and show showcasing our students. Winter Music Showcase is on Jan 13 & 14.

III. Board Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

The Committee met on Dec 7th. They reviewed the End of Year Annual Financial Report for last year that were due to DESE on December 1st. Biggest part of the discussion was the surplus tuition calculation. This comes down to you can't keep building a chest of funds, you have to spend it. Capital expenses are to be brought by Infrastructure Committee - the Finance Committee will need to develop a plan to use funds.

Discussed the roofing & HVAC - need proposals submitted to the Committee to review and possibly approve.

How is the surplus designated? Can it be used to give staff bonuses?-No We use reserve funds to fund the capital budget annually. In the position where we may have to spend reserve funds to do the HVAC/roof and have Friends pay us back.

Cannot answer the posed question about using this years reserves to fund next years salaries - treading on negotiations.

If there is a loss then reserves are what the school uses to pay bills.

Las significant fundraising by Friends was the theater.

Parking lot was paid for by the Friends using accumulated funds.

Only revenue stream the Friends has is the lease to the school.

The cost of the theater was \$2.2 mil. The Friends only raised \$250,000 and remortgaged in the form of municipal bonds.

PVPA currently has \$1.045 million in surplus calculation. The reserves represents3 mos of expenses and there is a \$500,000 building project going on.

Surplus calculation and reserve funds are different.

B. Governance Committee

Did not meet this month due to scheduling conflicts. Will meet Jan 4th 8:00 -9:00.

Need to vote on student members - put names forth by student council. Will be submitted to DESE

12th Kamali Joseph

11th Fiona Yates

10th Danielle Joujoute

Shino Pichette made a motion to have Board approve the three student reps to be fully approved members of the board.

David Potter seconded the motion.

Fiona & Danielle would not change your participation. Kamali is 18 and would be able to vote - would expire June 2023.

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

Roll Call

Shino Pichette Aye

Shannon Materka Aye

Jenna Sardella Aye

Mindi Winter Aye

David Potter Aye

LATRINA DENSON Absent

Neil Hede Aye

C. Head of School Support & Evaluation Committee

Several items to report from November check in with HOS on eval process - informal updates to progress and status of the three goals was held on Nov 30th.

1. Recruiting hiring retain diverse staff similar to students - much progress leading up to creation of this goal - good on hiring last year and was presented recently to Board.

Activity going on for retention. Hiring for next year - bank of questions to emphasize ways PVPA is a good match for different walks of life. Outreach was a topic - ADP platform has increased the outreach and streamlined applications through the web site - good outcomes so far but more to come in the spring/summer. More formal check in to be held in Jan - formative assessment.

2. Policy manual - honing process and many policies have already been presented. Long line up of more to come - expect policies through Governance monthly.

3. Evaluating the Admin team - involvement with their work is collaborative and knowing what the work is needed to accomplish goals. Staff evaluation process has improved with the use of Vector Solutions - will roll out next year for Admin.

Met last night with Committee and discussed planning the Jan formative assessment and will invite Brent to meeting. Mar 15 final date for submission of artifacts from Brent.

Brent has completed self assessment. Evaluative surveys will be given to the entire community - working on details and rubric - borrowing from Board on Track.

D. Long Range Infrastructure Planning Committee

Shino invites John Kulas to address Board. Long Range Infrastructure Committee met and discussed possible music move to 1st floor. The Committee is sharing info with staff along with pros/cons and has invited feedback. The feedback received includes about a page of emails from staff - mixed responses a few that the Committee had not considered. Next meeting will be to discuss viability - if moves forward will request \$25,000 in 2024 budget for plan. Timing would require it to be summer 2025- would require Finance Committee and Board approval - qualified bidders and price competitive.

Would require sound dampening in dance studios. MS classes would be over the studios.

IV. Internal Stakeholders

A. Staff Reports

HS are generally happy - student/staff relationships are good. Teachers in building full time now so time seems to be used but still taking work home. Not been a lot of time to plan for Paideia - need planning Paidiea Committee to review - still issues. Would like to be out in community - realize it is not feasible right now. Standards based grading work includes discussions about exemplary vs accomplished. Formal attendance policy is proving to be really nice, it has improved some student attendance.

MS is reporting a lot of the same feedback. Paidiea will be different without classes in the morning - teachers are all in - feeling lack of planning time. Struggling with lack of support in classrooms. Ready to transition to Paidiea and spring.

All in for Paidiea? previous years has only been half day with morning half being academic - this year full day Paidiea with am & pm. offerings 1 hour of SEL curriculum - will be looking how to best make it effective for MS.

More support in classroom? Some experiencing no para support or lack of push in by academic support teachers. AS teach are teaching concurrent with MS teachers. Students on IEPs with no 2nd adult is challenging - looking for more consistency.

B. Student Reports

Seniors are doing well - looking forward to end of year - prom - no log cabin looking at new space in Springfield. Trip Brownstone Water Park. Some disagreements about graduation being separated from grad show. Survey not many responses would like parent response as well.

Complaints about the length of graduation prompted the discuss about separating them into two events. Ceremony at Academy and grad show at PVPA on different nights.

Grad show can be a marathon - some parents/grandparent have complained - takes a lot to pull off with staff - 2 day rental - Frank generally gets home at 3:00am. The decision has not been finalized - Academy is reserved. Survey results 12:9 - 21 is not representative of whole.

Upcoming Art Gallery for visual arts - these students deserve the spotlight. Productions are coming - excited. Year has been going well. Penny war!

Visual artists are very excited. Students are also working on civics projects - mandatory graduation requirement - students are investigating at PVPA and out in the wider valley - been talking with admin about changes at the school - some may come back to the Board. Dance dept were saddened about not going out into community for DEL - issue was with DEL. Excited for Paidiea.

V. President's Business

A. Union Negotiating Team update

We recently had our 1st negotiation session where we discussed ground rules. We were set to meet again but lawyers were communicating. Next session on Dec 19th - goals to get everything on table by certain point so that all can see what issues are of concern.

Both sides are in good shape - 3rd year of 1st ever CBA - items that were not fully baked the first time and need to better will be addressed. Think we will have similar areas of concern.

B. Fundraising

On going and upcoming projects that are exciting and necessary. HVAC is necessity. Music move is exciting. Recommended to have fundraising committee as part of Board - reluctant to have another committee.

Current leadership of Friends is set to resign. Personal connection through the school with these students has long time gone. The Friends should have a role in leading fundraising and maintaining the physical building- school lending the Friends funds might make sense. The resources of the Friends are not flush

Discussing school fundraising - Board should be taking a lead. Need full participation from the Board - investment in community. David has committed to this and will be promoting donations at productions. Must lead by example.

John gave an update on the HVAC situation - today 2 units down - contractors coming tomorrow. PVPA is spending a lot of funds to keep them running - we have replaced 4 heat exchangers with a cost of \$4,000 - \$6,000 each. New units are \$25,000 - \$30,000.

All units have exceeded their natural life expectancy - replacing parts - automated system that controls the system are hard to find or have been discontinued. Several years ago a couple of major projects were looked at with the Friends - parking lot was completed as it presented a safety issue. The next summer we had planned to address roof and HVAC - this did not happen and is now well beyond the need to replace.

Significant challenge for timing to get the work done. Friends did have the funds but spent on other items - Friends need to help us move forward - desperately need new Board members for the Friends. Will need to put it out to bid and follow procurement rules - not likely that work would be done next summer - would be summer of 2024 - risky and may end up replacing units in the mean time.

Any timeline that is less vague? Essential to have a president of the Friends - cannot move forward without. Not a heavy time commitment.

Should this be put in the Friday bulletin? We have but not being read by the wider community.

The ideal candidate for the Friends would preferably have some background in finance and development - as a transition one person could hold all three offices. We need folks who can raise funds and take a look at finances of Friends.

What has happened to the income for the Friends? It paid for the parking lot and covered the cost of a position for three years that was transitioned into a fundraising position.

Maybe we are not paying enough in rent - how long ago was that determined? Just can't make changes without a board.

HVAC updates during pandemic included updating filters - maintenance of units - some covered by ESSER funds.

What does a timeline look like? Need Friends to commit to architect \$30 - \$40,000 - go out to bid. The design would need to be done and then we would go out to bid for construction. There are 16 total units to replace along with the system controls. Work to be done summer 2024.

VI. 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 7:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marcy Conner