

South Bronx Early College Academy Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, June 24th, 2014
Greenberg Traurig, LLP
200 Park Avenue, New York, NY

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Resolution to Approve Minutes from May 15, 2014 Meeting**
- III. Resolution to Name a School Leader**
- IV. Resolution to Retain a Facilities Agent**
 - A. Co-location
 - B. Private Space Exploration – SCG Retail, Civic Builders
- V. 501(c)3 Tax Exemption Application**
- VI. Payroll & Benefits**
- VII. Other Business**
 - A. Update on Educational Partner
 - B. Board Meetings – Location and Time
 - C. Board Training – Lawyers Alliance of New York, September 18th
 - D. Board Committees
 - a. Executive Committee – Chaired by Board Chair
 - b. Finance and Operations Committee – Chaired by Board Treasurer
 - c. Education Committee
 - d. Personnel Committee
 - E. Summer Meetings
- VIII. Next Meeting: July 17th**

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Tuesday, June 24th, 2014
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200 Park Avenue, New York, NY

Attendees

Board Members Present: Andy Arons, Nancy Biberman, Ric Campbell, Lori Chemla, Andrea Cohen, Eric Nadelstern (via video conference), Davon Russell, Deborah Taylor

Other: Rebecca Kramnick, WHEDco; Meredith Leverich, WHEDco

Absent Board Members

Kristin Erat, Harvey Newman

Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 10:19am.

Approval of May 15th, 2014 Meeting Minutes

The Board passed a resolution to approve the May 15th, 2014 meeting minutes.

Resolution to Name a School Leader

Ric Campbell recused himself and left the room for this portion of the meeting. Mr. Russell updated the Board on Mr. Campbell's interest in the principal position, which was raised at the May 15th, 2014 Board meeting. Mr. Russell reported that, per the Board's requests at the previous meeting, he had communicated Mr. Campbell's interest in this position to the State Education Department and posted the job description to solicit other resumes and to conduct interviews. Mr. Russell stated that he and Andrea Cohen selected three candidates to interview from among the 20 people who submitted resumes. Mr. Russell and Ms. Cohen conducted interviews with two of the three qualified candidates; the third candidate accepted a position at another school and cancelled the interview.

Ms. Cohen reported that the first candidate interviewed had a history of administrative work in charter schools, but did not have any experience as a principal or in another role that requires extensive hands-on work with stake-holders such as parents. Mr. Russell added that the candidate does not have experience building and nurturing relationships, an important requirement for the principal at our school given the partnerships.

Ms. Cohen then reported that the second candidate interviewed had three years of experience serving as principal of a charter school; however, her reason for leaving her current position was unclear and left both Ms. Cohen and Mr. Russell with questions about the true nature of her leaving. The candidate has also not led a middle school. Ms. Cohen added that the candidate did not come across as a leader and it didn't seem that she would be able to lead a school such as ours.

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Mr. Russell and Ms. Cohen stated that after speaking with each candidate for an hour, they felt that neither candidate was as qualified as Mr. Campbell. Mr. Russell added that the two candidates interviewed were the strongest of those who had submitted resumes, but were still not on the same level. Eric Nadelstern said that most new schools hire new principals. He added that Mr. Campbell's extensive educational background is unique for a principal and his skill-set would be very well applied to such a position, especially at a school with a teacher-residency program partnered with a higher education institution. Mr. Nadelstern added that he has spoken with principals who have worked with Mr. Campbell in the past and that they have spoken very highly of him. Ms. Biberman added that she has observed Mr. Campbell interacting with parents, teachers and students, and has seen that he is engaging, inspirational and respectful. Lori Chemla inquired about Mr. Campbell's relationship with Bard College if he were to become the principal. Mr. Russell explained that Mr. Campbell is currently on leave from Bard and will resign so that he is completely disconnected from Bard. Ms. Chemla volunteered to conduct an additional reference check to ensure that the Board is diligent before making an official offer.

The Board passed a resolution to offer the principal position to Mr. Campbell, contingent upon a reference check and a criminal background check.

*Board Members who voted on this resolution: Andy Arons, Nancy Biberman, Lori Chemla, Andrea Cohen, Eric Nadelstern (via video conference), Davon Russell, Deborah Taylor

Resolution to Set the Principal's Compensation

Mr. Russell stated that he has reviewed the NYC Charter Center's compensation survey, and that the salaries for school leaders, principals, and executive directors, depending on different organizational structures, range from \$125,000 to \$260,000 per year. Mr. Russell said that Mr. Campbell's original request was for \$225,000 per year, but that he later said he would accept \$200,000. Mr. Russell stated that the principal's salary in the current iteration of the budget is \$150,000, but that additional fundraising could cover the difference. He also stated that Mr. Campbell plans to waive health coverage, which would have cost approximately \$12,000 - \$15,000 if the salary remained at \$150,000. Since the school would be saving money in health benefits, it could afford to pay a higher salary to the principal. Rebecca Kramnick added that Mr. Campbell's doctorate degree raises the expected pay-grade.

The board then discussed the term of a contract with Mr. Campbell. Mr. Nadelstern stated that three years is a standard contract length and that most candidates would not sign a contract for a shorter term. Ms. Cohen added that the contract could be for three years, but have the option to evaluate so that the Board could evaluate the principal's performance annually.

The Board voted to offer Mr. Campbell a three year contract to serve as the school's founding principal with a \$200,000 annual salary.

*Board Members who voted on this resolution: Andy Arons, Nancy Biberman, Lori Chemla, Andrea Cohen, Eric Nadelstern (via video conference), Davon Russell, Deborah Taylor

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Mr. Campbell entered the room. Mr. Russell stated that Mr. Campbell was no longer on the Board and could not vote moving forward. Mr. Russell stated that he would meet with Mr. Campbell to discuss the terms of the contract adopted by the Board.

Resolution to Retain a Facilities Agent

Mr. Russell debriefed the Board about the meeting that he, Mr. Campbell, Andy Arons and Meredith Leverich had with Civic Builders, a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing charter schools. Ms. Leverich circulated a proposal from Civic Builders, which included costs for finding space, as well as developing space into a school once a site had been identified. Civic Builders' fee for the exploration phase is \$20,000, based on the proposal they submitted. Ms. Leverich described the Civic Builders business model, which includes retaining the asset and collecting rent from a charter school, and then reinvesting their income into developing space for other schools. Mr. Arons said that Civic Builders' work is extremely valuable since it relieves charter schools, many of which do not have the capacity and/or expertise for this component of launching a school, of the burden of developing space.

Mr. Russell stated that he, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Arons and Ms. Leverich also met with Chase Welles from SCG Retail. This company is a broker, but only collects payment from the owner of the building when a deal is signed. Mr. Russell suggested engaging SCG Retail to identify a space for the school. He then suggested that the school revisit the proposal from Civic Builders once a site has been identified, and retain their services if the site needs major development to make it school-ready.

The Board voted to retain Mr. Welles and SCG Retail to conduct the preliminary exploration.

Update on Educational Partner

Mr. Campbell stated that there is a federal grant worth \$1.5 million over five years for which he believes the charter school is well suited. Lehman College is applying for the grant and has agreed to include the charter school as a partner, which would include placing graduate students at the charter school as described in the charter application. Mr. Campbell stated that NYU is also considering applying for that grant and partnering with the charter school. NYU may be willing to allow the charter school to take a leadership role in the grant writing and, as a result, make it more amenable to include some of the school's costs in the grant budget. Mr. Campbell said that he would circulate the grant abstract when it is complete. Mr. Campbell added that Cornell is also a possible higher education partner. Ms. Chemla said that she has a contact at Cornell and can help Mr. Campbell continue conversations with that school. Mr. Campbell said that he would continue his conversations with these higher education institutions and would be better able to pursue them since his leadership role as school principal has been defined.

Meeting Adjourned

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:53.