APPROVED

# Lawrence Family Development Charter School

# Minutes

## LFDCS Finance Subcommittee Meeting

**Date and Time**
Wednesday May 7, 2025 at 5:30 PM

**Location**
Zoom

**Committee Members Present**
C. Needham (remote), G. Lopez (remote), J. Henriquez (remote), L. McRae (remote)

**Committee Members Absent**
D. DeFillippo

**Guests Present**
Anthony Cichello (remote), D. Thakkar (remote), Y. Rodriguez (remote)

### I. Opening Items

#### A. Record Attendance

#### B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Needham called a meeting of the Finance Committee of Lawrence Family Development Charter School to order on Wednesday May 7, 2025 at 5:39 PM.

#### C. Approve Minutes

J. Henriquez made a motion to approve the minutes from LFDCS Finance Subcommittee Meeting on 04-02-25.
L. McRae seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| L. McRae | Aye |
| D. DeFillippo | Absent |
| G. Lopez | Absent |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |
| C. Needham | Aye |

Anthony C. from Krokidas & Bluestein provided an update to the committee. He reminded members that three key matters are currently being addressed: the lease agreement, which is the primary focus, along with IT services and custodial services. He noted that more detailed information regarding the lease would be shared during the executive session.

Regarding IT services, Anthony mentioned that there is strong consideration for bringing them in-house. This aligns with Darshan T.'s belief that internalizing these services could offer better support and greater control for the school, potentially at a comparable cost to what is currently being proposed by LFD.
As for custodial services, Darshan is in the process of initiating a bid process. The school is exploring both the option of bringing the services in-house and the possibility of contracting with a new vendor.

## II. Executive Session

### A. Executive Session

J. Henriquez made a motion to Enter Executive Session.
L. McRae seconded the motion.
Chris N. recommended entering Executive Session to discuss the lease and any related matters, noting that, in the best interest of the school, these discussions should remain confidential.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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|---|---|
| C. Needham | Aye |
| L. McRae | Aye |
| G. Lopez | Absent |
| D. DeFillippo | Absent |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |

## III. Lease Agreement

### A. Discuss the draft lease provided by Krokidas & Bluestein on behalf of LFDCS

This agenda item was discussed in Executive Session.

### B.

**Discuss the substantial terms for the lease provided by Simmons Law Group on behalf of Prospera**

This agenda item was discussed in Executive Session.

## IV. Custodial & Facilities Maintenance Services

### A. Review of the monthly breakdown of custodian and maintenance costs for the past three years

This agenda item was discussed in Executive Session.

### B. Discuss possibility of a different vendor for custodial/maintenance services if not included as part of the lease

Darshan T. said that the $868,000 proposed by LFD for custodial services seems high. He recommended that the school look into what other vendors are charging to see if there are more reasonable options.
Chris N. asked if the DESE requires the school to compare prices from other vendors. Darshan T. said yes, the school is not allowed to pay more than fair market value.
Chris N. then asked if one month would be enough time for Darshan T. to gather this information and report back at the next finance meeting. Darshan T. said yes, and explained that he will issue an RFP to collect bids and compare them.
Chris N. also asked if, in the case a new vendor is chosen, the current custodial staff could be hired by that new vendor. Darshan T. explained that since the custodians work for LFD, this would be something to discuss with any new vendor. Chris N. said it's important to keep in mind the staff's livelihoods during this process.

## V. Capital Improvement

### A. Review of current state of capital improvement spending

This agenda item was discussed in Executive Session.

## VI. IT Services

### A. IT Services Agreement

Darshan T. proposed using the same process for evaluating IT services as was suggested for custodial services, by issuing an RFP to gather bids. He shared that all members of the IT department have approached him, expressing interest in being hired directly by the school. According to Darshan, 85 to 90 percent of their work supports school operations, and all four staff members are interested in transitioning to school employment. He noted that hiring them directly would cost less than contracting them. Darshan also mentioned that he discussed this with Elka S. and confirmed that these employees have not signed noncompete agreements with LFD.

Chris N. asked whether a non-solicitation clause exists in the service agreement. Darshan replied that there is none. However, he expressed concern that LFD might claim tortious interference if additional staff leave to join the school, following the earlier transition of four staff members. Chris N. recommended that Darshan T. continue to consult legal counsel regarding this matter. He also asked whether Darshan T. could collect IT service bids in time for the next finance meeting. Darshan T. confirmed that he could. Chris N. noted that this timeline would allow for the final fiscal year 2025 budget to be approved on time.

Chris N. then inquired if Darshan T. had received any updates on potential federal funding cuts to Title I, Title III, or school operations that could impact the budget. Darshan replied that he had not, but he plans to attend a webinar hosted by the Massachusetts Charter School Association on May 13 to learn more. Chris N. added that, if necessary, any budget impacts could be addressed in an emergency session in June.

## VII. LFD's signoff on indemnification for transitioning employees

### A. This agenda item was discussed in Executive Session.

J. Henriquez made a motion to end executive session and return to open meeting.
L. McRae seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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|---|---|
| C. Needham | Aye |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |
| D. DeFillippo | Absent |
| L. McRae | Aye |

## VIII. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

J. Henriquez made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
L. McRae seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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|---|---|
| C. Needham | Aye |
| G. Lopez | Absent |
| D. DeFillippo | Absent |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |
| L. McRae | Aye |

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Y. Rodriguez

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**Documents used during the meeting**

*None*