New Heights Board of Trustees

June 28th, 2021

Starting Time: 5:00pm

Location: Zoom

Brockton, MA 02301

Join Zoom Meeting

**ZOOM Meeting:**

Description:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6822448291>

1. Call to Order at
2. Approved Board Members List
	1. Mike Sullivan
	2. Ollie Spears
	3. Rick Schwartz
	4. Graham Bengen
	5. Judge Phillips
	6. Vinnie Marturano
	7. Emmanuel Daphnis
	8. Steve Bernard
	9. Nicholas Christ
	10. Kimberly Zouzoua
3. Roll Call
	1. Board Members Present
		1. Mike Sullivan (Virtual)
		2. Rick Schwartz(Virtual)
		3. Emmanuel Daphnis (Virtual- left at 6:10)
		4. Steve Bernard (Virtual)
		5. Vinnie Marturano (Virtual)
		6. Judge Phillips (Virtual)
		7. Kimberly Zouzoua (Virtual @ 5:45)
		8. Ollie Spears (Virtual @ 5:45)
	2. Members Absent
		1. Graham Bengen
		2. Nick Christ
4. Reading and Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting from 5/25/2021
	1. Moved by Judge Phillips
	2. Seconded by Rick Schwartz
		1. All in favor
			1. Mike Sullivan (Aye)
			2. Rick Schwartz
			3. Emmanuel Daphnis
			4. Steve Bernard
			5. Vinnie Marturano
			6. Judge Phillips
			7. Unanimous
	3. Reports
		1. Finance - no report
		2. Governance
			1. Vinnie explained that the Governance Committee reviewed the Executive Director’s evaluation. Omari provided a two-page self-evaluation. The results were mostly positive.
			2. The committee also discussed committee members and terms. 4 current members are up for renewal : Graham, Manny, Rick and Mike. Vinnie will contact them in the coming weeks.
			3. New board members will not be actively recruited until after the Board retreat.
			4. Wednesday, August 11th at Camp Yamechas 5:00pm- Board Retreat
				1. Interest in having Kimberly facilitate
			5. Rick motions to accept the report and Judge Philips seconds. Motion passed.
	4. Chairperson’s Report (Mike Sullivan)
		1. Crystal Resignation accepted by the board.
			1. Motion to Accept Emmanuel Daphnis
			2. Seconded by Vinnie Marturano
				1. Mike Sullivan (Aye)
				2. Rick Schwartz (Aye)
				3. Emmanuel Daphnis (Aye)
				4. Steve Bernard (Aye)
				5. Vinnie Marturano (Aye)
				6. Judge Phillips (Aye)
			3. Unanimous accept
	5. Executive Director’s Report (Omari Walker)
		1. 5th Year Program Graduation Decision from State
			1. Omari explains that public schools are funded based on previous year’s enrollment and charters are not, enrollment paid our in quarters
			2. Smith family foundation funding was intended to fund the gap year for public schools where they hold the kids but are not given state funding for their enrollment the first year. This does not work for us, so we are sungint eh smith family grant to support all the supports we give students to ensure success
			3. Needed Permission from the state that they would fund us for them even though they graduate
			4. Retaining kids without a lottery is not consistent with charter school rules- charter school association says we should not graduate these students. State is saying that we do not graduate the students, we hurt both their and our 4 year graduation date.
			5. Woman who runs the state department has written an email ensuring that we will be funded their tuition if we graduate them as the state is asking adn enrolling them.
			6. Forwarded that email to the state charter department and are awaiting their opinion
			7. As it stands right now, we need to graduate our seniors and roll up our juniors to seniors but this is holding us up and could have financial implications if we do it without getting the charter association to agree as well because we are breaking the lottery rules
			8. We are awaiting DESE’s opinions before moving forward
			9. Rick: You have made it very clear but it is disturbing because the 5th year program was never supposed to have a tuition issue, according to Omari. This is the first time we are hearing the possibility this is an issue. It is the reason why we accepted the rant form the smith family foundation. Rick was led to believe the entire planning time that this was not an issue.
			10. Omari: It is now an issue because the state department guidance says it is not, but when we discussed with the charter association, they had concerns. As we look at different departments in the state and make sure we are protecting ourselves. We could accept the email but we want to ensure we are getting all the okays instead of just accepting one.
			11. Rick: Is it late to be doing the due diligence? Lot of time was spent on this. Seems like due diligence should have come earlier
			12. Omari: We asked all these questions throughout the process, however when we went to do the actual work of graduating them, other departments' flags were raised.
			13. Sophia explained the role of Marissa Marino and why her email relates to data reporting for the school
			14. Jess explained that this isn’t the first time New Heights has been in the center of a policy question. There is a precedent that we are not aligned with the charter office in order to meet the state’s goals.
			15. Rick is still concerned that it wasn’t figured out before now.
			16. Jess: Sophia and her team are doing the due diligence to ensure that we are making the right decisions.
			17. Sophia and Maria asked these questions back in the fall to Empower and DESE. They reassured NHCSB that it would be figured out. We are confident that it will be figured out but we need to wait for an appropriate response from the charter school office.
			18. Mike: We all have some concerns but we will wait to hear from Omari on the state’s update
		2. MCC Tuition Reimbursement
			1. NHCSB has been waiting on MCC to determine the reimbursement from MCC’s credit reimbursement.
			2. MCC will reimburse us in total for Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021. The reimbursement is approximately $260,000
			3. In addition, they have also asked for the total amount NHCSB paid for books this school year. No confirmation on book reimbursement.
		3. Student Enrollment
			1. Omari: We always look to keep approx. 735 kids in the building. NHCSB tries to over enroll to create a cushion.
				1. This year NHCSB enrolled approximately 750 students and we never fell below the 735 which allowed us to collect all of the per pupil funds.
				2. We are hoping to balance now with the incoming 6th grade group
		4. Draft Accountability Measures
			1. Omari: Asked Vinnie to have these be the focus of the BOT retreat including measurable goals. The Mission Statement was short and concise. We shifted the mission to include the key design elements. We are, however, committed to our mission but have a purpose statement that includes our key design elements and measurable goals.
				1. Mission Statement
				2. Purpose Statement
				3. Key Design Elements
		5. August 28th - Back to School Kick Off
			1. We ended the school year with fun activities and we would like to do something similar to welcome students back.
			2. Have an event on NHCSB campus to bring activities, food, and services (haircuts).
			3. NHCSB will partner with Pastor Rob Connolly to plan and coordinate the logistics of the event.
			4. Vinnie makes a motion to approve and Rick seconds the motion.
			5. Rick asked why the Board needs approval. Sophia explained that Pastor Connolly would be coordinating the event on our campus.
			6. Judge Philips asked if there are any concerns. Omari shared that there was a concern about insurance, but NHCSB does have insurance coverage for this type of event.
			7. Kimberly expressed concern and asked that volunteers be SORI checked. Sophia explained that volunteers would have to go through the SORI process.
			8. Motion passes unanimously.
			9. Mike asks Sophia to draft an email to him so he could ask Harbor One for possible donations.
	6. New Business
		1. Draft Annual Report (Vote May Not Be Required)
			1. Jess request a motion to accept the report as is with the understanding that the content will be the same but how it is written and the finance report will be edited by Executive team
			2. Invites Board members to make changes but the report is due by the end of July
			3. Rick asked about pages up to 49, including questions from the state. Jess said the document has been cleared up
			4. Vinnie said that the pages are not numbered
			5. Omari said does it make sense to give them the document and let them come back in July
			6. Mike said we vote to accept the draft report. If the board votes to accept understanding that there will be no substantive changes, understanding that we are not looking at the most up to date version. Once we get the final report, the board can review and can convene a meeting fi there are serious issues
			7. Vinnie does not have objections, something like this is left to the experts, so can we add to the motion that it is subject to review by the educational excellence committee?
			8. Omari- there is only one member of the academic excellence committee left so it would be only his vote
			9. Vinnie is comfortable to approving this in draft form subject to revisions for presentation and with plenty of time for the board to review the plan and make comments
			10. Mike: Any questions or concerns please address them to Jess. If there are major concerns,
			11. Motion to accept draft report subject to the conditions: able to make changes for presentation not substance, board able to review
				1. Judge moved
				2. Steve seconded motion
				3. Mike Sullivan (AYE)
				4. Rick Schwartz (AYE)
				5. Vinnie Marturano (AYE)
				6. Kimberly Zouzoua (AYE)
				7. Ollie Spears (AYE)
				8. unanimous
		2. CIPA Compliance (Vote Needed)
			1. Kerson explains the grant associated with this cipa policy
			2. Purchasing tech for students to have ease of access at home
			3. Motion to authorize the acceptance of our CIPA policy by Rick Schwarts
			4. Seconded by Vinnie
			5. Mike Sullivan (Aye)
			6. Emmanuel Daphnis (Aye)
			7. Steve Bernard (Aye)
			8. Judge Phillips (Aye)
			9. Unanimously accepted
		3. DRAFT 1105 W. Chestnut St Lease (Vote Needed)
			1. Omari asked Suzanne to explain the property
			2. Freestanding building
			3. Rent: $6,000/ Month, we are responsible for utilities
			4. Owner responsible for taxes
			5. Board previously authorized Omari to lease for $5000 including utilities
			6. Rick said it would be $12,000 more in rent, who knows about utilities. Questions whether space will be needed for 5 years since we hired 11 new employees with COVID funding, which is expected to go away
			7. Omari explained we are already out of space before those 11, those 11 do not have offices, we are hiring additional admin as we grow
			8. Steve discusses concerns over funds for lease and for utilities, shares Rick’s concerns. Is this the only available spot? Should we not be more responsible for where we spend our money to fit it within the allowed budget?
			9. Omari apologized that he does not have info in front of him to discuss who is utilizing which office spaces. We have been searching for 2-3 months for space, everything is getting more expensive instead of less. This is one of the least expensive properties we have looked at. Concern that we may lose the space and have to cram into the school, compromising confidentiality
			10. Vinnie said the Y is going through a similar situation and pricing is all over the place
			11. Did we have a lawyer for the lease agreement? Yes Frenette has reviewed it and supported us in negotiating
			12. Will add language back in
			13. Motion to authorize Omari to sign the lease for $6,000 plus utilities, generally, as presented to the board with him checking with Frenette to add some additional language regarding being subject to appropriation
				1. Vinnie motioned
				2. Rick Seconded
				3. Mike Sullivan (AYE)
				4. Emmanuel Daphnis (AYE)
				5. Steve Bernard (NAY)
				6. Judge Phillips (AYE)
				7. Motion Carried
		4. 2021-22 School Calendar (Vote Needed)
			1. Omari explained the two changes he is hoping to make: day ends for students at 2:00, 180 days instead of 184 to allow students and staff to have a more regular schedule
			2. Sophia reviewed the calendar including start date, retreat dates, end of school with and without snow days. Need to put the calendar on the website.
			3. Ollie asked if we would be allowed to skip snow days since we can do virtual?
			4. Sophia explained the commissioner has not allowed it
			5. Mike asked how many days less this calendar is for school days compared to the calendar pre-pandemic? 4 days less
			6. Mike: In terms of the end of the school day losing an hour, does that mean we lose 5 hours of instructional time weekly? 4 hours lost, Omari and Sophia has been working on schedule that minimizes transitions and maximizes time in core content areas
			7. Mike: Are we concerned at all about academic excellence as a result of less days and less class time?
			8. Omari: We are not taking away instructional time but study time. Study can be great for kids falling behind but not for the kids who did not need that time to keep caught up- moving that study period to the end and targeting students who need support
			9. Mike: Is there going to be a cost for tutoring? Omari says no, it is in the approved budget
			10. Mike: How much does tutoring cost? Omari asked Suzanne to locate that line item in the budget- it is around $32,000
			11. Rick: With tutoring and extracurricular activities, will you only have one hour of these? Sophia says no, that we would most likely go until 5 or 5:30
			12. Ollie: Have we tried to help students with the BAT bus to get home?
			13. Sophia: yes we post schedules and we worked with our Dean of students to get monthly passes, even for students not staying after school.Never done a free one.
			14. Ollie: Can we put some money in the budget to give kids the bus passes for free? Good idea
			15. Kimberly: could we write directly to the Mass Transit Authority to get the free bus passes? Omari will schedule a meeting with them so see what they can offer us- Boston does this- Sophia will schedule a meeting to see what options we have
			16. Motion to accept the 2021-22 school calendar as presented
				1. Motioned by Ollie
				2. Seconded by Rick
				3. Mike Sullivan (AYE)
				4. Emmanuel Daphnis (AYE)
				5. Steve Bernard (AYE)
				6. Vinnie Marturano ((AYE)
				7. Judge Phillips (AYE)
				8. Kimberly Zouzoua(AYE)
				9. (Unanimous)
		5. School End Time Change (Vote Needed)
			1. Motion to accept change end time
				1. Manny motioned to accept by Vinnie
				2. Seconded by Steve
				3. Mike Sullivan (AYE)
				4. Rick Schwartz(AYE)
				5. Emmanuel Daphnis (AYE)
				6. Judge Phillips (AYE)
				7. Kimberly Zouzoua (AYE)
				8. Ollie Spears (AYE)
				9. Unanimous
5. Reports of Special Committees
	1. Academic Excellence Committee (Pastor Manny)
		1.
	2. Finance Committee (Nick)
		1. YTD Finances
6. Governance Committee (Vinnie)
	* 1. Executive Director Evaluation
7. Special Orders
8. Good of the Order
	1. Announcements
9. Motion to adjourn by
10. Seconded by

Meeting adjourned at