

Wissahickon Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting

September 18, 2024, 6:05pm - 7:25pm

Meeting held via Zoom Conferencing

Board Members Present: Rachel Loeper (Chair), Justin DiBerardinis (Vice Chair), Allora Buckshon (Treasurer), Rekyiah Abdul-Zahir (Secretary), Shauna Mace, Dan Pereira, Jason Manning, Erich Holland, Ohenewaa White-Ra

Board Members Absent: Anthony Coughlin

Staff Present: Jane Walsh (Director of Development)

Guests Present: Mike Whisman (Charter Choices)

Chair Rachel Loeper called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

Swearing In of New Board Member (Rachel)

Rachel introduced new board member Jason Manning, who then introduced himself to the board. The board members and staff provided brief introductions of their roles.

Jason took the Oath of Office to officially be sworn in as a member of the Wissahickon Charter School Board of Trustees.

CEO Update (Rachel)

Kristi was absent due to illness so Rachel gave her CEO report.

- School enrollment is at our budgeted allotment, with only 10 open slots remaining.
 - Class sizes increased to 28 students to allow us to better meet our budgeted enrollment, but most are at 27, which is the size we prefer. If students leave mid-year, we will not re-enroll students past 27 per class.
 - Kristi reported a successful first day of school. Jane shared photos.
 - We have started contracting with Compass Pro Bono, who will provide consulting work regarding board recruitment and development. They will work with Kristi and Rachel to help assess what our needs as a board might be and make some recommendations.
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Consent Agenda (Rachel)

The consent agenda includes the August Meeting Minutes and the September Financial Statements.

Rachel called for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Ohenewaa made a motion and Rekyiah seconded. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Financial Update (Mike Whisman, Charter Choices)

Mike Whisman from Charter Choices presented the financial update through August.

- Cash is slightly up over the last two months.
- Current liabilities decreased by \$1.3 million, primarily due to summer teacher pay.
- Key Performance Indicators as of June 30, 2024:
 - Total margin: 7%
 - Days cash on hand: 191 days
 - Fund balance: 44%

Rachel called for a vote to approve the Financial Update. Shauna made a motion and Dan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Governance Update (Shauna Mace)

- **Approval of New Member:** The board unanimously approved Michelle Alcaraz as a new board member. The motion was led by Shauna and seconded by Rekyiah. Michelle brings extensive experience in education, curriculum, and literacy. With her addition, the board now consists of 11 members.
- **Board Goals:** The board reviewed last year's goals. The board agreed to revisit these goals at the next meeting, with Kristi present, to incorporate elements from the strategic plan
 - Attend all meetings or communicate in advance if unable.
 - Respond to emails promptly.
 - Engage in development work, including introducing friends to Wissahickon and supporting the spring event.

Development Update (Jane Walsh, Director of Development)

Jane Walsh presented updates on development efforts:

- The fall appeal campaign is in progress, with both mail and email versions.
- The 2nd annual WissaGIVING Week is planned for the end of October.
- Board members were requested to support WissaGIVING outreach and social media promotion.

Jane proposed the creation of an event committee to support development efforts.

Board members were reminded to submit pledge forms or communicate if more time is needed.

Student and Employee Handbook Changes (Rachel)

- **Student and Family Handbook:**
 - Adopted the Philadelphia School District's policy on gender identity and expression.
 - Added a statement on family member behavior that could result in a temporary school ban.
 - Clarified the policy regarding providing school lunch if a student does not bring their own lunch.
- **Employee Handbook:**
 - Removed the additional five sick days granted for COVID.
 - Added up to five education program days for staff pursuing relevant degrees.

The board unanimously approved the changes to both handbooks. The motion was led by Dan and seconded by Justin.

Rachel Loeper called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was led by Shauna Mace and seconded by Rekyiah Abdul-Zahir. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.

Action Items:

1. Board members to submit pledge forms or request more time if needed.
 2. Follow up with Kristi on incorporating strategic plan elements into board goals.
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