

**FOLK ARTS-CULTURAL TREASURES CHARTER SCHOOL  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

1023 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123  
Wednesday, December 21, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

**Absent:** Leana Cabral, Allaire Wohlgemuth

**Staff Present:** Ellen Somekawa

**I. Call to Order:** Selina Morales

Solstice Sharing: Bright spots

**II. Public Comment**

**III. Teachers' Salary Scale**

Report by the Salary Scale Committee Thierry Saintine

Our plan was to vote today on the change to the salary scale. But given the recent unionization of staff, we did not want to make changes without collaborating with the union. Our intention is to advance the kind of scale that we proposed to the Board but the process has changed and now other stakeholders need to be part of the process.

Discussion:

- It's possible that during the collective bargaining process that other proposals will add costs
- We hope that the work the Salary Scale Committee has done will be still useful.
- We need to renew contracts early in the new year, but this will be on a different timeline from a collective bargaining timeline. One possibility would be to see if we could enter into a barebones one year contract and then do a fuller contract negotiation for the next year.
- Will the Board need to create our own subcommittee to represent us in contract negotiations? [We are still learning about how the process will work.]
- There might be board members present at the bargaining table. It might make sense that someone from the Salary Scale Committee would participate.
- Where would the work live? Maybe we create another standing committee, a liaison or a bargaining committee.
- Is it expected that a union member would attend Board meetings? [We don't know.]
- We can't discuss or deliberate between meetings, but Board members can forward questions by email to Selina to get them in a queue to be addressed at a future board meeting.

#### IV. Executive Director's Report

Ellen Somekawa

Discussion:

- Is there a way for parents to see the sand mandala?
- Are we sharing the Celebration of Peace?
- Is the union impacting hiring practices? What needs to be included in the contract, notice of the union and union dues?

#### V. Approval of the Minutes

**1. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2022.

Moved: Pooja Agarwal

Seconded: Thierry Saintine

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Thierry Saintine, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Nancy Nguyen, Thierry Saintine

Abstained: Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Alan Phan

**2. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of November 29, 2022.

Moved: Neeta Patel

Seconded: Pooja Agarwal

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

#### VI. Finance Report

Finance Committee Report

Neeta Patel

No surprises and no changes from the trajectory we have been on. Revenues are down although enrollment is up. Expenses are higher due to inflation. Legal expenses are running over budget. Our cash position is strong due to ESSER funding.

Discussion:

- One strategy might be for the Board to set aside a certain amount of funds to set aside for projected increased costs or set a maximum amount that we will dip into our reserves.
- We need to increase the line item for legal fees.
- We still need to formalize our policy for the Board restricted reserve. It would be good to know what entities with comparable budgets do.
- We are talking to a consultant for training and consulting related to the staff unionization process.
- When do we anticipate that the ESSER reserves will reach a concerning level? [The Finance Director is not present at this meeting; this question will be revisited when David is present]

**3. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the financial statements of November 30, 2022.

Moved: Thierry Saintine

Seconded: Xu Lin

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

**VII. Revision of the Anti-Harassment Policy**

Policy Committee Report

Pooja Agarwal

The Policy Committee had extensive discussions of the Anti-Harassment Policy and the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Policy. Need more time for the Gender Non-Conforming Policy.

**4. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the revision of the Anti-Harassment Policy.

Moved: Nancy Nguyen

Seconded: Alan Phan

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

Discussion:

- What were the changes to the policy?
  - We separated out the anti-harassment policy from the anti-bullying policy
  - Added language about including online behaviors.
  - Spelled out examples of what constitutes different forms of harassment. Examples are framed as, “includes but not limited to” lists.
  - Included anonymous reporting procedures for students.
  - Reporting procedures for staff might be a matter of union negotiations. Will we have to revisit/revise all of our policies? They will need to be part of a conversation.

**VIII. Use of Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Commission School Health and Safety Grant Funds**

**5. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the use of PCCD School Health and Safety grant funds for projects necessary to increase the physical security of the building including: replacement of internal door cylinders to enable the use of a master key in the event of a lockdown; replacement of the front doors and door access system to increase security; and replacement of the glass egress door with a non-glass emergency door.

Moved: Nancy Nguyen

Seconded: Neeta Patel

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

**6. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the use of PCCD School Health and Safety grant funds to address mental and behavioral health issues by expanding school psychologist services offered in the school.

Moved: Thierry Saintine

Seconded: Jeff Koung

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

## IX. Committee Reports

- Nominations Committee Selina  
Selina, Xu Lin, or Allaire are taking nominations for June membership. Also talking about renewal of board terms. We will notify Board members if their term is about to expire.

- Development Committee Allaire  
Teachers' Wish List went out. All of the thank you letters and cards went out to donors and sponsors. January work is to update sponsor lists. Starting to prepare for what would be needed to embark on a Capital Campaign. If Board members have resource people to talk to who have experience with Capital Campaigns, then interviews could proceed. Want to begin to envision a game plan and a timeline. Jeff is working with Ricque to review our donor database and look for opportunities. If the committee shares their interview questions, it could help board members think of individuals to interview.

Discussion:

- Wissahickon Charter School (Ellen, Justin Diberardinis or Kristi Littell)

## X. Other Action Items

**7. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the hiring of the following employees:

Gwen Gilford, Teacher, 10 month, \$43,000

Moved: Xu Lin

Seconded: Neeta Patel

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

**8. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves new contract terms for the following employees:

Jacqlyn Griffin, Director of School Culture, 12 month, \$88,000  
Pheng Lim, Principal, 12 month, \$115,000

Moved: Nancy Nguyen

Seconded: Xu Lin

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

Abstained: Jeff Koung

Discussion:

- Would it be helpful to have an Admin scale?
- The Board hasn't been involved in setting Admin salaries
- What will we learn in the process of being a unionized school?
- Would it be helpful to have other tools to help Admin?

**9. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Charter School Services for the provision of long term substitute services in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

**10. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Delta-T for the provision of long term substitute services in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

Moved Resolutions #9-10: Alan Phan

Seconded: Pooja Agarwal

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

**11. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Listening Tree Consulting in an amount not to exceed \$6,000 for training and consulting services related to collective bargaining.

Moved: Pooja Agarwal

Seconded: Thierry Saintine

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine

## **XI. Adjournment**

Moved: Xu Lin

Seconded: Thierry Saintine

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Nancy Nguyen, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine