

SOAR ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

1-888-204-5987

Passcode: 9220108

Wednesday, March 27, 2019 – Rescheduled from March 20, 2019

MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order 5:03pm

Board Members: Thelma Jackson, George Meng and Andy Ferrera are present. Andy Ferrera left the call at 5:47pm. Bev joined at 5:50pm.

Other Participants: Lih Rosenthal, Executive Director of SOAR; Kate Walker, Executive Director of Seneca; Jess Andre, Director of Strategic Engagement joined at 5:17pm and left at 5:47pm.

II. Agenda Approval 5:03pm

Request for amendment to agenda to move action items IX to after correspondence. Motion to approve by Andy Ferrera, seconded by George Meng. Item passes 3-0.

III. Approval of February Meeting Minutes 5:03pm

Motion to approve by Andy Ferrera, seconded by George Meng, no discussion. Item passes 3-0.

IV. Correspondence 5:04pm

- a. Transition action plan, including written notifications
 - i. Document created by the Transition Team of Commission members, SOAR members, and Haid Bloxham from WA Charters. On-track with all notifications and Commission is closely monitoring.
- b. Upcoming Quarterly School Review with the Commission
 - i. Just received the final copy of the review today; will be forwarded to the board.
- c. F-1 Requirements due soon
 - i. Confirm a F-1 or F-180 – Dr. Thelma will clarify if it is a full disclosure
- d. WISM Review
 - i. WISM Review occurred a few weeks ago; review went well.
- e. WA Charters grant report
 - i. Final payment was originally not scheduled until June 1st but we have asked them to move payment up. WA Charters in agreement and final grant payment will be released soon and report will be due at the same time.

V. Public Comment 5:08pm

Public Comment bypassed as no members of the public were present.

VI. Executive Reports 5:12pm

- a. Board Chair Report
 - i. Dr. Thelma is continuing to meet regularly with Lihi
 - ii. House just released report about Education in WA. Lihi will follow-up with Mitch Price at WA Charters for a short summary of the legislation and implications for charter sector.
- b. School Leader Report
 - i. Staffing, enrollment, operations (Lihi)
 - 1. Rate of change is high; things are going smoothly. April budget based on 150 enrollment; close but haven't hit that yet. We continue to make staffing adjustment – Celeste, Associate Administrator, left her role. Special Education teacher and Therapist are spending one to two days supporting other schools which helps to reduce costs to SOAR. New bus schedule after Spring Break will be implemented which will reduce from two busses to one bus.
 - 2. Andy thanked Lihi for her leadership and for managing the budget appropriately. Dr. Thelma concurs.
- c. School updates (Sasha)
 - i. Not present due to participation at Educator Career Fair with the other SOAR teachers.

VII. Committee Updates 5:19pm

- a. Finance, George Meng & Lihi Rosenthal
 - i. Tracking enrollment very closely and making adjustments as needed. Forecast is based on an average enrollment across the year.
 - ii. Team is continuing to seek cost savings wherever possible, such as not replacing a staff member who have left or to consolidate a current resource.
 - iii. An on-going effort required to identify the continued financial impact of potential liabilities related to school closings.
 - iv. It will be important for the Board to continue their Board Member Insurance after the closure. Revenues have to be reconciled based on actual attendance; this could change with a future audit.
 - v. Current estimates project the school year ending with a negative balance of - \$22k. Seneca has offered to close the gap for SOAR and Board needs to identify how best to minimize this gap. This still assumes that there is \$25k in Board related fundraising. To the extent that the Board is not successful with the initial allocations, there will be a larger deficit at the end of the year. We are making sure we are as lean as possible without destabilizing the school and losing more families.
- b. Governance, Lihi Rosenthal

- i. No update.
- c. Development, Bev Grant & Lihi Rosenthal
 - i. Fundraising review: Opportunities shared for ways that the Board can engage their networks such as the Dance Recital.
 - ii. Next April board meeting – Dr. Thelma requested that any financial contributions being made by the Board are identified by the next meeting so that a firm amount is known in order to have a clear path forward regarding the budget.

VIII. Items for Board Discussion

5:46pm

- a. May WA Charters conference
 - i. May 3rd and 4th is the Annual Charter. Dr. Thelma expressed interest in attending.
 - ii. SOAR Board members also expressed interest in having the opportunity to share the lessons learned and decisions made to the wide Charter sector and inquired about the best space to do so.
 - 1. Kate Walker suggested the Commission Convening in June as a possibility and will follow-up with Josh Halsey at the Commission.
- b. End-of-year celebrations
 - i. Key dates:
 - 1. Dance Recital – Friday, June 7th evening
 - 2. End of the Year Carnival – Thursday, June 14th all day
 - 3. Staff Party – Tuesday, June 19th afternoon
 - ii. Intention is to make the end of the year as meaningful as possible. Lihi will send Calendar Invites to the Board along with an email with the description of each.
- c. Close-down planning and next steps
 - i. Lihi presented an analysis of anticipated costs post-closure. We have begun conversations with WA Charters and there is some indication that they could help support. Dr. Thelma and Lihi will reach out to Patrick and Ken Berrick, Seneca's CEO will also be in touch with Patrick.
 - ii. Budget was built to get the students through the end of the year; it was not built for the wind down costs.
 - iii. Dr. Thelma asked that the Post-Closure Needs Analysis be reviewed in greater detail at the April Board meeting.
- d. WSIPC and PSESD invoices
 - i. Requesting a reduction in invoices to WSIPC (software system that was sold to SOAR but it has still been in beta testing) and/or PSESD who signed a contract to provide a COO level expertise which SOAR has not received; Haid from WA Charters recommended that pursuing a reduction in PSESD invoices could be likely.
 - ii. Next step: Lihi and Jess to connect with Haid to get recommendations about amount to be reduced; Dr. Thelma and Lihi will then meet with John

from PSESD.

- iii. Jess provided an explanation for WSIPC and Andy supported decision to pursue a reduced invoice given that a financial dashboard has not been available until March.
- iv. Huge gap between what we contracted for and what we have received in both WSIPC and PSESD which has required significant heavy lifting on SOAR. George recommends we pursue aggressively. Andy suggested quantifying total number of hours required by Jess and Haid.

IX. Items for Board Review and Approval

5:09pm

- a. Check register for February, 2019
 - i. Motion to approve by Andy Ferrera, seconded by George Meng. It was noted that checks were already written. Item passes 3-0.
- b. Snow Day waiver
 - i. Lihi reported that SOAR has met the minimum number of instructional minutes despite the reduced schools days given the snow. Therefore it was recommended that SOAR not extend it's school year and pursue a Snow Day waiver. Board members asked questions to clarify. Lihi explained that this process requires a letter to be submitted to OSPI.
 - ii. Motion to approve by Andy Ferrera, seconded by George Meng. Item passes 3-0.
- c. July and August Board meeting dates
 - i. Lihi reported that SOAR is required to hold board meetings since the school will still be a public entity and needs to remain a public entity to receive anticipated apportionment funds.
 - ii. Plan to hold meetings on the third Wednesdays of July and August to be consistent with existing Board meetings.
 - iii. Motion by Andy for third Wed of July and third Wed of Aug by phone; Seconded by George; Item passes 3-0.

X. Adjournment

6:06pm

Next Regular Board Meeting: April 17, 2019 from 5:00-7:00pm at SOAR Academy, 1301 E 34th Street, Tacoma, WA 98404; Dial-In: 1-888-204-5987; Passcode: 9220108