

**LEARNING ACADEMY, INC.
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES**

Date: July 8, 2015
Time: 11:00 AM
Location: Learning Academy of Santa Rosa
5880 N. Stewart Street
Milton, Florida

I. Call to Order, Review of Public Notice, Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 11:09 am by Chairperson Lt. Jim Killingsworth. Board Members present were Lt. Jim Killingsworth, David Johnson, Jo Henderson and Robin King. Guests present were Dr. Bill Rader, Terri Roberts, Ray Sansom, Kara Whitney and Amy Pupo.

II. Approval of Minutes, March 31, 2015

The minutes were approved on a motion by Mr. King, seconded by Ms. Henderson.

III. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was approved on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. King.

IV. Public Comment for any registered speaker - none

**V. Consent Items
Personnel Recommendations/Changes**

Mr. Ray Sansom, Vice President of Human Resources and Administration, presented the personnel changes since the last Board meeting. The personnel changes were approved on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. King.

VI. Report and Discussion

A. Financial Reports

a. FY 2014/15 Financial Report/Final Budget

Ms. Roberts, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, presented the financial report/final budget as of May 31. Financials have been sent to our auditors. Ms. Roberts also reported that Learning Academy is ending the year in a good place, the highest reserve in the history of the school, \$208,568. It was stated that an amendment may need to take place. The FTE count (final average, March through June) is 157, up from 150 reported at the last Board Meeting in March. This represents an increase of 7 FTE. The majority of the Capital Outlay funds were

used to renovate the portables for the increased enrollment and to remodel facilities. It's a good thing we have roughly \$299,000 since the Capital budget is being cut next year and we will need every bit to use on expenses. The total fund balance for the year will be around \$300,000. Expenses may start out low, however, we spend a lot in the summer months. Ms. Roberts mentioned that the school is stable, we have enough in reserves.

The FY 2014/15 Financial Reports and Final Budget were approved on a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. King.

Further discussions included Mr. Johnson asking Ms. Whitney what the highest enrollment count during the year was and she answered 208. Mr. Johnson explained needing accurate data to take to the district for the budget, as they have requested it and Ms. Roberts goes conservative on the number, however, a more accurate portrayal of increased enrollment could help our budget. Ms. Whitney will supply these numbers. Ms. Whitney mentioned here that there are 20 students coming as summer referrals from the district and they are a challenge to stay. Mr. Johnson said there is a need to meet with parents, as there is still a negative connotation to the school and management. Dr. Rader mentioning that an End of the Year report will assist in staying on-task for each school, could be an image-changer. Ms. Whitney mentioned that more students are here by choice now and Mr. Johnson said the word on the street is that the charter school option is popular and flexible these days. Ms. Whitney mentioned LASR's partnership with Compass Recovery to focus on a group of students and work with seniors on a graduation plan. Ms. Henderson mentioned to the group that we are fortunate to have Ms. Whitney directing the school since she cares a great deal for the students. Ms. Whitney talked about how she has a great staff that works well as a team to get the job done.

b. FY 2015/16 Budget

Ms. Roberts, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, also presented the FY 2015/16 budget. There will be a 3% increase from the state, 3% salary raises are built in as well. She mentioned that several long term substitutes have been hired as full time Teachers. Funds have also been moved in the budget to facilities. Ms. Roberts also reported that the capital fund is decreasing from \$69,000 to \$45,000, due to legislature lowering funds, each year the fund "pot" is getting smaller. Ms. Roberts explained that this is a long term problem and will need to be addressed; Lt. Killingsworth mentioned that the state of Florida has experienced much growth (~30%) in charter schools. Ms. Roberts said we were still waiting to hear back on the Title One budget but that she is hoping it is higher.

The FY 2015/16 Budget was approved on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. King.

B. 401k Authorization

Ms. Roberts presented the implementation of a 401(k) retirement plan for the school staff. It was discussed that it is a good recruiting tool for new employees and there would be a plan for an employer match if the Board approves the plan. An employer match would increase participation. The plan provider is Ohio National and the experience with that provider has been positive so it is proposed that they will cover this plan also. Matching and vesting options were discussed, to be determined at a later time. Mr. Sansom will be the plan sponsor for the plan.

The approval of the 401(k) plan was approved on a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. King.

C. Director's Report

Ms. Whitney, Site Administrator, reported on the following: That the students have experienced increases in their test scores. Reading and Math both have increased gains this year (2014 data). A+ funds that were previously awarded were based on these scores. Ms. Whitney explained that her and her team are always searching for ways to "be better" and that it's a challenge since there's really no "measuring stick" to compare to - other charter schools have the same issues, however, there are differences to the area and population. She also mentioned that her staff has a great attitude and a heart for the kids. Ms. Roberts mentioned that there are two buses coming, as well. Ms. Whitney stated that 39 students graduated this year and that excited the staff in many ways. Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. Sansom for his leadership, that it has made a difference and paid off.

D. Management Report

a) Management Contract

Dr. Rader presented the reviewed and updated Rader Group management contract for approval. As Rader does finance for the school, it's feasible for Terri Roberts to be named the official CFO for Learning Academy. The Board approved years ago for Ms. Roberts to make decisions on its behalf, now is the time to put it into the contract. Appointing Ms. Roberts would allow her the authority to make adjustments to the budget (less than \$200,000) without official Board approval. Ms. Roberts would also be able to deviate by roughly 15% of the budget before forthcoming Board meetings. However, emergency meetings will be called if necessary. Also within this contract is giving authorization to Ray Sansom to hire, fire and make staffing decisions without approval from the Board. Another revision from the last contract is to have Rader Group hire an employee to work with all the schools (a shared position) as the Director of Instruction. This position has been staffed as of August 1, 2015. This contract also defines the term and however long the charter goes is how long it remains valid. Compensation/fees are set by the Board, it's included in this contract based on the partnership and services. There are also termination rights included in the renewal as well. A list of services has been provided in the Board packet, Facilities is not included but we will add to the list as we go forward.

b) Facilities Update

Further discussions included Lt. Killingsworth commenting on the growing facilities issue here at the school. He said it was the biggest issue on the agenda and we need to do something. Ms. Henderson agreed. Dr. Rader said he had walked the property with Mr. Sansom and assessed the boundaries – at this time portables could be added but it is not a long-term fix, that this is the year to find a new building and this was the first year the school had funds to spend. It was noted that a decision needs to be made; several areas in Milton are not feasible or attractive, that we may need to sell the land and look for new facilities. Our existing portables are seeing major wear and tear due to age and use. Ms. Roberts raised that our immediate concern is how many students we can accommodate here. Dr. Rader stated it could take up to 2 years for a new campus to be complete and a year for a pre-built facility to be ready for move-in.

The Management Report was approved on a motion by Mr. King, seconded by Mr. Johnson.

VII. Other Action Items - none

VIII. Emergency Items - none

IX. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items - none

X. Board Member Matters

Ms. Roberts tentatively scheduled the next Board Meeting for October 28th at 11:00 a.m. Ms. Whitney asked where she should office new CEDAC Anne Barr – that there is no space – Mr. Johnson will check in with the district and let Ms. Whitney know.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:06 pm by the Chairperson Lt. Killingsworth.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Pupo, Acting Recorder