Meeting Date: October 18, 2016

Time: 6:45 PM

Location: 7 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Bill Spinelli (Chairman)

Peter Bonaccorsi (Acting Vice Chairman)

Jenny Hitzeman (Parent Representative)

Kim Rivers (Director)

Rebecca Fredrickson (Director)

Tom Tyler (Secretary)

Non-Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Karin Cevasco (School Director)

Absent Board Members:

John Keicher (Treasurer)

Attending Gate City Staff:

Amy Savoie (Teacher)

Attending Public:

No members of the general public were in attendance.

**Quorum**: 6 of 7 voting members were in attendance at the start of the meeting.

Meeting called to order at 6:49 PM.

Public Comments

No public comments were made.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION (Bonaccorsi/Hitzeman): Motion to approve minutes of the August 16, 2016 meeting as written. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION (Bonaccorsi/Rivers): Motion to approve minutes of September 20, 2016 meeting as amended with Kim’s input in the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Committee Report

Bill Spinelli presented the financials.

MOTION (Bonaccorsi/Tyler): Motion to approve the financials as presented by Bill Spinelli. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION (Rivers/Hitzeman): Motion to accept Form DOE-25 as sent to the Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Parent Surveys on Specific Topics (Curriculum, Communication, Marketing, etc.)

Tom Tyler discussed the Communications work-in-progress Communications survey.

Lighting Proposal

MOTION (Tyler/Fredrickson): Motion to approve the lighting proposal as presented, including the acquiring of $12,878 of debt, payable over 40 months at $321.95 per month, based on projections for efficiency gains exceeding the direct monthly costs. Motion passed unanimously.

Friends Committee Update

Jenny Hitzeman presented the update from the Friends committee. Highlights:

* Margaritas fund raiser went very well. Kindergarten class made a flower pot to raffle. The fund raiser brought in $436.00.
* An Orange Leaf fund raiser is planned for the night of the Holiday Concert.
* The Paint Your Way to 5K fund raising is going fantastic, with 60 registrations so far, including T-shirts, water bottles with logo, etc.
* Fall festival is coming up October 31.
* Ski club (not a fund raiser) info will be coming out this week.

Curriculum Committee

Kim Rivers presented the Curriculum Committee updates. Highlights:

* The rating scale for the report cards is being worked on.
* The exhibition of learning events, like the colonial events last year, are being planned.
* Work continues on the Health and Wellness curriculum.
* We are going to start to have gym classes for the younger grades.

HR, Performance and Compliance Committee (HRPCC)

Peter Bonaccorsi presented the update from the HRPCC:

* We worked on exit interviews surveys.

PR and Marketing Committee

Rebecca Fredrickson presented a report of the PR and Marketing Committee. Highlights:

* We added a team member, Mary Grace Markham.
* We did a marketing video linked from our public Facebook page and web site.
* We created a YouTube channel for the school.
* We participated in Art Walk this weekend, being a participant on the arts community.
* We have completed Showcase Tour (tours targeted at invited guests such as legislators, business leaders, etc.) and planned another one.
* We had meetings to discussion marketing strategy.
* We are updating an old marketing flyer.
* We need more people, 3 or 4 more would be great.

Grant Writing and Endowment Committee

Bill Spinelli presented a report:

* We are having our first committee meeting on Friday, October 21.
* We are engaged in discussions with a grant writer about how their services may help us.

Director’s Report

Karin Cevasco delivered the written Director’s Report in advance of the meeting, included here:

**Gate City Charter School for the Arts**

**Director’s Report**

**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**October 18, 2016**

**Personnel Update**

Deputy Director - Esther Kosofsky

Hiring Committee:  Bill Spinelli, Karin Cevasco, Christina Whitaker

The hiring committee interviewed Esther Kosofsky on Friday, October 7, 2016

There was a meet and greet attended by all teachers on Tuesday, October 11, 2016 after school. Feedback from teachers was positive toward this candidate.

The hiring committee feels that Esther's background in communications, theater, the arts, and expressive arts therapy will serve our school's mission. Her experience with counseling will assist in our teacher to teacher mentoring goals.

I checked Esther’s references and they were all positive. Some mentioned that there would be a learning curve in gaining knowledge in the Common Core State Standards, but Esther gives 110% of herself to everything she does and she will learn quickly. She is magnetic and enthusiastic and said, “I love your school! I am all in!”

**Enrollment Update**

(Distribute Table)

**Curriculum Update - Physical Education Classes for grades 1-4**

Gym classes for grades 1-4 have begun utilizing YMCA instructors

(Distribute Handout)

**Update on HB 126 Commission**

Since September 2015, I have served as a member on the Governor’s Commission to Study Issues Related to Students Receiving Special Education Services While Attending a Chartered Public School. The Commission met for the last time on Monday, October 17, 2016 and the findings and recommendations from the commission were presented in a report that will be presented to Governor Maggie Hassan by the Chair of the Commission, Alan Pardy (NH Special Educators Administration Association) by the end of this month. The majority finding of the Commission is that when charter school staff and district school staff are committed to working together in a collaborative nature to serve the student, things are working well. The overall challenges presented are that the state does not currently have a full understanding of the costs related to special education as a whole, let alone the difference in cost when that child is attending a public charter school. The smaller size of a charter school, coupled with the unique structure of special education responsibility when a child attends a public chartered school as outlined in RSA 194-B:11, III, adds to district costs because the economies of scale are not advantageous in most scenarios. In some cases, such as when the charter school environment reduces the child’s needs for services (a child with anxiety being the number one situation cited), the district benefits from a cost savings.  However, when charter school staff and district school staff have a collaborative working relationship, all parties benefit. It was the Commission’s majority opinion that the rights of the student with special education needs should be protected at every level when that family decides to enroll in a public chartered school. The full Commission’s report with all its findings and recommendations will be available publicly after November 1.

**Debate Club Request for Field Trip to Washington DC**

(distribute handout)

Field trip dates April 16-19, 2017

Close Up ([www.closeup.org](http://www.closeup.org))

Fundraising to cover cost of trip through Close Up. Close up will hold on to funds for the school and will keep an account that carries over from one year to the next to support the next group of students. Donors can contribute to one specific student or to the school in general. The school decides how to distribute those funds to students. Close Up offers scholarship money for the school to decide how to distribute to students.

Cost to school is for substitute teachers to cover 6th grade and ⅞ Grade Humanities

MOTION: (Tyler/Bonaccorsi): Motion to grant *conceptual approval* for the School Director to pursue developing a plan for a field trip to Washington DC in April, 2017, for the 7th and 8th grade students involved in the Debate Club, in accordance with the policy on field trips. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: (Bonaccorsi/Rivers): Motion to enter Non-Public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Entered non-public session at 9:02 PM.

Exited non-public session at 9:22 PM.

MOTION: (Bonaccorsi/Rivers): Motion to confirm the hiring of Esther R. Kosofsky as the Deputy Director per recommendation of the hiring committee. Motion passed 5/0/1.

MOTION: (Bonaccorsi/Hitzeman): Motion to approve Non-Public minutes form the September 20, 2016, meeting as amended during the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION PM (Bonaccorsi/Tyler) Motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:32 PM.

Next Meeting: November 15, 2016.