

**STATE OF WASHINGTON  
CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

**Thursday, March 27, 2014 – 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

South Seattle Community College  
Georgetown Campus  
Building C: Room C122  
6737 Corson Ave S  
Seattle, WA 98108

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE**

Trish Millines Dziko, Kevin Jacka, Chris Martin, Dr. Margit McGuire, Dave Quall, Steve Sundquist, Cindi Williams, and Larry Wright

Absent: Dr. Doreen Cato and Chris Martin

Staff: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Aileen Miller, ATG; and Colin Pippin-Timco, Executive Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Roll Call**

Chair Steve Sundquist called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Attendance was taken. The following Commissioners were present: Trish Millines Dziko, Kevin Jacka, Dr. Margit McGuire, Dave Quall, Steve Sundquist, Cindi Williams, and Larry Wright. It was determined a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

**Approval of the Thursday, February 13, 2014 Commission Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes from the Thursday, February 13, 2014 Commission Meeting were reviewed and approved – Commissioner McGuire moved, and Commissioner Dziko seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention, Commissioner Wright.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Melissa Westbrook, blogger for Seattle Schools Community Forum Blog, encouraged the Commission to consider a different approach to public testimony during the 2015 solicitation public forums. As well, Ms. Westbrook encouraged the Commission to adopt further page limits to the charter applications. Ms. Westbrook expressed her satisfaction with First Place Scholars' progress towards its 2014 charter school start-up date. Finally, Ms. Westbrook maintained that she had questions around budget appropriations for charter school students' bus service, and how this would affect other public school students' bus service.

Gordy Linse, consultant for Linse Consulting, acknowledged the Commission's groundbreaking work, and briefed the Commission on his continuing work with Executive Director Halsey as his Executive Coach. Mr. Linse outlined his integrated set of services, expanding on his concepts of coaching, consulting, and mentoring moments, which he would utilize in his work with Mr. Halsey.

**SUPERINTENDENT RANDY DORN**

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Randy Dorn, presented his office's work in support of the Commission. Mr. Dorn applauded the Commission for its transparent work and decision making, and

encouraged the Commission to continue to reach out to both parties in the continuing debate over the Charter School Act's implementation.

#### **CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Sundquist briefed the Commission on the reappointment and transition of three of the Commissioners: Commissioner Jacka had been reappointed to a four year term ending in 2018; Commissioner McGuire's reappointment was still in process; and Commissioner Martin had asked not to be reappointed to a second term. Chair Sundquist reported that a replacement for Commissioner Martin was forthcoming.

Chair Sundquist reminded the Commission that board elections would occur at April's meeting, and that Commissioners wishing to serve on the executive committee should contact him over the next two weeks.

Chair Sundquist reported that representatives from Excel and Rainier Prep had asked to enlist the aid of the Commission in setting the start-up date of the approved charter schools as the Commission's approval date so as to access district levy funds. Mrs. Aileen Miller (ATG) reported that this interpretation by representatives from Excel and Rainier Prep was inconsistent with state law, and that the Commission was urged not to take this action. Commissioner Dziko moved, and Commissioner Williams seconded to not set the start-up date of charter schools as the Commission's approval date. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Executive Director Halsey briefed the Commission on lessons learned during the 2014 Applicant Debriefings. Mr. Halsey related that Aileen Miller and himself from mid-February through early-March had engaged in debriefings with representatives from six charter school applicants. Mr. Halsey reported that on two occasions, representatives had stated that they knew their applications would be denied due to incompleteness, but chose to continue with the application process for their organization's edification. Further, certain representatives reported that they would benefit from having the recommendation reports linked more closely to the scoring rubric, with specific examples from the application where standards were not met. Finally, certain representatives expressed concern with inter-rater reliability.

Mr. Halsey reported that the information obtained in these debriefings had been utilized, in part, in an update of the Request for Proposals (RFP), due for release on April 15, 2014, and he recommended the Commission approve the RFP for release later in the meeting. As well, Mr. Halsey reported that he was continuing to work with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) on inter-rater reliability.

Mr. Halsey briefed the Commission on the current status of the charter contracts for the seven approved schools, which had at this point gone through two rounds of negotiations. He related that the contracts were on track to be completed before the April 24 Commission Meeting, and would need to be approved at that meeting to comply with the Commission's statutory responsibilities.

Mr. Halsey briefed the Commission on the current rule-making status. He related that a CR102 for rules relating to charter Oversight and Corrective Action, as well as Public Records, had been submitted, and the draft rules could be found in the State Register 14-06 issue, as well as the Commission's website. Mr.

Halsey related that these rules had been scheduled for public comment at the April 24 Commission Meeting, with written comments due April 22.

Mr. Halsey briefed the Commission on a list of empowerments of the Executive Director. Commissioner Wright moved, and Commission Dziko seconded the approval to empower the Executive Director in perpetuity to:

- (1) Make decisions in consultation with NACSA and the Commission on which Washington based evaluators will be hired by NACSA;
- (2) Hire court reporters to capture verbatim notes at each Public Forum with a budget of \$10,000; and
- (3) To begin contract negotiations with authorized charter schools.

Mr. Halsey briefed the Commission on the upcoming Washington Charter School Association conference on May 8 and 9. Mr. Halsey related that representatives of the Commission had been invited to participate in a panel entitled *High Quality Authorizing*. Commissioner Dziko moved, and Commissioner McGuire seconded to reimburse Commissioners' conference fees. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Halsey updated the Commission on the past legislative session. He reported that though HB 2583, permitting charter school chief executive officers to file complaints of unprofessional conduct regarding certificated employees, was not voted on in the Senate and died before becoming law, elements of the bill had been incorporated into the contracts of approved charter schools. Mr. Halsey further reported that the supplemental budget that he had submitted had been finalized. Mr. Halsey encouraged the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee to develop legislative goals for the Fall, 2014 session.

Mr. Halsey briefed the Commission on the continuing relationship with NACSA, and the entity's support of the Commission's strategic planning and performance framework. Commissioner Wright moved, and Commissioner Jacka seconded to empower the Executive Director to implement the June 15, 2013 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Commission and NACSA to pursue the Commission's strategic planning and performance framework advancement. The motion carried unanimously.

The Commission broke for lunch at 12:00 p.m.

#### **COMMISSION'S BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The Commission returned from lunch at 12:36 p.m. Chair Sundquist proposed the Commission address the Budget and Financial Review at this time.

Mr. Halsey discussed the Commission's biennium budget, and reported a supplemental increase to 466K for 2014, and 553K for 2015. Mr. Halsey reported that the supplemental increase would allow the Commission to fund the upcoming RFP process, specifically the evaluation teams.

#### **STRATEGIC PLANNING AD-HOC UPDATE AND PRESENTATIONS**

Chair Sundquist presented the findings of the Strategic Planning Ad-Hoc Committee. The Ad-Hoc Committee outlined a scope of work with a timeline concerning the Commission's Strategic Planning process. The Ad-Hoc Committee recommended that the planning process commence in April and conclude in August.

Mr. Halsey related to the Commission that he had reached out to state agency leaders and two consulting firms to lead the Commission in strategic planning. Both firms provided Mr. Halsey with bids for services but one withdrew because of capacity. The other firm, TrustWorks, had developed a draft proposal for the Commission. Mr. Halsey reminded the Commission that NACSA would be financially supporting the strategic planning process, but would not be providing consultants. Mrs. Miller encouraged the Commission to develop an MOU between itself and NACSA before engaging in the strategic planning process.

Dr. Cathy Fromme of TrustWorks presented her firm's draft proposal for the Commission. The proposal included the development of a three to five year organizational plan to develop to full capacity the Commission's ability to execute all statutory and regulatory responsibilities. The proposal detailed a work-period of six four-hour strategic planning sessions carried out at the Commission's monthly meetings.

Commissioner Dziko moved, and Commissioner Williams seconded affirmative action on NACSA's role in strategic planning. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Sundquist moved, and Commissioner Dziko seconded the Commission's engagement with Dr. Fromme and TrustWorks in the strategic planning process. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK**

Chair Sundquist proposed the Commission address the Performance Framework at this time.

Mr. Halsey discussed the importance of the Performance Framework. He related that he had been in discussions with NACSA to determine their support in establishing the Performance Framework, and further that he had contacted a number of local entities to support the process as well. Mr. Halsey concluded that there was an interrelation between the Commission's strategic planning and the Performance Framework. Mr. Halsey proposed that Dr. Fromme and TrustWorks offer local support in establishing the Performance Framework.

Dr. Fromme of TrustWorks presented her firm's draft proposal for the Commission. The proposal included the development of a Performance Framework pilot over the next four months, to be completed and ready for implementation by July 29, 2014.

Commissioner Williams moved, and Commissioner Quall seconded to develop an MOU between the Commission and NACSA regarding the development of the Performance Framework. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Dziko moved, and Commissioner McGuire seconded the Commission's engagement with Dr. Fromme and Trust Works in the development of the Performance Framework. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **COMMUNICATION TEAM UPDATE**

Commissioner Williams presented an update on the Commission's communication plan, and led the Commission in a discussion of future actions. Stakeholders in both a general, as well as place-based strategy were identified.

#### **LEGISLATIVE AD-HOC COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Chair Sundquist presented an overview of the past legislative session, noting the passage of ESSB 6552, authorizing the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop rules to implement the 24-credit diploma, as well as the defeat of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver language. Chair Sundquist led a discussion of efforts the Commission should make in the coming months before the Fall 2014 legislative session, including drafting of bills and potentially contracting a lobbyist. Chair Sundquist encouraged the Commission to put legislative planning on the Commission's April meeting agenda, and Commissioners agreed.

### **2014 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) AND RUBRIC CHANGES**

Mr. Halsey presented changes to the RFP for the 2014 solicitation period:

- (1) Language was added alerting applicants that the RFP is for schools opening in the 2015-2016 school year;
- (2) Language was added regarding the Commission's intent to administer and the purpose of the due diligence reports;
- (3) Language was added requesting applicants populate the sample contract with information from their application;
- (4) Language was added requesting applicants to submit a redacted copy of their application materials. The redacted copy will omit the personal telephone numbers, email, and home addresses of anyone associated with the applicant, as well as check images and receipts;
- (5) The application timeline was amended to reflect the addition of the draft recommendation reports, applicant responses to recommendation reports, and the distribution of the final recommendation report and applicant response to the Commission;
- (6) Language was added requiring applicants to identify their operational and organizational objectives, as well as clarifying their purpose; and
- (7) Language was added to alert applicants to the Performance Framework so that they may begin thinking about how they will integrate the Performance Framework into their organization's performance management system.

Additionally, Commissioners directed staff to develop language to explicitly state that failure to comply with RFP page limits would be a disqualifying feature, and to add the language to the list of revisions above. Chair Sundquist moved, and Commissioner McGuire seconded to adopt the amendments to the RFP. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Halsey presented changes to the Rubric for the 2014 solicitation period:

- (1) The following criteria were added to the section entitled 'Family and Community Involvement' to improve and clarify the expectations concerning community involvement prior to the application being submitted:
  - (a) Demonstrate community involvement and support in development of the proposed school;
  - (b) Provide evidence to support the belief that there is a community need/demand for the school; and
  - (c) Provide evidence of partnerships that have already been established with community organizations, businesses or other educational institutions.
- (2) The following criteria were added to the section entitled 'Education and Program Capacity' to address an applicant's knowledge of the target community and evidence of partnerships with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions:
  - (a) A description of the group's ties and/or knowledge of the target community; and

(b) Provide evidence of partnerships that have already been established with community organizations, businesses or other educational institutions, with concrete identification of the current and future roles that these community organizations, businesses or other educational institutions will play in the school's development.

(3) The category title 'Performance Management' was changed to 'Performance Framework' to align the rubric to the RFP.

(4) The following criteria were added to the section entitled 'Other Information' to allow the Commission to verify research and information expressed in an application, especially when educational programs or partnerships are referenced. This language was also added to be clear that the application, in its entirety, must comply with all applicable laws governing charter schools in Washington:

(a) Information and research referenced in application has been tested and confirmed;

(b) Information contained in the application is accurate and is not misleading;

(c) Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to comply with, all applicable laws governing the operation of charter schools in Washington; and

(d) The school's proposal does not contain provisions that violate laws applicable to charter schools in Washington.

(5) The following criterion was added to the section entitled 'Existing Operators' to strengthen the Commission's position on and its ability to conduct due diligence reports, as well as the Commission's intent to use those reports in its evaluation deliberations:

(a) Issues identified in the Due Diligence Report have been vetted and addressed.

Additionally, Commissioners directed staff to add the criteria, "issues identified in the Due Diligence report have been vetted and addressed" to both the Other Information and Existing Operators sections. Commissioner McGuire moved, and Commissioner Dziko seconded to adopt the amendments to the Rubric. The motion carried unanimously.

### **CALENDAR PLANNING**

The Commission will move its June 10, 2014 meeting to Seattle, and will move its August 21, 2014 meeting to August 19, 2014. These calendar adjustments will be noticed on the Commission's website.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Commission identified the following next steps:

(1) Hold Commission Officer Elections;

(2) Conduct further legislative planning;

(3) Complete, review, and authorize charter contracts;

(4) Conduct four hours of strategic planning at the April 24, 2014 meeting; and

(5) Begin developing the Performance Framework.

The meeting adjourned at 4:13 p.m.