



CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 19, 2019 | 10:02 a.m. to 3:24 p.m.

South Seattle Community College, Georgetown Campus
6737 Corson Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98108

Attendance:

Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Heather Lechner, Harium Martin-Morris, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, Steve Sundquist, and Cindi Williams.

Leadership Team: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Krystal Starwich, Director of New School Applications; Aileen Miller, Assistant Attorney General; and Amanda Martinez, Executive Assistant.

Call To Order

Roll Call

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. The following Commissioners were present: Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Heather Lechner, Harium Martin-Morris, Kristina Mayer, Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, Steve Sundquist, and Cindi Williams. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

Consent Agenda

The meeting minutes for the August 22, 2019 Commission meeting, August 27, 2019 and August 30, 2019 Special Meetings, and standing committee updates were reviewed. Commissioner Williams moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Pauley seconded. The motion passed with no opposes; one abstention.

Public Comment

Nyaria Lee, a Tacoma resident, parent and first grade teacher at Impact | Puget Sound Elementary provided public comment regarding the need for a free high quality schooling option in Tacoma and urged the Commission to approve Impact Public Schools' petition so students don't have to wait to receive the education they deserve.

Kristin McCaw, Chief Financial & Operating Officer at Impact Public Schools, provided public comment submitted by Ms. Joyce Glass. Ms. Glass, a Tacoma resident in the Dome Top community, urged the Commission to allow Impact Public Schools to open in 2020 at the Tacoma facility.

Jamila Grace, a Tacoma resident and community outreach ambassador for Impact Public Schools and former Green Dot Destiny Middle School instructor provided public comment regarding the need for a free high quality schooling option in Tacoma and urged the Commission to approve Impact Public Schools' petition. Impact's model is desperately needed now for the families and students.

James Heugas of Washington Charter School Development provided public comment to support the application of Impact | Salish Sea Elementary to be located at the former Destiny building in Tacoma, as this facility is a great asset, and Impact is a great operator. Mr. Heugas also looks forward to come back to the Commission to discuss facilities in the future.

Gil Salvador, new resident of Tacoma, provided public comment of the assessment of the schools in the area. Mr. Salvador believes there are many kids with great potential and a charter school would do great for the families in the area.

Carmen Escamilla-Soto, parent at Impact Public Schools, provided public comment that the community should be able to choose board members and with more access to information from the schools. Ms. Escamilla-Soto also expressed interest in having parents and families present to Commissioners.

Chair Report

Willow Public Schools Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement Update

Chair Williams provided an update regarding Willow Public Schools (Willow) Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement. Chair Williams, Commissioner Mayer and Commissioner Lechner found that Willow satisfied the Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement and was able to open after two Special Meetings on August 27 and August 30.

Commissioner Appointment Updates

Chair Williams provided an update on Commissioner appointments. There has been no further movement with the current open seat, and Chair Williams is in discussions regarding her reappointment.

Executive Committee Process Clarification

Chair Williams provided a brief overview of the Executive Committee officer elections from the August meeting and a need to reconfirm the voting process.

Commissioner Sundquist moved to elect Cindi Williams as Chair. Commissioner McGuire seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Commissioner Sundquist moved to elect Kristina Mayer as Vice Chair. Commissioner Pauley seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Commissioner Standing Committee Assignment Consideration

Chair Williams provided an updated list of Standing Committee assignments based on Commissioner's expressed interest. Chair Williams moved to approve the Standing Committees. Commissioner Lechner seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

- The deeply valued community voice, and how stakeholders are remaining an important piece of the decision-making process. RVLA is has developed a formal protocol for recording input from stakeholders;
- Educational Service District 101 provides back-office support to RVLA as of September 1. This transition is moving from the Green Dot Washington office, and will be fully integrated with state systems with close monitoring throughout the year; and
- The board maintains a function of providing high level strategy to bring the school to the vision of a standalone model while providing oversight, insuring compliance, providing support, resourcing staff and students. The board strives to be representative of the community and continue to add members with expertise in key areas.

Commissioners engaged in dialogue with the Green Dot and Rainier Valley Leadership Team. The dialogue was focused on RVLA’s transition from the Green Dot model, including academic and curriculum access, board composition, financial resources and debt obligations.

Green Dot and Rainier Valley Leadership Academy will continue to develop a plan to present to the Commission.

Executive Session

An Executive Session was begun at 12:37 p.m. pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30.110(1) To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency.

Open Session

At 12:48 p.m., Chair Williams resumed open session stating that no final action had been taken during the Executive Session.

Impact Public Schools | Salish Sea Elementary

Jen Wickens, Chief Executive Officer; Kristin McCaw, Chief Financial & Operating Officer; Micaela Razo, board member; Todd Meldahl, board member; and James Heugas, Washington Charter School Development provided the Commission with an update and information regarding Impact Public Schools’ petition to move second authorized school, Salish Sea Elementary, from South Seattle/Renton to Tacoma.

Ms. Wickens shared the justification for Impact’s petition, including the challenges encountered with the previously named facility in the originally proposed area of South Seattle/Renton and a timeline for school success. Mr. Heugas outlined the sector-wide issues with facilities, and the difficult process to find workable site solutions for charter schools in Washington. Mr. Meldahl added national context to the real estate and facility search.

Ms. Wickens has outlined the community engagement that has happened in Tacoma, and the plan moving forward, should the petition be approved. She also expressed the respect and empathy held for the two school closures in Tacoma and the need for high quality elementary school options in the community. Ms. Razo added the implications of future schools in underserved communities, like the Yakima valley, if Impact is unable to open Salish Sea Elementary in Tacoma for the 2020-21 school year.

Commissioners engaged in conversation regarding the petition. This discussion included:

- Implications to the South Seattle and Renton communities with prior engagement for the application process;
- Appearance of lack of community input and openness in the process;
- The sector-wide problem of facilities;
- Historical context and recent events with the Tacoma community and charter schools; and
- The remarkable preliminary results and trajectory of Impact | Puget Sound Elementary to date.

Commissioner Williams moved to deny Impact | Salish Sea Elementary petition to change the schools' location from South Seattle/Renton to Tacoma. Commissioner Sundquist seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Overview and Discussion of Assistant Attorney General Role

Senior Assistant Attorney General, Aileen Miller, provided an overview of the role of the Assistant Attorney General.

Legislative Priorities Discussion

Patrick D'Amelio, Chief Executive Officer and Mitch Price, Director of Policy and Government Relations from Washington State Charter Schools Association (WA Charters) presented their 2020 legislative priorities. The top priorities include:

- Levy off-set and full funding for all public schools
- Charter school cap and five year window
- Special Education funding
- Facility Challenges
- Commission's interests, including strengthening the Charter School Act.

Next Steps

Chair Williams identified the following next steps:

1. Continue developing a Commissioner pipeline
2. SOAR Academy Updates and Reflection / Lessons Learned
3. Green Dot and Rainier Valley Leadership Academy Transition
4. Charter School Replication and Expansion Application Development
5. Equity Policy Implementation
6. Commission FY 2019 Final Budget
7. Willow Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement updates
8. Strategic Plan Update
9. Commission Standing Committee Reassignment
10. Facilities and funding deep dive with Washington Charter School Development
11. Washington State Charter Schools Association Legislative Strategy

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Williams adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.