

**Polaris Charter Academy
Board Meeting Minutes**

Dial-in: 712-775-7031
PIN: 519622

Date:	Monday, June 15, 2020
Time:	6:30pm (conducted via call to achieve appropriate social distancing)
Topic(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key State of the School Updates • Board Committee Reports

ATTENDANCE CATEGORY	BOARD MEMBERS & FELLOWS	SCHOOL STAFF
Attending in Person	N/A	N/A
Attending by Zoom	Tina Yarovsky Melanie Domer Ian Roche Sam Bottum Ben Brenton Rebecca Shapiro Mike Davison Chris Haworth * Lacey Mizell *	Michelle Navarre Elizabeth Whiting
Unable to Attend		

* Since new board members, joined Zoom call after BOD candidacy was confirmed

EXPECTED GUESTS & VISITORS
Elyse Cowles

Tina Yarovsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

March Meeting Minutes

No comments on the March meeting minutes. Sam Bottum moved to approve the minutes as-is. Rebecca Shapiro seconded. All approved.

Open Session for Public Comment

No one for public comment

Board Candidate Discussion and Vote

- Board reviewed applications for two candidates:
 - Chris Haworth
 - Lacey Mizell
- Melanie Domer moved to approve Chris Haworth’s addition to the board. Rebecca Shapiro seconded. All approved.
- Melanie Domer moved to approve Lacey Mizell’s addition to the board. Rebecca Shapiro seconded. All approved.

Leo Latz Engagement Update (Presenter: Elyse Cowles from Leo Latz)

- Given COVID-19 situation, board training has been postponed (new date has not yet been set)
- An industry-wide update re: fundraising: More than 50% of non-profits have experienced a fundraising decline since pandemic began. However, 73% of non-profits expect foundation giving to remain steady.
- Education sector is still doing relatively neutral in maintaining fundraising even since pandemic

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- Major donors are continuing to be active throughout crisis.
- Latz team will recommend 5 foundations for us to approach and will create research re: them (to educate us) and will work with staff to reach gift officer.
- Recommending that no major gift or campaign solicitations happen until September unless they are directly associated with a crisis appeal.
- Case presentation is on V13.
- Latz team will plan to present final case for support to the board at the end of the summer. Six weeks remain in the engagement.
- How will the case for support be impacted by COVID and also the recent heightened awareness re: systemic racial injustice. Polaris could adapt its case to address both of these issues. TBD how those issues will impact the final case, depending on how the situation develops over the summer.

State of the School (Michelle Navarre)

Impact of Protests on the School Community and Neighborhood

- The neighborhood has been significantly impacted by protests, riots, and looting. Grocery stores closed. Kids do not feel safe in their homes. Power struggles in neighborhood between rival gangs, gangs and police.
- Teachers and staff have had age-appropriate conversations in Crew about the current state of the nation.
- Michelle has talked with staff about re-committing to diversity, equity and inclusion work. Will have funding implications. Plan is still being developed, and will likely be implemented in August.

Distance Learning Update

- Overall, distance learning is going well. 73% of kids are engaged each day (i.e. actively handing in work).
- Modified report cards for distance learning – focusing to a greater degree on ‘academic character’, which kids can self-assess from home.
- School is offering kids opportunity to retain their tech throughout the summer.
- Three scenarios being considered for SY 20/21:
 1. Everyone in-person at Polaris
 2. Everyone distance learning
 3. Hybrid plan, where some kids at home and some kids at school, and then flip the groups
- Unclear how much Polaris plan is tied to CPS action plan; unclear the legal autonomy we have to develop the plan that best benefits the school community.

Student Recruitment Update

- Student recruitment efforts came to a halt with school closure.
- Ms Vance continues to focused on recruitment, working with a recruitment expert and planning for summer recruitment
- Struggling to know how to estimate enrollment numbers for next year. Concerns about low enrollment numbers driving decisions regarding hiring and restructuring admin roles.

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State Mandated Board Training

- On January 1st, 2020 a state bill went into effect mandating charter board training for all board members.
- All board members must complete four hours of board training in their first year and two hours of training each subsequent year they are on the board.
- Michelle proposed a partnership with Ed Board Partners (\$1000 / year for BOD of 10 people) with four different training modules.
- Next steps to come from Michelle or Governance committee.

Annual OMA / FOIA Training and Conflict of Interest

- Annual Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act (OMA / FOIA) training must be completed ASAP. Follow up email to come from Mel with directions and timing.
- Annual Conflict of Interest form must be completed for all board members. TO ensure complete records, Polaris is requesting that all board members (other than new board members) submit forms for 2019 and 2020. Follow up email to come from Mel with directions and timing.

Board Committee Discussions

Finance (Mike Davison)

- Results through April:
 - Net income unfavorable balance of ~(\$100K);
 - Revenue (\$200K) below budget driven by lower fundraising than planned;
- SY20/21 initial budget due to CPS July 15. Finance committee will develop scenarios and meet with BOD to review and determine initial budget to submit.

Governance (Melanie Domer)

- Governance team to meet 1:1 by 8/1 with each board member (and senior staff members as appropriate) to identify possible candidates. Mel and Rebecca to initiate meeting requests.
 - Melanie: Michelle (re-loop), Ben, Sam
 - Rebecca: Mike, Ian
- Action: New board member onboarding recommendation to be reviewed with Tina and Michelle week of June 22. Mel to set up meeting.
- Action: Melanie will follow up on FOIA and Open Meetings Act Training, Conflict of Interest Forms. Michelle to send Mel emails already drafted.

Development (Ian Roche)

- Development actuals are short to budget targets by (\$176K), given the impact of the pandemic (thus impacting the annual fundraiser) and some unanticipated reductions in major gifts.

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- Benefit net income of \$45K, approximately -\$15K to -\$20K lower than previous in-person events (revenue lower than an in-person event, but expenses dramatically lower as well).
- Next step is to distribute follow-up solicitations, with content from the event.
- As we plan for next school year, consider impact of delay in Leo Latz fundraising project.

Review of Board Goals

- Grow the board: 10 to 13 active members engaged by EOY. With addition of Chris and Lacey to BOD, currently on track assuming at least 1 more BOD member brought in before EOY.
- Actively participate in fundraising initiatives: Collaborate with Leo Latz and engage our networks in fundraising activities. More to come in the second half of this calendar year.
- Formalize board practices: We are still struggling to hit internal deadlines and to get forms complete and training done.
- Foster professional development of the HOS: Unprecedented pandemic situation caused us to put this on hold

At 8:42pm, Ian Roche' moved to adjourn the meeting. Sam Bottum seconded. All approved.