

Los Feliz Charter School for the Arts
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 14, 2011 7:00pm
2709 Media Center Drive Los Angeles, CA
Approved

Board members present: Matthew Shenoda, Karin Newlin, Michael Garces, Tracy Prinz, Michael Bishop, Sharon Sutton (via phone), Bob Greenberg, Tony Butka, Darcy Mellinger, Gabrielle Samuels

Absent: None.

Quorum: Yes.

Also present: Mary Ann Gallo, Joe Meza, Melissa Samuels, Marta Alcumbrac, Cyrice Griffiths, Tish Hicks

Proceedings:

- Michael Bishop calls meeting to order at 7:10pm.
- Michael Garces moves to approve the minutes from 3/10/11. Tony Butka seconds.
- Bishop asks for Public Comments (Agenda Item II) Melissa Samuels reads from a letter she has written about financial crisis and her concerns as a parent, Communications Committee Co-Chair and Co-Chair of the Middle School/High School committee. Marta Alcumbrac, referring to a downtown Los Angeles school with a foundation that fundraises to support their terrific program, asks that the Board consider hiring a grant writer and/or a professional development person as they look at the budget for the coming year.
- Darcy Mellinger speaks on Protocol for Board Meetings (Agenda Item III). She asks about Brown Act & Robert's Rules of Order and wonders about how public comments should be handled in the future. She is looking for cohesion and consistency as to how meetings are conducted. Bishop says that it is the Board chair's responsibility to oversee the proceedings. He suggests that all Board members purchase copies of The Brown Act and the latest copy of Robert's Rules of Order. He asks if other Board members would like to comment on this. Sharon Sutton and Karin Newlin share their thoughts. Bishop expresses the need for establishing a protocol on record. He says that it is at the pleasure of the Board about how formal or informal they want to be. Butka says that he can draft a standard protocol. Tracy Prinz reads from the By-Laws which has a rather sparse description. Butka will draft a simple policy & present at next meeting.
- In the interest of time, Bishop suggests moving up Agenda Items: 9, 13, 8 & 10.
- Butka begins the budget planning discussion (Item IX). Bishop talks about "panicked" nature of conversation surrounding the school's financial situation, and advises exercising calm as the Board proceeds with the discussion. He talks about the news coming out of the Governor's office and their budget cuts. He refers to the wide range from the worst case to best case scenarios. He believes the worst case is unlikely b/c it would push too many districts into receivership, which the state won't let happen. He says that no matter what, times will get tough, but he cautions against focusing on the worst case. Butka urges that the Board meet before the end of the month to work exclusively on budget. Bishop says that the State's January budget is the one that is in writing and therefore the one they must refer to for now. There is further discussion about the timeline and potential impact of Governor's budget. Butka adds that there should be a conversation about long range sustainability. Bishop says that it is imperative for ExED to have the assumptions prepared in advance of the meeting. Meza, Bishop, Butka & Newlin will meet by phone or in person before the Board meeting so that Meza will have a draft ready to share. The budget Board meeting is scheduled for 7pm on Monday April 25th.
- Meza talks about ADA projections and wonders how conservative the Board would like him to be. Newlin believes that they will be fully enrolled at 520 students for 2011/2012, but suggests setting the expectation at 93% ADA based on the school's history. Discussion follows.

- Meza begins presentation on the current financials. He distributes the "financial dashboard". Meza then distributes a dashboard of the financials if they weren't factoring receivables. Bishop highlights that Meza is making the case for LFCSA's need for factoring receivables. Meza says that they did meet a different lender at the CCSA conference who says they will be more cost effective. Discussion about "Trans" loan option and probability of it opening to charter schools. Bishop urges Charter schools applying pressure to get LAUSD open this option up. \$1.1 million of receivables sold as of June 30th. Discussion follows. Bishop emphasizes that this financial situation will extend through 2015/16 at least.
- Meza points out that the combination of not being fully enrolled for most of the year and low ADA cost \$150,000 from what was budgeted. Bishop talks about how growing as a charter is tough financially b/c they are budgeted based on previous year's enrollment. Expansion of a grade does mean an immediate increase in funds, but expansion of class size or class numbers in existing grades doesn't mean an immediate increase in money per the "Pensac" funds. Bishop adds that although we will have increased revenue due to the increase in enrollment those funds will be vulnerable to deferrals.
- Discussion about need for transparency so that parents will be better educated. Per a comment from Samuels, Bishop talks about need for a fundraising arm of the school or Board. He talks about need to establish that for sustainability as well as a better relationship with the parents.
- Bishop asks Meza to present the P2 report (Item XIII). Meza explains that it is a data gathering report and looks at non-resident students.
- Butka moves to approve the P2 report. Shenoda seconds. Motion carries by general consent.
- Newlin mentions an LA Weekly reporter who was inquiring about non-resident students. Newlin invited him to tour the school, which he did. She wanted to the Board to be aware that these types of questions are being raised. Bishop asks what the preferences for enrollment are. Newlin lists the following: 1. Siblings, 2. Employees, 3. Free & reduced lunch (up to 40% per grade), 4. LAUSD (resident students). Newlin says that the free & reduced lunch population for the next year, as currently enrolled, should be 33%. Prinz asks about the actual numbers of free and reduced lunch applicants for this coming year. Newlin will follow up with an email. Prinz emphasizes that increased community outreach is needed.
- Mary Ann Gallo speaks about fundraising (Item VIII). She explains what the Annual Give has achieved up to this point, what it's next steps are, and what the fundraising projections are for the remainder of the year including Big Night Out and the Ducati motorcycle raffle. Discussion about how fundraising is accounted for.
- Bishop asks for the Leadership Committee's report (Item X). Mellinger talks about the process of having the organizational chart approved and moving forward with the hiring process. Bishop & Butka clarify that the Board approved the chart pending the budget realities. Discussion follows. Newlin says that as an administrator, she cannot recommend starting an interview process. Bishop says that he would discourage changing the Org Chart, but that you can avoid some of the recommendations of the Org Chart. At this time, he says he would recommend avoiding the Asst. Principal position and suggest interviewing for the Director positions. In the absence of an A.P., the Director of Curriculum would have to assume additional responsibilities, and it would be up to that person to take on the job or not. Meza said the range for directors is \$85 - 160,000.
- Discussion follows about the Co-Director structure. Newlin says that consultant, Dave Guthrie has cautioned against it. Sutton adds that she has received similar feedback. Garces says that it is commonly employed in the Arts: Artistic Director + Director of Operations. Butka notes that the Board needs to give direction and plug in different scenarios for the budget discussion. Garces suggests that the committee should start moving forward with the Director of Curriculum interviews. Bishop says go forward with the Dir. of Curriculum, once that person is found, it will inform the hiring of the next position. Matthew Shenoda suggests starting with 20 min phone interviews, which will buy some time and could help identify who would be worth bringing in for an in-person interview.
- Butka moves that the interview committee be Darcy Mellinger, Tracy Prinz, Marissa Chibas, Michael Bishop and Julie Cain. Shenoda seconds. Discussion follows. Mellinger asks that the committee be

able to continue consulting (pro bono) with Newlin, Karolynne Gee, Audrey Fann & David Guthrie. It is noted that the committee can consult with whomever it chooses. The proposed process would be: Phone interview, in-person interview with committee, then final candidates would come to the Board. Darcy asks when the Board would like to meet the candidates. Discussion follows. Motion carries by general consent.

- (Item XI) Samuels says that she will be looking into best practices and consult with Michael Garces in order to develop an Advisory Board.
- (Item VII) Samuels asks that the Board approve Juan Devis as a new Board member. She describes his qualifications. Butka moves that Juan Devis be approved as a member of the Board of Directors. Samuels seconds. Motion carries by general consent.
- Butka moves that the Board approve Michael Bishop for another 2 year term. Shenoda seconds. Bishop says that he will renew his term if someone else assumes the chairperson position. Bob Greenberg volunteers. Bishop says he will do it. Motion carries by general consent.
- Samuels opens discussion of Newlin's contract and days worked over 200. Newlin addresses the question, referring to her contract and her history of days worked. Bishop says that he will provide direction in terms of expectations moving forward. He acknowledges that Newlin suffered for lack of direction. Bishop, Butka & Meza will discuss how to address Newlin's contract issues. Butka moves to return to Board in April with results of discussions regarding Newlin's contract. Shenoda seconds. Motion carries by general consent.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30pm.