

## Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

### Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, April 13, 2016

**Present:** Susannah Howe, Deirdre Arthen, Scott Remick, Dan Klatz, David Starr, Jesse Belcher-Timme, Penny Leveritt, Amy Aaron, Steve Hoyt, Charles Wiemeyer, Dianne Hobbs

**Regrets:** Andi Porter

**Facilitator:** Susannah Howe

**Notetakers:** Alana Fichman

**Guests:** Chris Greenfield, Michael Filas, Kate Saccento

**Listkeeper:** Susannah Howe

**Timekeeper:**

**Mission statement read by:** Scott Remick

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<b>Announcements /Appreciations/ Acknowledgements</b>	<p><u>Announcements:</u> Reminder that emails between board members are considered meetings, and are subject to open meeting law. So no deliberations or discussions that might lead to decisions.</p> <p><u>Appreciations:</u> To Friends of Hilltown for Artspark!</p>	
<b>Any thank you notes needed?</b>	None yet.	
<b>BoT Visibility this month?</b>	<p>Good board representation at Artspark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Valley Gives Day: Facebook page</li> <li>-Grandparents Day</li> <li>-Music Festival</li> </ul>	<b>Wear buttons and attend these events!</b>
<b>Minutes</b>	March 2016 meeting minutes reviewed.	<p><b>Jesse B.T. moved to approve March minutes.</b></p> <p><b>David S. seconded.</b></p> <p><b>Minutes approved by consensus.</b></p>
<b>Public Comment Period</b>	Suggestion from a guest that any SPED person hired will work with education teachers in the classroom, not just pull out. Applies to general integration within the school.	

<p><b>Waiver to Personnel Policy Proposal</b></p>	<p><u>Proposal Summary:</u> The President and Vice President of the Board of Trustees, as a sub-group within the Domain Council, shall serve as the deliberating body for requests for waivers to personnel policies.</p> <p>A form called the “Request for Waiver to Personnel Policy” was created as part of the proposal and the process of the waiver request and deliberation described.</p> <p>The goal of the proposal is to codify and streamline the process for requests to waivers of personnel policies and to eliminate the need to engage the full Board in the process.</p> <p><u>Comments:</u>  Correction, supervisor does not have to agree with waiver requests, just has to initial. Changed on form.  Rational for four weeks is that it gives domain council a buffer to be able to discuss the waiver request at one of two of the monthly Domain Council meetings</p>	<p><b>Scott R. and Susannah H. moved to approve the proposal.</b>  <b>Jesse B.T. seconded.</b></p> <p><b>Proposal approved by consensus.</b></p>
<p><b>Hiring Policy Revisions Proposal</b></p>	<p><u>Summary:</u> The current hiring policy has been in place for a long time and the original parameters relate to a smaller school, needed revision for our now larger school.</p> <p><u>Changes from current older policy:</u>  Original applied to all positions, now only applies to teaching positions half-time or greater or coordinator positions.  Composition of committee the same, but with the provision that the parent cannot have students who will be in the same class as the teacher being hired.  The parent will now facilitate the parent part of the process. Finalists used to come to an open meeting with parents, concern was that there were different questions being asked to different candidates. Now parent on committee will solicit questions from parents with students in the current grade, and the committee will select a list of those questions to be asked at the parent meeting. Parents can still attend, listen, and give feedback. Cannot ask spontaneous questions.  #4: Order of preference will be changed.  #5: Meeting with teachers. Questions inconsistent. Thought of as duplicating committees work. Hands on project happens with small group of teachers, stays the same. Candidates allowed to ask questions of current teachers.  #7: Final decision, no change. Goal of four weeks.  Issue: Process taking too long, potentially losing</p>	<p><b>Steve H. moved to approve the proposal as edited.</b>  <b>Scott R. seconded.</b></p> <p><b>Proposal approved by consensus.</b></p>

	<p>candidates.</p> <p>Helpful to recruit members of committee knowing specific time frame.</p> <p>Domain coordinator process: very similar. Skewed towards the board, two members.</p> <p>Parent interview: standard set of questions. Staff questions open ended.</p> <p>Committee makes recommendation, board makes the final decision.</p> <p><u>Questions:</u></p> <p>Correction: “teacher” rather than “staff member.”</p> <p>Board chair and board president are the same person</p> <p><u>Internal hiring procedure:</u></p> <p>Idea is to give current staff members prioritized over outside candidates. All staff members were lumped together, though could be different positions, ex. Teacher changing age groups versus TA becoming teacher.</p> <p>No parents currently involved in internal hiring procedure. Reason for not having a parent for internal hiring procedure?</p> <p>Possible solution to avoid confusion of parents coming in late to the process would be to have a parent originally on the internal hiring committee.</p> <p>Amendment: put a parent on the committee.</p> <p><u>Hiring of a domain coordinator:</u></p> <p>Internal process. Same committee as for external hiring.</p> <p>Comments: full process should be done with any domain coordinator candidate.</p> <p>School is unusual administratively, internal candidates should be encouraged.</p> <p>Comes back to the board for hiring, board could require larger process.</p> <p>Should have same committee size as external, but no reason to go public if people are satisfied with internal candidate.</p> <p>Formatting: hiring for internal candidates should be separated out, have a new subheading.</p> <p>Pressing hirings coming up.</p> <p>Recap of changes:</p> <p>1) Second bullet on first page, “teacher” rather than</p>	
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	<p>“staff member”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Under “The Process”, #3, select “finalists”</li> <li>3) Under External Domain Coordinator Positions, third bullet says board “President”</li> <li>4) In #3, “Finalists”</li> <li>5) <u>Hiring procedure for internal candidates</u> - add “for teaching positions”</li> <li>6) Under same heading, after paragraph 3 first sentence “...including teaching positions and long term substitutes,...” add part from page 1 that starts “The Education Coordinator (EC) will chair....” to “...parent will not have children entering grades in the open position.” (N.B.: included change from “Staff member” to “teacher” as with page 1 chance mentioned above.)</li> <li>7) Add new header on last pages “<b>Hiring Procedure for Internal Candidates for Domain Coordinator Positions.</b>”</li> <li>8) Under that header, add the part from page 2 “The Board President will chair a Hiring Committee ...” through “...parent representative chosen by the BOT.”</li> <li>9) Remove “For Domain Coordinator positions,...”</li> <li>10) Last bullet has a typo</li> </ol> <p>NOTE: Dan Klatz provided the revised version as approved to the clerk at the meeting via email.</p>	
<p><b>Succession/Hiring Process Proposal</b></p>	<p>Proposal is meant to assist in starting hiring process for Administrative Coordinator (Amy) who will retire at end of ‘16-’17 school year.</p> <p>Would like approval to start hiring process in order to hire someone while Amy is still at the school.</p> <p><u>Comments:</u></p> <p>Job description would be part of hiring process moving forward. Goals of process is to look at existing roles and determine whether they need additional support or flexibility.</p> <p>Object is to receive approval for maintaining current shared management structure. Board must embrace publicly, has been murky in former meetings.</p>	<p><b>Susannah H. and Scott R. moved to approve the proposal.</b></p> <p><b>David S. seconded.</b></p> <p><b>Proposal approved by consensus.</b></p>

<p><b>Q3 financials And proposal</b></p>	<p>Q3 financials have been approved by finance committee. Nothing unexpected, doing better than anticipated. Lower tuition rate from March onwards, June could be less. Was anticipated.</p> <p>There will probably be a surplus. One more student than expected. No development associate, which was planned for, and contributed to bridge potential deficit.</p> <p>Heat and snow plowing less.</p>	<p><b>David S. moved to approve the Q3 Financials. Scott R. seconded.</b></p> <p><b>Q3 Financials approved by consensus.</b></p>
<p><b>Finance Committee Proposal: Transfer of Funds</b></p>	<p>Currently there is \$264 in designated capital building funds. Finance Committee proposes transferring \$50,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Building Fund. These funds will be used to address Spring and Summer building projects, both interior and exterior.</p> <p>If there is a budget surplus for FY16 as anticipated, some surplus could replenish the Undesignated Fund Balance.</p> <p>The Finance committee supports this request, as does the Chair of the On-site committee.</p>	<p><b>David S. moved to approve the proposal. Steve H. seconded.</b></p> <p><b>Proposal approved by consensus.</b></p>
<p><b>FY17 Budget update</b></p>	<p>Noted that this is an early DRAFT only. Assumes full capacity of 218 students. Figure for PPE used is 1/1.5% over current average for this year. Assumes all other income stays flat for grants and fundraising.</p> <p>This is just a very rough look to compare the bottom line difference between renting and owning. DESE's FY 17 projections have not been released yet.</p> <p><u>Personnel:</u></p> <p>Added 2% for salary and steps where applicable, unsure of what it will actually be until Personnel and the BOT make decisions.</p> <p>Line 25: Looking at changing structure of after school management.</p> <p>8% increase for health insurance, general recommendation.</p> <p><u>Occupancy:</u></p> <p>Middle column for renting, right hand column for finalizing sale by mid-June.</p> <p>Because USDA is taking longer than anticipated we may not close by June 30. For example, 2 months worth of rent (if we had to pay July and Aug) is roughly \$25,000 that would increase occupancy in the "Own" version. Because</p>	

	<p>the school sits on 2 discrete parcels, as evidenced by our tax bills, we might consider refiling 2 separate USDA applications in order to avoid the federal level review which will delay a decision.</p> <p><u>Questions/Comments:</u></p> <p>Typically real estate tax rates go up with a sale. After reappraisal.</p>	
<p><b>Local Political Update</b></p>	<p><u>On the non-local front:</u></p> <p>Charter school association working with members on a house bill that would probably be superior to senate bill. If it passes, would go to conference committee. There is more support for charters in the house than in the senate. Decision will be made in July whether to go forward with ballot.</p> <p>The Senate bill included allowing district school committees to decide whether or not to allow a chartership, and that is a death knell for charters.</p> <p><u>Action?</u></p> <p>Sponsoring an open evening forum with PVPA, Four Rivers? Potentially Holyoke Sabis school. Sponsored by Democratic Party? Broaden to more regional group?</p> <p>Potential worry for the event and any backlash. We should certainly focus on the probable upcoming ballot referendum. There will be plenty of future opportunities to have our voices be heard, and it would be more beneficial to be en-masse and prepared.</p> <p>Talking points and correct data is important.</p> <p>Should be strategic, be prepared for negative press from a Hilltown/other charter sponsored event.</p>	
<p><b>Annual Meeting Planning</b></p>	<p>All committees and the Friends of Hilltown give a report to the community. Each chair writes something up and also will more casually speak at the meeting about the activities of their committee.</p> <p>Committee chairs give an overview of range of work their committee has done. President of board writes a summary of actions of the board of the year.</p> <p>Any bylaw changes are voted on. (N.B.: there are no changes being proposed at this annual meeting.)</p> <p>New board members are presented for vote by the community.</p> <p>At beginning: some kind of topic. Open discussion, speaker, guests, etc. Potential good topic could be: charter school related politics that is coming to the fore this year.</p>	<p><b>Committee chairs and FoH President get their annual meeting reports for their committee to Deirdre before the next Board of Trustees meeting.</b></p> <p><b>Deirdre will send examples of past committee reports to chairs.</b></p> <p><b>Amy will look for a</b></p>

	<p>As part of the discussion, concrete and accurate facts about charters and Hilltown as a charter could be presented. Could provide talking points to the Hilltown Community.</p> <p>Politics around charter schools would be an obvious topic to have, useful in day-to-day. Take away handout, bookmark, something.</p> <p>Could get someone from the charter school association to come to do some explaining, why the charter school debate is so charged.</p> <p>Meeting is 6:30 pm on May 18th.</p>	<b>member of the Charter School Association to present.</b>
<b>New Business - Identify only</b>	<p>Friends of Hilltown says thank you to Board of Trustees for participation in Artspark.</p> <p><u>Valley Gives Day:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-It's become the primary fundraiser.</li> <li>-Valley Gives gives monetary awards for meeting certain criteria, such as the greatest number of unique donors. Each unique email address, even if it's from the same person, counts as an individual donor.</li> <li>-Valley Gives lasts 24 hours and it's across the entire Pioneer Valley.</li> </ul> <p><u>Grandparents Day:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Will have to go through parents to send the invitations, as much of the contact details of grandparents and special friends has been lost</li> <li>-Will need people to register</li> <li>-Would love to have grandparents emails</li> </ul>	
<b>Committee Reports - Questions only</b>	<p>Need recent site minutes as well as a Friends of Hilltown report.</p> <p>Clarification: will finance committee bring the new job description to the board, or will GABS?</p> <p>(Should go through GABS to the board for next month.)</p>	
<b>Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation</b>	<p>Next meeting is scheduled for May 11th at 6:30 pm.</p> <p>Snacks: David Starr Drinks: Terra Missildine</p> <p>Newsletter blurb: Penny</p> <p>Facilitator: Susannah</p>	
<b>Review Action Items:</b>	<p>Alana reviewed action items with the board.</p>	

<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM	
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**Attachments:**

April BOT Meeting Agenda; March 2016 BoT Meeting Minutes Draft; Waiver to Personnel Policy Proposal; Request for Waiver to Personnel Policy Form Draft; Proposal to the Board of Trustees Succession Planning: Shared Management + Hiring Process Start; FY16 Q3 financials; FY17 Budget Draft; Finance Committee Meeting Notes, Feb 26, 2016; Finance Committee Meeting Notes, March 18, 2016; Finance Committee Meeting April 8, 2016; Domain Council Minutes 03-15-2016; Domain Council Minutes 04-05-2016; Finance Committee Proposal, Fund Transfer; Personnel Committee Hiring Policy Revision Proposal; Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes, April 11, 2016

**Tentative Agenda for May 11th Meeting:**

- Revised Finance Committee job description
- New budget draft update
- GABS potential board member slate
- Discussion of Board Roles
- Update on Annual Meeting
- LRP Status Updates
- Personnel Committee, recommendation regarding salary scales (will be invited, Finance Committee for June)
- School Security Update
- FOH Update: Artspark and Valley Gives