

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Present: Penny Leveritt, Susannah Howe, Steve Hoyt, Dianne Hobbs, Deirdre Arthen, Scott Remick, Jesse Belcher-Timme, Amy Aaron, Charles Wiemeyer, Andi Porter, Alana Fichman, Dan Klatz

Regrets:

Facilitator: Susannah Howe

Notetakers: Alana Fichman, Penny Leveritt

Guests:

Listkeeper: Susannah Howe

Timekeeper: David Starr

Mission statement read by: Steve Hoyt

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
New Member Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -covered the Consensus Process (See diagram) and Finger Sounding -Review of forms in handbook: proposal form especially utilized -Penny: intro to handbook and DESE process -“Obligations and Duties of BOT”: new item, reflection of information online. -Suggestion to review the board resource book good resource -There is an ongoing process of getting board book documents uploaded to the trustees google account. 	(Conflict of Interest training TBD)
Announcements/Appreciations/Acknowledgements	<p>Welcome!</p> <p><u>Appreciations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Volunteers who helped before school opened, and parents who are continuing to help 	
Minutes	<p>July 2015 minutes. Small edits made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Give to Grow Update: actual end date was Aug. 31 -Deleted “Although it’s a different building, the plan can still make a compelling case to purchase vs. continue to lease.)” 	<p>David Starr moved to approve 7/29/15 minutes</p> <p>Jesse Belcher-Timme seconded.</p> <p>Minutes approved by consensus.</p>

Public Comment Period	No public comment	
Give to Grow Closeout	<p>-This agenda item was moved up to after Public Comment Period.</p> <p>-Waiting to hear back from donors, Easthampton Savings Bank update: VP will make a proposal to ESB heads for a donation in the \$15-20,000 range</p> <p>-Loss of development computer files: unable to access files for months due to complications from changing servers. Majority of 2015 files related to Development data from Sonja disappeared. Some files that Sonja had worked on at home were retrieved. Problem should not occur in the future.</p> <p>-Unpaid pledges: no one has yet requested those funds.</p> <p>-Newer contributions will need Thank You Letters</p> <p>-Send a reminder about pledge due date</p> <p>-Look for pledges made in '14 to be paid in '15</p> <p>-Follow-up on discussion next meeting</p>	Andi will follow-up with Deirdre regarding unpaid pledges
BOT Goals	<p>-Domain council chart from 8/18/15 meeting with BoT goal suggestions.</p> <p>-Increasing board visibility for the school community and especially for the integration of new families</p>	
BOT Visibility	<p>-Suggestion to add an ongoing topic at the top of the agenda in future meetings - how to increase board visibility for that and upcoming month. month.</p> <p>For BoT visibility:</p> <p>Idea 1) Board member photo board?</p> <p>Idea 2) Board presence at every classroom orientation meeting</p> <p>-Board member at new parent breakfast</p> <p>-Drop-off table staffed by board member</p> <p>-Question discussed: After a public comment is made at board meetings, where does that go next? Where do the public comments get addressed?</p>	<p>Susannah will make more BoT buttons</p> <p>Susannah will print photo for Board board</p> <p>Charles and David will go to the new parent breakfast and coordinate “meet the board” table at student drop-off</p> <p>Orientation: Penny will go to Indigos and Reds, Scott will go to Greens, Steve to Yellows, Susannah to the Prisms, Blues, and Purples, Charles to Oranges</p>

	<p>Public comment must be presented in person.</p> <p>Board will need to decide if public comment needs to become a future meeting agenda item. It could come under new business only as a question as to whether the public comment should become an agenda item for a future meeting.</p> <p>Under OML the public comment item cannot be discussed by the Board of Trustees at the meeting at which it was presented.</p>	
Site Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Systems: getting AC to function consistently, new HVAC person should come in this week. -Swings in process -Drainage Issue: we haven't had rain yet, so we are unsure if the drainage problem will be resolved by work done by landlord this summer. -New classroom was set up over summer -Moveable partition in all school. Detached first day of school, fixed next day. -Shades and bleachers in All School space -New closet for Sadie/All-School space. 	
Building Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Owner and at least two partners are in favor of HCCPS owning the building. Nothing in writing that commits HCCPS to the sale or puts down any price. -Some charter schools throughout state are owned either by a 501c3s or by themselves. Differences: could revert to state ownership if school owns it if school closes, communication can be challenging with 501c3s (two boards rather than one). School would be retained by 501c3 in the instance of closing. -HCCPS can make an offer at any time, rent will hold steady until FY 2017 -School currently pays \$26,000 in property tax, would not be obligated property tax with ownership -Solar panel - under school ownership, the solar panel lease with the provider would become the school's lease. -Pros: Zero or cheaper taxes, less insurance, no management fees, possible solar income, no approval necessary for modifications, reduced/stabilized occupancy cost, potentially more flexibility with zoning/bylaws, could 	<p>Finance Committee will calculate a projected monthly mortgage payment</p> <p>Julie Starr will provide comps of the space</p> <p>Amy will research school ownership of buildings</p>

	<p>leverage building improvements before sale, could sell with move</p> <p>-Cons: More or sole responsibility, reduced protection, unknown interest rates and building cost, could cost more, would mean effort and time from board and volunteers.</p> <p>Further Discussion:</p> <p>-Budget projections influence on potential building purchase. Interest rates.</p> <p>-Role of actual cost versus other factors</p> <p>-Reason for building ownership could be stated as that cost could be reduced and used for other purposes</p> <p>-Would having a sales price help with any decision to move forward at this time?</p> <p>-Finger sounding: majority wish to brainstorm next steps. Difficult for charter schools to receive loans due to the time limit to the charter. Reflected in interest rate.</p> <p>-Amy believes there are ways for charter schools to get around this.</p> <p>-Susannah states that this will not be opening a conversation yet with the owner, rather gathering information</p> <p>-Comparison to other buildings?</p>	
<p>FOH Update</p>	<p>-Brainstorming of questions for David to ask Sonja in her exit interview</p> <p>-Andi reports three new members voted in. The Friends of Hilltown will now meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. meeting time. A transportation grant was approved. Carolyn Hazen will be a liaison between the Community Team and FoH. Art Spark is scheduled for Saturday April 9th.</p>	<p>David will conduct exit interview with Sonja.</p> <p>Susannah will send David Carey Royce's exit interview for reference.</p>
<p>Fundraising Thinktank</p>	<p>Discussion on whether or not to refill the Development Associate position for the coming year.</p> <p>Weigh cost of the position versus monies raised in the current environment of HCCPS being in evaluation mode with regards to its philosophy on fundraising and how to do it.</p> <p>Uncertainty about role of potential Development Associate, whether to to combine with Community Coordinator, uncertainty about</p>	<p>Andi will spearhead continued discussion with focus groups and investigate database questions with Deirdre</p> <p>Andi and FoH will determine development tasks and determine necessary administrative support</p>

	<p>fundraising, in a period of exploration. Several fundraising campaigns preexisted the time when there was a Development Associate.</p> <p>Removal of Development Associate role not a permanent decision.</p> <p>FoH will have to decide if they need support from the school and where it will come from. Feedback for this year to be a low pressure fundraising year, FoH in accord.</p>	
New Business - Identify only	None	
Committee Reports - Questions only	<p>On-Site meeting was July 14th, not August 11th.</p> <p>Discussion on a request for a change of title from Fundraising Thinktank to Development Thinktank, reflecting a broader lens than money.</p>	
Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation	<p>Next meeting is scheduled for October 14th.</p> <p>Snacks: David Starr, Charles: drinks</p> <p>Newsletter blurb: Penny</p> <p>Facilitator: Susannah</p>	
Review Action Items:	Alana reviewed the action items.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM	

Attachments:

BOT Meeting Agenda; July 2015 BoT Meeting Minutes Draft; Give to Grow Update, Sept 3, 2015; Fundraising Thinktank Report, August 20, 2015; On-Site Meeting Minutes, August 11, 2015; DOMAIN COUNCIL MEETING 08-18-15; DOMAIN COUNCIL MEETING 09-03-15

Tentative Agenda for October Meeting:

Give to Grow closeout, more buying building discussion, more discussion of Fundraising Thinktank, Committee Goals, Security Report, MCAS report, 1st quarter financials