

August 13, 2020

MINUTES OF THE
UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, August 13, 2020
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DRAFT

Members Present:

Chair DeLaina Tonks (*refrains from voting, unless otherwise noted)
Vice Chair Bryan Bowles
Member Cynthia Phillips
Member Jim Moss
Member Krystle Bassett
Member Michelle Smith

Staff Present:

Jennifer Lambert
Assistant Attorney General David Jones
Amber Hellstrom
Stewart Okobia
Greg Connell
Marie Steffensen
James Madsen
Jenna Magnetti
Robert Kohutek

Others Present:

Stephanie Speicher (soon to be sworn in board member), Mike Haynes, Cynthia Simpson (ITCL), David Reeves (ITCL), Michael Simpson (ITCL), Marlene Drake (SSS), Todd Hepworth (SSS), Brad Gunnell (SSS), Mike Weight (SSS), Jessica Christopher (SSS), Sterling Kelling (FPAO), Laura Oliver (FPAO), Cameron Cotter (FPAO), Marvin Aiono (CNTA), Evan Clark (CNTA), Edris Netzler (CNTA), Doug Pike (APS), Justin Hsia (APS), Crystal Huang (APS), Dr. Barbara Hong (APS), Aimee DiBrienza (EHS), Sondra Jones (EHS), Jessica Denevan (EHS), Thomas Wootton (EHS), Randall McUne (EHS), Maria S. LaBarge (USAS), Katie Robinson (USAS), Sarah Ruiz (USAS)

Call to Order

Chair Tonks called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM

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Pledge of Allegiance

There was no flag present so the Pledge was not made.

Board Chair Report

Chair Tonks read a statement about the lack of an anchor location due to health and safety, then welcomed -parents and stakeholders back to school and thanked them for their efforts, welcomed Ms. Stephanie Speicher as the SCSB's newest board member, and welcomed USBE Member Mike Haynes as liaison on the SCSB.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Lambert discussed being invited to speak on school re-opening at the legislative special session, currently advertising for an educational coordinator position, moving Mr. Stewart Okobia to a financial manager position, and offered a thanks to Salt Lake County for providing CARES Act funding to local charter schools.

Public Comment

Mr. Chris Helvey of Freedom Preparatory Academy gave public comment concerning Freedom Preparatory Academy—Online's proposal using an identical name to their already established charter school.

Consent Calendar

A) July 28, 2020 Minutes, B) Monthly Financial Report, C) Beehive Science & Technology Academy Amendment, D) Fund and Program Accounting Certification, E) The Center for Creativity, Innovation and Discovery Charter Agreement, F) DaVinci Academy Charter Agreement, G) Endeavor Hall Amendment, H) Enhanced Kindergarten Early Intervention Program – Optional Extended Kindergarten (OEK) Funding.

Motion

Member Phillips moved, and Member Smith seconded, "that we approve the consent agenda as described and written." The motion carried unanimously.

Introduction to Proposals and Process

Vice Chair Tonks informed the board that Lights Out Academy and Impact Academy withdrew their proposals.

Ms. Marie Steffensen introduced the format and process in which each group will propose their schools.

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Proposal Presentation: Institute for Technology Centered Leadership

Ms. Marie Steffensen played a video provided by the Institute for Technology Centered Leadership and the group fielded questions from board members.

Proposal Presentation: Santaquin Science School

Member Smith declared a conflict of interest owing to Santaquin Science School's board chair being the aunt of Member Smith's husband.

Ms. Marie Steffensen played video provided by Santaquin Science School then the group fielded questions from board members.

Proposal Presentation: Freedom Preparatory Academy—Online

Ms. Marie Steffensen played a video provided by Freedom Preparatory Academy—Online then the group fielded questions from board members.

Proposal Presentation: Camino Nuevo Technical Institute

Ms. Marie Steffensen played a video provided by Camino Nuevo Technical Institute then the group fielded questions from board members.

Proposal Presentation: Aurora Preparatory School

Ms. Marie Steffensen played a video provided by Aurora Preparatory School then the group fielded questions from board members.

Proposal Presentation: Edge High School

Ms. Marie Steffensen played a video provided by Edge High School then the group fielded questions from board members.

Proposal Presentation: Utah School of Arts and Sciences

Ms. Marie Steffensen played a video provided by the Utah School of Arts and Sciences then the group fielded questions from board members.

Discussion and Vote on Proposals Invited to Complete Full Application

Motion

Member Phillips moved, and Member Moss seconded, "to invite Institute for Technology

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Centered Leadership to complete a full application to bring back to the board. “ he motion carried with following votes:

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Moss—Yes

Member Smith—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Vice Chair Bowles—Yes

Discussion to the Motion

Whether the group understands the difference between public and private schools; wanting to know what makes the school unique and stand out; wanting someone who can navigate legal and financial obligations on their board, and concern for how students will be engaged and supported was discussed.

Motion

Vice Chair Bowles moved, and Member Bassett seconded, “that Santaquin Science School be moved onto a full application.” The motion carried with the following votes;

Vice Chair Bowles—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Moss—Yes

Member Smith—Abstained because proposing board chair is her husband’s aunt.

Discussion to the Motion

Revisiting the name to better articulate what they are trying to accomplish and concerns about transportation were discussed.

Motion

Member Phillips moved, Member Smith seconded, “to invite Freedom Preparatory Academy—Online to-- consider their application more fully and bring it back to us next year.” The motion carried with the following votes:

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Smith—Yes

vice Chair Bowles—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Member Moss—Yes

Discussion to the Motion

Potential of the school, experience that could be brought from other states, desire to see them more defined, think of the value they will add to students of the state, and concern of primary grades with online format was discussed.

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Motion

Member Moss moved, and Member Phillips seconded, “that we invite Camino Nuevo Technical Academy to complete a full application.” The motion carried with the following votes:

Member Moss—Yes

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Member Smith—Yes

Vice Chair Bowles—No

Discussion to the Motion

Budget making of breaking the success of the full application, and how the group plans to serve the underserved, was discussed.

Motion

Vice chair Bowles moved, and Member Smith seconded, “that we move Aurora Preparatory Academy forward to the full application process.” The motion carried with the following votes:

Vice Chair Bowles—Yes

Member Smith—Yes

Member Moss—Yes

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Discussion to the Motion

Fan of dual immersion but concerned about having two foreign languages, and need for a plan to make sure they have well prepared and licensed teachers to accommodate language program was discussed.

Motion

Vice Chair Bowles moved, and Member Smith seconded, “that we invite Edge High School to continue to do some work and really understand who they are and what they want to accomplish and bring a proposal back to us in an ensuing year, but not this year.” The motion carried with the following votes:

Vice Chairr Bowles—Yes

Member Smith—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Member Moss—Yes

Member Phillips—Yes

Discussion to the Motion

Appreciation for CTE pathways and sense of community and education philosophy, and how distance learning portion would be implemented was discussed.

Motion

Vice Chair Bowles moved, and Member Smith seconded, “not to move Utah School of Arts and

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Sciences forward to the application process this year and encourage them to go through a submission process in an ensuing year.” The motion carried with the following votes:

Vice Chair Bowles—Yes

Member Smith—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Moss—Yes

Discussion to the Motion

Unfairness to them and students to invite them to complete the full application at this time and the need for a full board of individuals interested and excited about the project was discussed.

Board Policy Amendments (After Being Posted for Public Comment)

Communications policy

Review of Facilities Contracts or Financing Agreements for Charter Schools

Executive Director Lambert commented that the “Communications” policy and the “Review of Facilities Contracts or Financing Agreements for Charter Schools” policy were posted for more than thirty days. The “Communications” policy received no public comment, but the “Review of Facilities Contracts or Financing Agreements for Charter Schools” received multiple comments.

Motion

Member Phillips moved, and Member Smith seconded, “that we adopt the Communications policy.” The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Stewart Okobia presented on the public comments received on the “Review of Facilities Contracts or Financing Agreements for Charter Schools” and discussed proposed changes.

Concerns with language and existence of a draft before a school’s board votes on it was discussed.

Motion

Member Phillips moved, and Member Moss seconded, “that we post this policy and its revisions to continue to receive public comment on this policy and consider it at a future meeting.” The motion carried unanimously.

SCSB Goals

Vice Chair Bowles updated the board on its goals.

Motion

Vice Chair Bowles moved, and Member Phillips seconded, “that we look at these goals more thoroughly at our next meeting.” The motion carried unanimously.

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Letter in Support of Charter Schools Across the Nation

Chair Tonks spoke of a letter Mr. Royce Van Tassell drafted in support of charter schools in response to rhetoric from the Biden campaign.

Motion

Member Moss moved, and Member Phillips seconded, “to support, and sign, Mr. Royce Van Tassel’s letter.” The motion carried unanimously.

Request for Enrollment Cap Flexibility for SY2020-2021: *Utah Connections Academy and Utah Virtual Academy*

Chair Tonks declared a conflict of interest as the principal of Mountain Heights Academy and recused herself from this agenda item, handed over the responsibilities of chair to Vice Chair Bowles, then left the meeting.

Representatives of Utah Connections Academy discussed the size of their waitlist and the need the community needs.

Representatives of Utah Virtual Academy also discussed their waitlist and needs of parents in the community during these unique times.

Process was discussed.

Motion

Member Moss moved, and Member Phillips seconded, “that we implement the expedited process that has been described that would allow each school to submit a request to temporary lift (for this coming school year) the caps by 1,000 for Utah Connections Academy and 1,500 for Utah Virtual Academy; that we move expeditiously on that request such that if we approve a submission with the conditions included from our staff that we could inform the State Board by Tuesday so that if they are in agreement we can also approve and move expeditiously and inform the legislature so that they can provide the funding necessary to support those students.” The motion carried with the following votes:

Member Moss—Yes

Member Phillips—Yes

Member Bassett—Yes

Vice Chair Bowles—Yes

Adjourn

Motion

Member Moss moved to adjourn.