

APPROVED



# Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

## Minutes

### Governance Committee Meeting

---

#### Date and Time

Tuesday June 4, 2024 at 7:00 PM

#### Location

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 97401706247

View conference details

*keyboard\_arrow\_up*

Hide conference details

[\(US\) +1 305-224-1968](#)

*content\_copy*

Copy phone number to clipboard

*info\_outline*

Meeting host: [ldenson@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:ldenson@mtholyoke.edu)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://mtholyoke.zoom.us/j/97401706247>

*launch*

[Joining instructions](#)

---

#### Committee Members Present

Azizah Yasin (remote), EJ Lafleur (remote), LATRINA DENSON (remote), Shino Pichette (remote), Vanessa Ford (remote)

### **Committee Members Absent**

*None*

### **Guests Present**

Brent Nielsen (remote)

---

## **I. Opening Items**

### **A. Record Attendance**

### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

LATRINA DENSON called a meeting of the Governance Committee of Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Jun 4, 2024 at 7:11 PM.

### **C. Read Mission Statement**

Latrina read the mission statement.

### **D. Approve April 30, 2024 Governance Meeting Minutes**

LATRINA DENSON made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Committee Meeting on 04-30-24.

Azizah Yasin seconded the motion.

Shino Note: The notes in section C say there are 4 people eligible to hold office - but that is only after the 5th eligible person clarified that he does not want to run for office.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Azizah Yasin	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Shino Pichette	Aye
EJ Lafleur	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Aye

## **II. Governance**

### **A. Review and Approval of candidates For Recommendation To The Board of Trustee**

Discussion of new applicants that we haven't talked about yet.

Lex/Juniper Parent (not on the agenda - newly added)

- They are currently applying for a position at PVPA, so if they were to get it, they wouldn't be eligible for membership through this route.
- Concerns about making this board decision before the employee hire decision is made.
- We do have low board membership, so we wouldn't want to be discouraging membership in any way. We want to make sure that the message is that this is NOT a "no", it's just a holding for consideration until the employment decision is made.

Craig Santos:

- He has great experience working with students with behavioral challenges.
- We reviewed his application, his interview and his resume.

Reviewed the whole panel:

- Grace Bannasch
- Kiara Badillo
- Craig Santos

Final vote for membership is at the board level.

Brent: It might make sense to expand the trustee nomination process to have a potential new nominee come tour the school and chat with some teachers / students / admin.

- Committee response: Yes, this is a great idea!

Shino Pichette made a motion to motion to nominate Craig Santos for the Board's consideration as a trustee at the next board meeting.

EJ Lafleur seconded the motion.

Discussed his resume in more detail.

Vanessa had to leave the meeting at 8:02, so missed this vote.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Azizah Yasin	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
EJ Lafleur	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Absent
Shino Pichette	Aye

## **B. Board of Trustee Officer Slate and Election Process**

Latrina spoke with everyone who will be on the board next year.

Sasha is most interested in the clerk position.  
Vanessa is open to the treasurer position.  
Latrina is interested in the chair position.  
Azizah is interested in the vice-chair position.

Azizah had to leave the meeting at 8:05 momentarily (she returned at 8:25, and then left again at 8:40pm and returned at 8:50).

(left this convo at 8:05 and returned to it at 8:45)

LATRINA DENSON made a motion to put forward the following officers for nomination by the board.

EJ Lafleur seconded the motion.

Latrina as chair

Azizah as vice-chair

Sasha as clerk

Vanessa as treasurer

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Vanessa Ford	Absent
Shino Pichette	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
EJ Lafleur	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye

### **C. By law updates**

There are big big exciting changes coming.

Next step is to bring the proposed changes to the board.

It will be a long process, but we think this was long overdue and will be good!

### **D. Head of School: Charter amendment proposal**

Brent has been working on this amendment for a long time.

The goals of this proposal for an amendment to the charter:  
(And this was presented to the board at the April meeting)

- Change the definition of our region - to shrink it to 18 cities/towns (includes 95% of current PVPA students, including those for the 24-25 year).
  - Currently, our region is twice the size of any other charter school in our area.

- The reason to do this is to be able to provide transportation to school for all students in our region (within two miles of their homes).
- If we provide transportation to every student in our region the state will help fund the cost. This would allow us to both save on our current overall transportation costs, but also be able to provide more transportation to students.
- Based on the data we collect when we make offers, is that parents decline positions because they can't figure out how to get their students to the school.
- We think it will allow us to recruit more students who are really focused on the arts.
- This will also help with chronic absenteeism.

Brent shared the criteria of how to make the requested change to the amendment, and his initial responses of what info he plans to share.

Shino: What type of communication has happened with staff, students, and parents about this.

- Brent shared it with staff in April and got positive feedback about it.
- Brent shared it at the very public April board meeting and got positive feedback about it.
- Brent shared it with parents in a public forum and got unsolicited positive feedback about it.
- Brent plans to do a survey about it (by the end of June), to understand who would take advantage of it. Brent has some data about how other schools approach this, and how many families participate...
  - Brent spoke with one of the leaders of a peer school who has this set up already, who works with the same bus company. Even though they are offering free transportation to everyone, only 50%ish of their student population takes advantage of this.

The deadline for the application for charter amendments is September 25. But there will need to be a special board meeting in July, because this needs to be formally approved before submitted to DESE. We would want to open applications for the next school year on Dec 1 - and we want information by then. Earliest that DESE would consider this would be their Nov meeting, the last it would be considered, is the Jan meeting. Brent has spoken with DESE and they indicated it would be likely to be considered in the Nov meeting.

Shino: How would this impact students who are currently enrolled but not within this new district.

- This change would not change the status of any student. It would also not change the sibling status of any new applicant.

- The current bus routes (we have only three) are all in places that would be covered in this new plan, so no one would lose transportation.

Azizah returned at 8:25.

Brent thinks that this will be able to help us shift our student population towards back to students who love the arts - rather than students who just don't want to be at their home public schools.

This committee supports moving forward with this change. Latrina, EJ, Azizah and Shino all expressed support.

### **III. Other Business**

#### **A. Retreat Date**

8:30pm

Latrina reports:

- This retreat is hopefully a time for the new board members to team build with the current board.
- 3-4 hours would just be a long meeting, so we likely want it to be longer than that.

Brent is pretty available this summer. He sees different advantages to both approaches, having one long day meeting, or two half days.

Azizah can't do a week day meeting. She would prefer two morning blocks rather than one long day.

July 26 (is a Friday), July 27 and 28? Work times are hard for people. Maybe 8/9 - 3pm on Saturday July 27. Latrina will announce this.

Need to schedule this before the new members are formally voted on.

Latrina left again at 8:40pm.

### **IV. 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 8:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shino Pichette

Shino Pichette made a motion to Adjourn.

EJ Lafleur seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

LATRINA DENSON Aye

Vanessa Ford Absent

Azizah Yasin Aye

Shino Pichette Aye

EJ Lafleur Aye