

Los Feliz Charter School for the Arts Board Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2010 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
ExED Office 11858 LaGrange Ave, 2nd Floor L.A., CA 90025
APPROVED

BOARD MEMBERS:

Present: Karin Newlin, Marta Alcumbrac, Gabrielle Samuels (via phone), Marissa Chibas-Preston, Sharon Sutton, Michael Bishop (via phone until 6:30 pm), George Abrams (via phone)

Absent: Sharon Sutton, Robert Greenberg

Quorum? Yes.

Also Present: Joe Meza, Mary Ann Gallo

PROCEEDINGS:

- Marta Alcumbrac called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.
- Alcumbrac moves to approve the minutes from the June 17 Board Meeting. Marissa Chibas-Preston seconds. Michael Bishop abstains as he was absent from that meeting. Ayes via roll call: Alcumbrac, Gabrielle Samuels, Chibas-Preston, Sharon Sutton. Motion carries.
- Alcumbrac opens discussion of 2010/2011 budget. She notes the exceptional nature of this moment for LFCSA. She adds that she wishes it weren't necessary to make cuts and underscores her respect for and value of teachers. She then asks Karin Newlin to make her presentation.
- After talking about the tremendous journey to get to this moment & the changes ahead, Newlin Use a Powerpoint presentation to illustrate the successful fundraising in past years, what she views as top priorities and biggest challenges for the coming year, and to detail where she thinks cuts to the budget can be made.
- There is a short discussion about class size. It is noted that most schools see some attrition in 5th and 6th grades.
- Chibas-Preston then gives her own perspective on where she would like to see cuts. She mentions an inspiring meeting in which she participated that explored the role of the Arts in LAUSD schools. She sees the potential for collaboration with other schools. She talks about how LFCSA should honor its mission and thereby stay competitive when going after money from foundations.
- After a short discussion of how arts instruction would be handled, Chibas-Preston notes that her proposal is similar to Newlin's, and they could work together to structure the cuts.
- Joe Meza points to a couple of positive changes to the budget which greatly reduce the negative cash balance in June that was previously reflected.
- Michael Bishop shares his opinion of the proposed cuts and what he would like to see in terms of LFCSA's current and future financial situation. He notes that California's public schools are functioning with 18% less funds than only 2-3 years ago.
- Meza mentions the possibility of selling more receivables later in the school year, but adds that it would come at a very high cost.

- Bishop says his priorities are a positive net income and positive cash flow. The end goal is to relieve dependence on selling receivables and build LFCSA's financial portfolio to a point where the school could borrow from itself if needed.
- It is noted that there is a possibility of SB740 money coming in this year.
- Newlin, while noting that she has tremendous respect for Bishop's position, underscores the unique nature of this year and cautions against making cuts so deep that the program suffers.
- Bishop also points out that Schwarzeneger still hasn't signed the state budget, and that could have unforeseen consequences.
- After a brief discussion, it is noted that the budgets proposed by Newlin and Chibas-Preston reflect similar savings, so the Board will have to examine wherein the differences lie.
- Alcumbrac notes that charter schools are run more like small businesses than traditional schools.
- Meza adds that the closer to zero (up from negative) that the cash balance gets, the greater the possibility of exploring other loan sources instead of selling receivables.
- The Board looks at the budget expenses, line by line, to find any possible areas to save.
- There is a discussion of the need to search for an Executive Director. It is decided that a search committee, headed by Samuels, will be formed for that purpose.
- Chibas-Preston moves to adopt by Newlin's budget proposal, Proposal C, with the modifications as discussed, recognizing that the budget is built on assumptions and that while things can change, the Board is committed to the school's mission. Sharon Sutton seconds. Ayes via roll call: Sutton, Alcumbrac, Chibas-Preston, Bishop, Samuels, Abrams. Motion carries.
- In response to a question from Samuels, Chibas-Preston explains that the budget for arts instructors is a combo of her & Newlin's proposals. Two arts teachers are being hired and CAP instructors (through CalArts) will supplement.
- Alcumbrac notes that she would like to discuss who will be writing the proposal for charter renewal.
- There is a brief discussion of agenda for August 21st Board Retreat/Meeting as well as mention of various community members who will be attending.
- Newlin notes that she will send out the results of the CORE-GRASP meetings, and that she, Chibas-Preston and Samuels will fine tune the retreat agenda.
- Meza outlines the key changes to the budget that resulted from the meeting.
- Alcumbrac moves to adjourn at 9:10pm.

Minutes submitted by Mary Ann Gallo.