

Minutes of
Conservatory Lab Charter School
Annual Meeting - June 20, 2017 – 6:00 – 8:30p.m.
Bolling Building, 2300 Washington St., Roxbury

Present: Gary Gut, Anne Snyder, Martha Kleinman, Lisa Wong, Stephanie Perrin, Bradley Richardson, Clay Rives, Myriah Johnson, Maisha Douvon Cover, Melanie Sheffield, Elaine Ng, Danna Mauch, Keree Simmons, Kay Sloan, Ericka Sanchez, Bethany Ford, Kitty Pell.

Absent: Bob Grinberg & Staverne Miller

Staff: Linda Nathan (CAS), Seth Racine (CAS), John Chistolini, Bea Abascal (Foundation), Cecilia Soriano

Guests: Liz Curtis, Rachel Crocker-Ford, Rachel Sacks, Jill Davidson

Gary Gut called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

- I. Public Comment. There was none
- II. Approval of minutes from May 24th Board Meeting of CLCS Trustees.

Martha Kleinman moved to approve the minutes, Keree Simmons seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
- III. Update on Meeting with Mayor Walsh.

Gary Gut reported that he and Linda Nathan along with Kay Sloan and Maisha Douvan Cover, had a positive meeting with the Mayor on May 31st.

 - There were also 4 other members of his staff present, among them Joyce Linnehan and John Barros
 - The Mayor continues to be very interested in the success of Conservatory Lab Charter School
 - He expressed an interest in seeing some collaboration or integration with BPS
 - He is interested in having a K-12 or K-16 Public Pathway with a deep arts immersion; could see CLCS joining forces with BAA and/or Mass College of Art or perhaps Berklee College of Music
 - All the above is less a solution for real estate for CLCS, but more an innovative idea for down the road.
 - Both the sites at Columbia Road and in Mattapan were discussed; pledged his support for both sites.
 - Invited the group back after more clarity has been elicited from the Board of Trustees; suggested September as a time to return.
- IV. Summary of Evaluation of CAS Service Agreement
 - Gary Gut began by saying that he, Danna Mauch and Anne Snyder met regularly to discuss the status of the Service Agreement with CLCS. In addition, Linda wrote a self-evaluation, Trustees were surveyed and members of the school's leadership team were interviewed.
 - Gary said, that as Linda began, she was faced with many challenges, and underlying tensions specifically related to the differences between a Charter School and a District School.

- To begin with, the Service Agreement itself was new and required details for implementation.
- There was a need to establish common values.
- The Middle School structure continues to need improvement.
- More support is needed of the Chief Operating Officer and the Principal in building the faculty at the school, including recruitment of new staff

Recommendations for next year included:

- A realization that movement needs to go at a more measured pace – not so many things all at once.
- An adoption of goals that are very specific with a clear understanding as to decision-making and decision makers.
- A more concrete 2 yr. School Improvement Plan – put metrics and milestones in place for next year.
- A pledge to protect the programs which are cornerstones to CLCS: the El Sistema program of music education, Expeditionary Learning and social/emotional learning.
- To be supportive of the Charter School model
- To design an implementation plan of action for the Strategic Plan as soon as it is completed
- Establish an aggressive fundraising goal for next year.
- Give more time and focus to the Center, as more things become resolved with the School

In summary, it is fortuitous that Linda Nathan has come, with her energy and vision. The entire entity - Conservatory Lab Charter School, the Center and the Foundation - is a better place because she is here.

V. Summary of Evaluation of CLCS's COO and Principal

Linda gave background to the process: Each wrote a self-evaluation of progress on their goals; there was a 360 review given by their direct reports and others; and Linda wrote a lengthy report which she shared with each of them.

For COO:

- Acknowledgment given for superb job done in moving Lowerr School from Brighton to Dorchester
- Has effectively managed both facilities
- As Superintendent designee has ensured timely communication with DESE
- Effectively implemented the “entity” structure under which all were operating this year
- Drafted the Staff Handbook
- Worked well with Mass Charter Association
- In charge of systems and structure: managed attendance and staffing, held regular operational meeting and had financial oversight over the School
- Has incredible “Can Do!” attitude

Recommendations for next year included:

- Further improve HR systems for recruitment, retention and on-boarding of staff
- Develop improved systems for communications with regard to attendance and tardiness of students; including family registration with aid agencies.
- Improve clarity on budget oversight responsibilities
- Work to clarify “district” operational issues and “school” operational issues in order to achieve clarity about roles/responsibilities, etc...
- Ensure regular operational meetings that do not include principal
- Ensure that principal is fully focused on instruction and not operations
- Continue to recommend areas for improved systems and structures (i.e. ideas about how to better gather and update family information)

For Principal:

- Set clear measurable goals for the school
- Assembled a Leadership Team and successfully deployed lean staff for maximum impact
- Introduced and began ILT with teachers
- Created early baseline student data right away – STAR assessment
- Made necessary mid-year corrections (putting a learning specialist with a classroom teacher)
- Introduced SEL at the elementary level
- Re-introduced CREW at all levels
- Implementation of Guided reading and Centers
- All grades (except middle school) made growth—and enough to celebrate

Recommendations for next year included:

- Greater immersion in Expeditionary Learning practices for herself and with LT
- Work with SMT to have more transparent Human Resources practices (teacher compensation and career model)
- Establish a clear model for teacher development and coaching
- Focus more exclusively on Instructional Component of the school (85%)
- Be the external face of the school for parents and families
- Continue to work closely with Director of EL Sistema, whom she oversees
- Continue to focus on positive school culture and build more awareness for faculty and students of “CREW”
- Develop two year improvement plan with metrics and milestones

VI. Acknowledgment of outgoing Trustees

- Gary Gut paid a tribute to Stephanie Perrin and Anne Synder, who are leaving the CLCS Board after serving on it for 15 and 12 years respectively.
- Anne Snyder then gave a lovely tribute to Cecilia Soriano, Liaison to the Board, who is leaving CLCS after 7 years.

VII. Governance Report and Vote on Officers and incoming Trustees

- Stephanie Perrin presented the Governance Report which reported on progress made on five goals:
 - ◆ A full Board assessment was taken

- ◆ New incoming Trustees represent an increase in diversity, which more closely represents the demographics of the communities the School serves
- ◆ With the help of CAS's ED, Board members were able to identify and recruit new candidates
- ◆ Developing a more active mentoring program for new Trustees remains an objective for next year's Governance Committee, to be led by Kay Sloan
- The slate for Officers for the 2017-2018 school year were presented:
 - ◆ Gary Gut – Chair
 - ◆ Kay Sloan – Secretary
 - ◆ Bob Grinberg – Treasurer
- The officers will be joined next year by Clay Rives, Danna Mauch and Kitty Pell for Executive Committee meetings
- Gary Gut called for a vote on this slate
- Kitty Pell made the motion to approve the slate as presented. Brad Richardson seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

The list of nominees for incoming Trustees was presented. These are:

- Tyrone Sutton – Music Co- Chair at Boston Arts Academy
- Lynn Cetrulo – Practicing psychotherapist
- Kimberly Samuel Nelson – works with Massachusetts College of Art president David Nelson
- Rev. Dr. Gregory G. Groover – Pastor, Historic Charles Street A.M.E. Church, Roxbury, MA, Former Chair of BPS School Board
- Myriah Johnson – For a full three year term

Stephanie Perrin made the motion to accept all 5 names put forth, Anne Snyder seconded the motions and it passed unanimously.

Motion made and passed unanimously to re-elect to new three year terms:

- Gary Gut
- Danna Mauch
- Brad Richardson
- Clay Rives
- Lisa Wong
- Melanie Sheffield

VIII. Vote on 2017-2018 Budget

Brad Richardson presented the budget under consideration. John Chistolini was able to have the insurance increase by only 1%, instead of 5%, as originally forecast. Bradley Richardson moved that the budget for 2017-2018 be approved as presented, Stephanie Perrin seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

IX. Good News to Report – Linda advised the Board that in the latest STAR assessments showed both ELA and Math student growth were approximately 1 year or greater; encouraging progress is being made - more information to come in the Fall.

X. Development Report – Also good news.

- The attainment of \$489,804 was a fact as of this evening. The goal set for the year is \$500,000.
- The Center received a two year Grant for \$100,000 from the Boston Foundation.
- Received confirmation from the Barr Foundation from a previous pledge that, once all paperwork is finalized, \$500,000 would be forthcoming on August 18, 2017.

XI. Update on Strategic Planning

Martha Kleinman reported that the scope of the Strategic Plan has been expanded quite a bit.

- Consultants and JSPC Members are building a financial model that should serve over the next 5 years. They are considering all elements: faculty, program elements, size and scope of school, size of faculty, size of fundraising needed.
- The hope is to wrap up the strategic planning process by Thanksgiving of 2017

After a full discussion, including Board members, additional comments included:

- Ways to best leverage the investment in our faculty
- A career ladder for the school
- Building a new facility will build retention
- Stability will produce results in retention as well.
- New building will facilitate fundraising
- Need to present several scenarios to evaluate alternative career ladder structures
- Essential to have more parent involvement in facilities planning

XII. Facilities Update

Gary Gut reported that several changes have already been implemented to engage more proactively with parents regarding new facilities planning.

- A parent, Brad Mahoney has joined the Facilities Task Force
- A Parents Facilities Advisory has been established that will meet monthly in an open meeting format for all parents to ask questions and comment on current plans
- A core group of parents, including Keree Simmons, Brad Mahoney, Jessie Boatright, Seth Kirshenbaum and Jose Lopez have joined the Advisory

Due diligence investigations of the Columbia Road site are proceeding as previously discussed; preliminary schematic fit studies were presented at the June 19th Community Meeting

At 8:11 Myriah Johnson made the motion to adjourn.