

RISING TIDE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

April 26, 2021

Virtual Meeting due to Governor Baker's stay at home advisory.

Narrative Mission Statement:

What is the purpose of the school?

"...The Rising Tide Charter School provides students with community-based education each day, using the Town of Plymouth as a local yet dynamic textbook which will provide fertile ground for the development of higher-order thinking skills."

Leadership and Governance:

"In accordance with MA Charter School Law, the Board of Trustees is ultimately accountable for the school's educational mission, performance and adherence to its Charter."

Call to Order

Chairman, Chris Schelleng, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. In attendance were Chris Schelleng, Norm DeCoste, Sean Kelly, Sandy Kozlowsky, and Amy Norris. Also in attendance were Michael O'Keefe, Head of School, and Eric Mello, Business Manager.

Guests

None

Meeting Minutes

Attachments/Handouts: March 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

Sean made a motion to approve the March 2021 Board Meeting Minutes. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

Financials

Attachments/Handouts: RTCPS Financial Reports for the period ending March 31, 2021

Eric reviewed the March financials, and our projected enrollment is 666 with per pupil tuition of \$15,352. Year-to-date, we have received \$328,547 from grants. As a result, our income is over budget by \$586,823. Our expenses year-to-date are more than budgeted due to COVID costs and staff cost of living adjustments. Net Income compared against budget is \$214,869. We are having a very positive year despite the unknowns with COVID at the beginning of the year. Our cash balances total \$2,436,277.

Amy made a motion to accept the March financials. Norm seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

New Business

Attachments/Handouts: Preliminary Budget FY 2021-2022 – Rising Tide Charter Public School

Eric presented the preliminary budget for FY22 which was reviewed with the Finance & Audit Subcommittee prior to April break.

For Income, student enrollment is projected at 665, with a 4% increase in per student tuition (\$15,965/student). There will be 2 federal grants for COVID-related expenses, ESSER II and ESSER III. Half of the monies from each grant are allocated for FY22 and FY23 - \$239,728 per year.

On the Expense side, the proposed budget includes a 4% cost of living increase for staff, salaries for new employee positions, additional contracted program support services, and another regional bus.

Capital budget estimates include replacing 4 boilers, repairs to HVAC units, as well as other miscellaneous upkeep.

Eric reviewed the cash flow projection, which would leave the school with 76 days cash reserve at the end of the year.

After being paused last year due to the pandemic, Michael stated the Student Opportunity Act will be implemented next year, with funding reduced from a 7-year phase-in to 6 years. This will raise the foundation rate for all schools, however, that may result in towns not spending above the new foundation rate.

Additional staff for next year include a full-time English teacher due to an increase of English language learners, behavioral support staff, and 2 adjustment counselor interns to assist wellness support team.

We were able to get a 1:1 fleet of Chromebooks with grant money this year. We want to maintain fleet moving forward, so that has been included in the proposed budget.

With the additional ESSER II and ESSER III grants, we will be able to supplement our operating budget, adding Crossroads for Kids program and 2 new Dean of Community staff positions (one for Middle School and one for Upper School).

Sandy made a motion to approve the Preliminary FY22 budget. Norm seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Old Business

Health & Safety Update

As of today, 2 students tested positive for COVID over vacation and 3 are quarantined as close contacts from exposure outside of school. The Town of Plymouth daily positive cases continue to fluctuate. Statewide the numbers continue to trend downward. School leadership continues to closely monitor numbers and physical space guidelines. In today's Monday Memo, Michael provided families with updated close contact information from DESE.

Board Subcommittees

Nominating and Governance – Did not meet.

Finance and Audit – Nothing to add.

Communications and Advocacy – We are taking the Summer to plan a community garden on campus, with plans to fundraise in the Fall. The Rising Tide Health Advisory Committee anticipates using this as an outdoor learning space. Also discussed communications plans for next year.

School Report

Spring enrollment closes at the end of this week. All applicants should be added, but there will be a lottery if needed. We will take a pause before adding another Upper School enrollment period.

We are preparing for full in-person learning this Fall. With the new furniture, we have adequate space for all students to be safely in school, even those who are currently remote. Contingency plans are being discussed should we be required to offer remote learning.

The hiring process has begun for next year to replenish positions vacated by retirements and teachers not returning, as well as the new positions created.

The plan is to keep club fees free and student fees low so that programs are accessible to all.

Lunch and breakfast will remain free through the end of next school year.

MCAS testing will be done for diagnostic information only. School accountability systems are on hold (using 2019 data) because there is no new MCAS data.

Summer programs are getting filled up. There are dance/theatre, painting, and the Jill Crafts Scholars Program being offered.

Adjourn

Sean made a motion to Adjourn. Sandy seconded the motion. All voted in favor to Adjourn.