

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN CLASSICAL CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
APPROVED Minutes
Thursday, January 12, 2010 7:00pm
School Library**

Attendance: Trustees President Lori Clements, Treasurer Anna dos Santos, Clerk Thomas Viveiros, John Neas, Donald Tappin, Gail Trotin, Nav Chander, Poh-Lin Yeoh, Tim Tracy , Cheryl O'Donnell , Asst. HOS Heather Zolnowski, Director of School Operations and Student Activities Joe Perna, Vice President Rich Frongillo (7:55 pm)

Absent: HOS Dr. O'Malley, Stephan Katinas.

Start (7:02pm): Lori opens by informing us that Dr. O'Malley is sick. She then encourages board members try and plan on being at scheduled school events. She reminds us all that next Thursday is Pillar Night @ 7pm and Enrollment Night is on January 28. She solicits volunteers from the board to attend.

Lori mentions that she has still not heard back from Father Manning to schedule a lease negotiation meeting. She will continue to pursue this.

She also mentions that trustee terms for Tim Tracey, Tom Viveiros and Cheryl O'Donnell expire on June 30. They are required to notify Lori in writing by the end of January to express whether or not their intent is to run for another term.

Lori recently received an e-mail from Matt Ginnetty on the Washington Street property. There is nothing new to report.

Approval of November 2009 Board Meeting Minutes (7:09 pm):

Anna mentions a couple of corrections on the last two pages which Lori says she will fix in the draft.

MOTION: To approve the November 2009 Board Meeting Minutes

RESULT: Motion carries unanimously.

Recognition of the month:

Heather introduces the students who participated in the first annual Lego League competition. Michele Pearl speaks as a Team Manager and thanks the PCO for their support. She describes an overview of the research challenge: The goal is to make a Lego® MINDSTORMS™ Robot and program it to perform certain functions.

A team members describe the Lego vehicle design and what types of features were added. The student talked about the design method (brainstorming, etc). As the student team members take turns describing their project, they show their mastery of several skills including problem definition, brainstorming, collaborative problem solving, addressing ethical issues (privacy of mail), teambuilding, and scheduling. The team has created a website to describe their project. The URL is: <http://roboticeinsteins.webs.com> .

Open Comment Period (7:31 pm):

There are no comments during this period.

Head of School report (7:32 pm):

Heather gives the HOS report. She mentions that BFCCPS has received the good news about having our charter extended for another 5 years.

She mentions that the Education Reform bill was voted on and had passed through the Senate. The legislators are working long hours so that the legislation can be passed in time for Massachusetts to be eligible for a \$250M education fund. She mentions that the current version of the bill looks good for charters so far. It should pass tonight.

Heather mentions the school's on-going effort to reduce paper usage and practice "green" initiatives. The school has taken one more step in that direction yesterday by publishing the 2nd electronic pink-sheet. She also mentions that the Scope and Sequence is also distributed electronically.

Heather informs us that half of the Capstone project presentations were done last week and students did an amazing job. The remaining projects will be presented tomorrow.

Pillar night is scheduled for Thursday, January 21 at 7pm. The format will be to have parents broken up into four groups (one for each pillar) and have them rotate into other "pillar" groups as the night progresses. The administration is hoping to have a board member to sit on "primary educators" panel. It would be useful to also have board member support on the "character education" panel as well.

Heather mentions that Dr. O'Malley has been working to find a new English Language Arts (ELA) reading program and that the administration ended up choosing Pearson's "Reading Street". Heather congratulates Dr. O'Malley for all of his hard work. Anna asks how much the program will cost.

Faculty Rep Report (7:41pm):

Gail talks about reading selection process and she thinks that we have chosen a good series. She also talks about the Heifer project which is part of the school's global initiative.

Gail also mentions that Heifer International sponsors study tours for educators to travel to Honduras. Gail mentions that she is applying for this program along with School Counselor Becca Harrington. She briefly mentions the timeline: applications are due in January and the trip is scheduled to take place in June.

Treasurer's Report (7:45):

Anna discusses the budget as of the end of November. She mentions that the Finance Committee has been going through the budget in detail. She highlights the following changes for a policy-required board vote:

- Classroom Books and Supplies (budget item 6050): The math materials budget was exceeded by \$4,900.
- Professional Accounting services (budget item 8715): This budget was increased by \$21,000 to cover additional work performed by AMS.

During Anna's report, she mentions that we are actually getting more per student than we originally budgeted. She mentions that we are getting money from the Federal government for two (2) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grants. Part of this grant money will be used to pay for a Special Education aid resource. Anna also mentions that our payroll expense has been reduced by \$27K because we saved money on new hires.

MOTION: To accept the budget changes as proposed in the Budget Updates insert distributed in the packet notes.

RESULT: Anna made the motion, Tim seconded motion and the vote is unanimous with the exception of Rich. Rich abstained because he came in late after the discussion. The motion passes.

Action Register:

Rich mentions that we need to start soliciting for a Nominating Committee. Lori mentions that we will need to start looking for more people to serve on the board. Anna asks whether or not the bylaws dictate about whether or not we need a committee. Lori reminds everyone that we voted at the July retreat to eliminate the Nominating Committee.

Rich also mentions that Tom, Tim, and Cheryl have their terms retiring this year. He reiterates that these board members need to let Lori know by end of January as to their intentions to run for another term.

Rich also mentions that the employee input survey is scheduled to go out in February. Anna mentions that we should mention things that need to be budgeted for by next month as the budgeting process is nearing completion.

Annual Fund Update (8:02pm):

Nav Chander mentions that we have raised approximately \$8,450 dollars as of today. We have 30 families that have contributed so far. He also mentions the importance of increasing the participation rate among the BFCCPS community.

Nav was asking about using our email alert system to send reminders. He also mentions that a Bruins shirt is being auctioned along with some Patriot paraphernalia. He mentions that he plans on setting a deadline for the drawing for end of March, but he hopes community members will continue giving all year long. John mentions that the faculty did not get the letters this year. He also mentions that we need to be careful about corporate donors and look at the campaigns which we should solicit them for. His concern is that we need to be strategic about when we ask corporations for money so that we are not perceived as asking too often.

Facility Discussion on Future Facility (8:13pm):

Each of the board members had a homework assignment to list about five (5) or six (6) characteristics that they believe are important and need to be considered before deciding on a new facility. Lori compiled the list of ideas ahead of time from each of the board members. Heather records the board members' ideas as Lori goes through each of them as they are placed on the overhead projector screen for all at the meeting to see.

A long dialogue begins to take place as the board discusses the topics that were placed up on the screen. One of the themes that emerge is that the school needs a vision statement. Gail brings up the fact that she has recent experience participating in a vision casting session. Although the vision topic creates a certain amount of controversy, there is enough discussion to warrant an offsite meeting to address this topic. Lori mentions that we will most likely plan to have an offsite meeting to continue this discussion.

Heather distributes the 63-page wired-bound "Ben's Best" to each of the board members. The Ben's Best publication contains a compilation of best practices that have been deployed at the charter school. It allows BFCCPS to share practices with the community as a whole and may be used by other schools to help them duplicate practices which we have found useful to the educational experience.

Lori mentions that Dr. O'Malley was retired from the public school system before he came to work with us. At that time, BFCCPS was supposed to have applied to the Commissioner of Education for a waiver to allow him to continue to collect from his pension. In 2008, Dr. O'Malley got a letter indicating there was a problem with his retirement and raised a financial issue. The charter school has written a letter to the commissioner requesting a retroactive waiver dated from the time Dr. O'Malley has started. This request has since been denied.

Dr. O'Malley wants to proceed with legal action to resolve this issue. The school would need to join this action if he proceeds. As it was explained to the board, there are no financial implications to the school for joining Dr. O'Malley.

MOTION: A motion is made for the board to sign on as co-plaintive to Dr. O'Malley's lawsuit.

RESULT: All the board members with the exception of Rich voted for the motion. Rich abstained. The motion passes.

MOTION: To adjourn at 9:37pm.

RESULT: Poh-Lin made the motion, Anna seconded motion and the vote is unanimous. The motion passes.