

**YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
1231 North Broad Street – 5th Floor
February 2, 2018**

MINUTES

Present: Martin Brigham, Jared Farbman, Erin McNamara Horvat, Kiley Smith Kelly, Khalilah Lawson (arrived 8:50 a.m.), Scott Lillis (arrived 8:55 a.m.), Melanie McCottry, Michael McPhilmy (arrived 8:58 a.m.), James Mergiotti, James Multari, Nathan Norstrud, Robert Totaro, Sai Yerrapathruni.

Absent: Alfred Essandoh, David E. Thomas, Roxanne Tillman.

Guests: Keith Anderson, Zion Bunn (student), Matti Perilstein (on phone from 9:00-10:30 a.m.), Tiffanie Talley-Baines (joined by phone at 10:00 a.m.)

Staff: Ameen Akbar, Scott Emerick, Adesanya Karade, Brian Leffler, Eva Lexie, Meredith Molloy.

Staff guests: Ted Molloy, Nikkia Moss, Stephanie Waller.

The meeting was chaired and called to order at 8:47 a.m. by Board Chair M. Brigham.

Welcome and Approval of Minutes: (M. Brigham)

The minutes of the regular board meeting of December 15, 2017 were distributed to the board in advance of this meeting. Ten board members were present to vote on the following resolution:

- **Motion** by R. Totaro: **To approve the minutes of the December 15, 2017 board meeting as submitted.** J. Multari second, motion **unanimously approved.**
- K. Lawson joined the meeting following the vote on the minutes.

Facility Update and Facilities Committee: (M. Brigham)

M. Brigham stated that we continue to have some problems related to the building, including frequent power outages that shut down our computer server. Six and a half years remain on our lease. A meeting is being arranged with the Board Chair and another Board member of OIC (our landlord) with the objective of having the problems addressed. Their CEO has recently taken a leave of absence.

- K. Lawson recommended also speaking with the Interim CEO, and reported she had a positive conversation with the Board Chair.
- S. Lillis and M. McPhilmy arrived at the meeting during the facility update.

M. Brigham explained that the Board has an ad hoc Facilities Committee which went dormant for a time but is being revived. Members of the committee will be R. Totaro, A. Fullard and S. Lillis, and we will ask S. Olshin if he is willing to return to the committee.

- K. Anderson volunteered to join and help with this work and was gratefully accepted.

Green Build Presentation: (G. Jenkins and students)

Green Build construction instructor George Jenkins and twelve of his students gave a presentation to the board. They described the evolution of construction instruction and the green building track at YouthBuild Philly, and talked about their goal of having a solar micro-grid which would allow them to practice to become solar installers, while also serving the community. There are many partners who want to help make this happen. They are looking for guidance and support from board members, and invited board members to come and see their work.

Finance Update: (J. Mergiotti)

YBPCS financial statements as of 12/31/17

Financial statements as of December 31 were distributed to the board in advance of this meeting, and a copy is on file with these minutes.

- J. Mergiotti reviewed the financial statements and stated that we are in very good shape and the cash position is stronger than it was at this time a year ago.
- Receivables are about the same, and are all deemed collectable.
- The income statement reflects a higher amount received from the School District due to an increased number of Special Ed students, which is an ongoing trend across the district. Since there are also higher expenditures associated with this, it is generally revenue-neutral.
- Actual receipts of government grants are lower than budget, but this is just a timing gap. Variances on the expense side are also timing-related.
- In response to a question, S. Emerick explained that the Learning Exchange line item is underspent so far; we now have a consultant and will soon hire a Director. Expenses will be higher in year 2 and 3 of the grant.
- A. Karade pointed out this budget was created last May. We will re-forecast for January through June.

Other

- M. Brigham thanked the Finance Committee and staff for working on a financial dashboard which is going to be a wonderful tool when it is complete.

Fundraising Update: (K. Smith Kelly)

2018 fundraising event update

- The fundraising event will be on May 3 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the HIVE at Spring Point. Tickets are available online. They are \$75 each, reduced to \$65 before mid-February.
- It is a board requirement to sell or buy 5 tickets and give an in-kind donation for the auction or raffle.
- Sponsorships are welcome. An information packet about this will be emailed to board members.

Other 2018 campaigns

- The committee is working with S. Phillips on plans for a week-long campaign in April with Starbucks stores in our region. It will include both fundraising and raising awareness of YB Philly.
- J. Multari is doing a March Madness fundraiser.

Board engagement

- K. Smith Kelly and M. McCottry are setting up one-on-ones or small group meetings with board members to talk about helpful connections they can make for fundraising and/or program partnerships. They hope to complete this process with everyone before the end of the fiscal year.

Program Update: (B. Leffler)

B. Leffler distributed and reviewed a handout, a copy of which is on file with these minutes.

Program Outcomes

- B. Leffler reviewed the retention numbers for the class of 2018 so far in comparison to the class of 2017 for the same time period. There were challenges with attendance in 2017 that led to a graduation rate lower than our goal. We are on track for improvement in 2018. He credited a strong recruitment process, as well as staff efforts to build relationships and student engagement.
- He then reviewed placement figures for Year 2 alumni in their first 6 months post-graduation, comparing the classes of 2017 vs. 2016. The figures were very similar. Class of 2016 placement for the full period of measurement has now been completed, and we achieved 72% placement of all students who enrolled in the program that year (whether they graduated or not). This is an all-time high. For those who graduated it would be well over 90%. We hope to achieve this again for the 2017 class. Several factors contribute to this success:
 - Our postsecondary staff has grown.
 - Year 2 students meet with a staff member every month to do an action plan, and then receive a free trans-pass.
 - We have greatly increased partnership opportunities that lead to placements for our students.
- There was a question about placement data by vocational track. This would be useful to highlight in more detail and to analyze annually in determining spending priorities for vocational training for the following year.
- We are also looking to deepen our data to measure quality of placement.
- The most difficult group to place has been Special Ed students with a behavioral support diagnosis, regardless of track. We are looking for organizations that would work with this population and help us place them.

Special Ed Population

- B. Leffler reviewed data from 2015 and 2017 regarding the percentage of Special Ed students in our population. It has increased significantly from 28% in 2015 to 48% in 2017. The statewide average is around 15-17%, but we have been told that alternative schools in Philadelphia range from 30-60%.
- These are students who came in with an IEP. We rarely add new diagnoses to the group, but if we were to include all students who are significantly below grade level we would have a much higher number.
- We have hired additional Special Ed staff and counselors, and are looking into additional training and coaching for all staff on how to work with these students.
- We serve all students whether they have an IEP or not. Our efforts in building the climate and culture serve all students. We use an inclusion model for Special Ed students, but with extra help. All students do action planning.

- There was a discussion about the risk that needs will increase faster than resources, and how best to address this. Other organizations face the same problem. Can we become a hub to partner and help others do this work?

Governance Update: (K. Lawson)

- K. Lawson asked T. Talley-Baines (a member of the Program Committee who was attending the meeting as a guest by phone) to introduce herself. She also mentioned M. Perilstein who was on the phone for the earlier part of the meeting and is interested in committee service. She thanked K. Anderson, a member of the Finance Committee for attending as well.
- A written Governance Committee report was distributed to the board in advance of this meeting, and a copy is on file with these minutes.

Pipeline Update

- K. Lawson spoke about ongoing recruitment efforts to bring new people onto our committees, and from there as appropriate onto the board.
- T. Daniel and C. Esser will be nominated to return to the board in June after a year off. We also have several new candidates in mind.
- S. Yerrapathruni is currently filling a partial term and will be eligible to be elected to a full term in June.
- The Grads on Board program is working towards preparing a few YB alumni for possible board service.
- S. Phillips has resigned from her board position due to scheduling conflicts, but will remain engaged as a member of the Fundraising committee.
- A. Essandoh will reach his 9-year term limit in June, but will remain as a member of the Finance Committee.
- M. McPhilly will be retiring from board service in June after giving 12 years to YB Philly. K. Lawson spoke highly of the leadership he has brought.

Board Retreat

- It is critical that we have full participation from the board at the retreat on May 11. We will spend 60-70% of the day on some deep-dive issues that are part of our strategic planning process, and the rest of the time on student/alumni leadership, including interaction with young people.

Board Assessment

- Board members will be asked to complete their individual self-assessment rubric in the spring. Conflict of interest disclosures and Statements of Financial Interests will also be due. These forms will be brought to the March board meeting as well as distributed via email.

Board Orientation

- All important documents and information for board members will be available in an online folder.
- We are thinking of pairing each new board member with an experienced one as a mentor.

Other

- Part 2 of our Social Identities training has been scheduled for everyone who was able to complete part 1. For those who couldn't attend, we will look for other opportunities to share the information.

- K. Lawson thanked those who signed up for the Level Up mentoring program and asked that they give feedback on the program to staff.
- E. Lexie distributed belated holiday gifts to the board members.

Other Updates: (S. Emerick)

HR Committee

- S. Emerick spoke about how heavily we have relied on M. McPhilly's expertise in HR. As he prepares to step down, the short-term strategy is to have the Finance and Program committees each take on portions of the HR work. For the longer term, we are thinking through how best to bring new expertise in and again have a board HR committee.
- He announced that YB Philly again won a top workplace award, but some of the scores went down with regard to communication and opportunities for growth, and the Senior Management Team is working on addressing this.
- Spring Point may offer some HR consulting that we can tap into.

Government Relations

- There is a new YouthBuild Pennsylvania Coalition consisting of six active YB programs. They have a new website, bylaws, and board. There are plans for a statewide basketball tournament between the programs in March, and a statehouse day in Harrisburg in April focusing on young people's leadership. Anyone wishing to participate should notify S. Emerick.
- Some other states have state budget line items to support YouthBuild. We don't expect that in the short term, but we do want to build statewide awareness of the YB movement.

Strategic Plan

- S. Emerick referred to a strategic planning update handout that had been distributed.
- The plan will include a review of our previous plan to update any implementation items still needed. However, the main focus will be on four major case studies:
 - Learning Exchange business plan: A pro bono consulting group from PennPAC will support our case study on the business model for the Learning Exchange. The first three years of the exchange are supported by a grant, but the goal is to have it become at least revenue-neutral and preferably revenue-generating.
 - Under what conditions would we consider expanding enrollment? We have received encouragement from the School District to consider this. We need to figure out whether and how it could work without impacting the quality of our program.
 - Risk assessment and mitigation
 - Facility: Do we want to consider moving in the future? What would be the timing? Should we lease or own? We need to explore all the options, including financing models and capital campaigns.
- We are still thinking through consultants to use for the Strategic Plan as well as the funding for it.

Closing and Adjournment:

- M. Brigham commented on the constant challenges at the school, and how staff are not complaining but always looking at how to do things better. He also remarked about the large amount of work board members do outside of board meetings and how active and thoughtful board members are.

Thirteen board members were present to vote on the adjournment resolution.

- **Motion** by K. Smith Kelly: **To adjourn the meeting.** S. Yerrapathruni second, motion **unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Eva S. Lexie