

SCHOOL FOR INTEGRATED ACADEMICS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Minutes of the
GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

5:30 pm

SIATech

1500 Indian School Rd NW

Albuquerque, NM 87104

Council Members Present:

Emily Salazar
John Rodarte
Jacob Kennedy
Rhonda Seidenwurm
Evalynne Hunemuller

Council Members Not Present

Stacey Cooley
Virginia Trujillo

Guests:

Curt Szarek, SIATech Business Manager
Erik Bose, SIATech Principal

Minutes:

John Rodarte, Governing Council Secretary

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm by President Emily Salazar.

Rhonda Seidenwurm commented that when she reviewed the minutes of the prior meeting, she noticed that she initiated all the motions.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of October 18, 2011 Agenda
Evalynne Hunemuller made a motion to approve the agenda as modified. Jacob Kennedy seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Approval of September 20, 2011 Minutes
Jacob Kennedy made a motion to approve the minutes. Rhonda Seidenwurm seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Finance Committee Report/Business Manager Report – Curt Szarek
 - Mr. Szarek explained that both he and Jacob Kennedy will meet before each Governing Council meeting to review the financial information. This was initiated by Mr. Szarek as a result of the last Council meeting and is intended to increase oversight of the SIATech Albuquerque Business Office. Mr. Kennedy will present the information to the council and Mr. Szarek will be available for questions should the council have any that Mr. Kennedy cannot answer.
 - The council members will now receive the full detailed financial report at each meeting in addition to the rollup version. Mr. Szarek encouraged council members to review the reports and ask questions.
 - The financial statements for August 31, 2011, were distributed and Jacob Kennedy reviewed them with the council. Mr. Kennedy pointed out the school's strong cash position in contrast to the current liabilities. Mr. Szarek explained that approximately \$155K of the \$410K reflected on the budget consists of HB-33 funding received, approximately \$21K consists of Instructional Materials funds and the balance is designated as Operational funds.
 - Mr. Szarek commented that SIATech has not spent any HB-33 funds until further clarification from PED is received. He reiterated that a PED-sponsored webinar on the appropriate uses of HB-33 funds was cancelled due to the number of inquiries received and, as of this date, has not been rescheduled. As a result, SIATech, along with other charters, are being cautious about spending the funds until further clarification as to the appropriate use(s).

- Evalynne Hunemuller asked if the \$21K of Instructional Materials funds is cumulative, and if any dual enrollment textbooks are paid with Instructional Materials? Mr. Szarek explained that since the SIATech curriculum is delivered electronically, textbooks are not purchased exclusively. The Instructional Materials allocation for the 2011/2012 fiscal year is a little more than \$10K, so SIATech attempts to use its limited resources prudently. SIATech does have an account established with the CNM Bookstore for any dual-enrollment materials necessary. Sonya Vigil purchases the materials at the bookstore the student(s) will need. Dr. Salazar suggested Mr. Szarek get in touch with her contact at CNM to avoid the long lines when purchasing books. Evalynne asked if textbooks could be rented for the CNM students. Mr. Szarek commented that he believes that the dual-enrollment materials must be purchased. Dual-enrollment materials remain the property of the school and are given to other students whenever necessary to avoid having to purchase the same books again.
- Both Mr. Szarek and Mr. Kennedy shared that the audit exit conference was held on October 4, 2011, at Moss-Adams' office. Curt Szarek, Jacob Kennedy, Erik Bose, and Jennifer Hall, CPA at KPMG, were in attendance. Various aspects of the audit presentation were discussed and the only change to the previous draft was reclassification of fund balances pursuant to GASB 54.
- The monthly check registers for July, August, September, and month-to-date for October were distributed for review. Jacob Kennedy stated that he reviewed these in detail when he and Mr. Szarek met prior to the council meeting. In addition, Mr. Kennedy asked to see documentation for any checks written to employees, which consist primarily of reimbursement for wireless services, postage, software license renewals and approved travel.
- Dr. Salazar questioned who gets the cell phone reimbursements? Mr. Szarek explained that he, Mr. Bose and Ms. Roth receives reimbursement which is included as taxable fringe benefits on their W-2's. She inquired as to who is identified as the lease holder for the annex? Mr. Szarek answered the lease for both the Business Office and the annex is payable to Dr. William McIver. She also questioned what were the checks written to CES? He explained that SIATech entered into a Joint Powers Agreement with Cooperative Educational Services to provide ancillary services, such as diagnosticians and speech language therapists, as-needed. This ensures compliance for the school's full-inclusion special education program and the school does not have to hire staff for these positions. She also questioned the checks to written to SED Medical labs? Mr. Szarek explained these charges were for the required drug tests for the two new ITA's which were recently hired.
- Evalynne Hunnemuller asked if Midway, Vex Robotics, and Amazon were paid with Instructional Material funds. Mr. Szarek commented that Midway is strictly Operational Funds. Vex Robotics and Amazon is reported under Instructional Materials. She asked if the Midway payment was normally high every month. Mr. Szarek responded that at the end of April, the school cuts off purchasing for the remainder of the school year, and when everyone returns from break, there is always a large order to replenish supplies. Mr. Bose commented that the procedure for all procurement requires administrative approval and nothing is approved without his review. She also inquired as to what the payment to Third Rock Grid was? Mr. Bose identified Third Rock Grid as the "internet cloud" host which is utilized for school's Second Life virtual learning program.
- As requested by Evalynne Hunemuller during the September council meeting, a staff list identifying job class, FTE, licensure level and contracted salary was distributed for review. Evalynne inquired as to why teacher salaries were so high. Mr. Szarek explained that the school is a year-round school and teacher contracts are for 220+ days, in contrast to other schools whose teaching staff is contracted for an average of 180+ days. He also pointed out that the majority of the personnel reflected on the listing have been with the school since its inception in July 2004 and fall within the adopted salary schedules by licensure level. He reminded the council that those salary schedules have been subject to 3% increases since 2004 and, due to legislative funding cuts, there have been no pay increases for the past three years although the employees' share of insurance and educational retirement have gone up. Evalynne also inquired why the salary for the principal is so high since state law reflects the average salary for a high school principal be \$85,000. Mr. Szarek explained the School Personnel Act indicates a high school principal must be paid a minimum of \$80,000, and his recollection is that it does not distinguish thresholds for charter schools as compared to districts. Evalynne also asked about salaries for the secretarial/clerical assistants and why they are so high. Mr. Bose explained that he has a new organization chart to distribute which outlines the types of duties performed by those personnel which show that while being classified as such in the budget, their prescribed duties go beyond those of simply clerical. Mr. Szarek reminded the council the salary schedules and corresponding pay scales were approved eight years ago with PED guidance and approval. Rhonda Seidenwurm asked if Donna Vanlandingham received extra compensation for taking the minutes at the council meetings. Mr. Szarek responded no. She also inquired as to whether ITAs are alone with students in the classroom. Mr. Bose responded there have been instances where the ITAs have to act in a substitute capacity. The ITAs do not issue grades to the students.

- Both Rhonda Seidenwurm and Evalynne Hunemuller inquired as to how nine teachers manage to accommodate teaching close to 300 students. Mr. Bose explained since this is a competency-based program whose students don't do the seat time they would in a traditional school setting, this is accomplished because of the unique relationship with Job Corps and the bi-weekly schedule that is currently followed.
- Evalynne Hunemuller asked about the business office support staff position. Mr. Szarek explained that he has a part-time assistant to satisfy the segregation of duties requirement, which most charter schools are not fortunate enough to have. The assistant, Sonya Vigil, ensures protocol is followed with regard to all aspects of the purchasing process and cash receipts. In addition, she is the school's designated inventory control agent who maintains the integrity of the perpetual inventory system.
- Copies of all current leases were distributed to the council. Mr. Szarek pointed out that the only lease reimbursement submitted for the current fiscal year is for the U building classroom lease, and does not include the annex. He passed around a copy of the 1st quarter lease reimbursement which verifies only the Del-Jen lease has been submitted for reimbursement. Jacob Kennedy confirmed this during the meeting he and Mr. Szarek had prior to the council meeting.
- Jacob Kennedy stated both he and Mr. Szarek would be glad to conduct a presentation to help the council understand the detailed financial and budget reports provided to them each month.
- Curt Szarek reminded the council that as a result of her resignation effective August 31, 2011, Ms. Callahan must be removed as a check signer on the school's bank accounts. He will have new signature cards at the November meeting.
- The next Finance Committee meeting will be held at the business office on Thursday, October 27, 2011, to review the September 30, 2011 financial statements/quarterly reports, all journal entries, and bank reconciliations. Rhonda Seidenwurm is the newest finance committee member. She has replaced Greta Roskom.

2. Principal/Head Administrator Report – Erik Bose

The Principal/Head Administrator report was distributed. Mr. Bose reviewed the report with the council. Mr. Bose also distributed a new organizational chart.

- Mr. Bose shared his decision to have Mr. Valles take on supplemental duties over and above his teaching responsibilities and be Erik's designee who will be involved in site-based decision making through the remainder of the 2011-2012 school year. Mr. Bose explained that for his additional responsibilities, Mr. Valles would receive a \$5,000 stipend which is outlined in a contract addendum. Dr. Salazar thanked Mr. Bose for being cognizant of transparency with regard to this matter and inquired if this is something that needs to be approved by the council. Rhonda Seidenwurm informed the council this is an administrative decision and does not require the approval of the council. The council approves the budget as a whole, and as long as sufficient funding is available, Mr. Bose is allowed to make this decision.
- Mr. Bose has been invited to attend the Senate Youth program in Washington D.C. where he will have the opportunity to meet President Obama. His expenses will be covered by the Heart Foundation. In order for him to attend, he must have verbal approval from the Governing Council. The council did agree this would be an excellent opportunity for Mr. Bose as well as SIATech and they are in favor of him attending.

3. Travel/Claim Reimbursement Procedures – Curt Szarek

Mr. Szarek distributed samples of completed expense reimbursements and explained the procedure for submitting travel expenses for reimbursement.

4. Robert's Rules of Order – Jacob Kennedy

There will be further discussion of this matter at the November meeting once the council has had an opportunity to review the information Jacob Kennedy distributed.

5. Task Force to Determine Feasibility of Annex – Emily Salazar

- Dr. Salazar reported that she met with Mark Tolley to discuss the proposed annex. Mark informed her that his discussion with Kelly Callahan did not supersede any decision made by the SIATech Governing Council. According to Dr. Salazar, Mark was concerned the council had not been notified of the lease associated with the annex when it was initiated as part of the lease reimbursement application. With regard to the issue of non-Job Corps students who wished to enroll in SIATech, Mark informed her that APS did not have any issues with the SIATech lottery process. As a matter of fact, he stated APS would be using SIATech as a model in the Gates Foundation Grant which they will be writing. He also felt ethically the proposed annex should not be used for afterschool tutoring. He suggested SIATech rethink the proposed annex and consider terminating the lease.

- Rhonda Seidenwurm inquired as to the status of whether a meeting had been scheduled with the property owner to possibly get out of the lease. Mr. Szarek explained the owner was still out of the country through the end of October and he hoped a meeting could be set up shortly after he returns.
- Evalynne Hunemuller suggested redirecting those students who were interested in attending the SIATech annex to the night school at DATA.

6. Leases

All leases, including those which were provided to the council with the BARS in the September meeting, were distributed and discussed during the Business Manager/Finance Committee section.

7. Principal Evaluations/Goals

- Mr. Bose requested the council inform him of any goals they have which are outside of the formal administrator evaluation.
- Ms. Salazar commented the lines of communication must be kept open, which will also result in transparency.
- Rhonda Seidenwurm requests the PED guide for principal/administrator evaluation be mailed to the council. She also suggested the evaluation process begin in February.
- Linda Paul from New Mexico Leadership Institute will be at the November meeting to demonstrate the principal VAL-ED tool and provide training.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The next regular scheduled meeting is November 15, 2011 at 5:30 pm.

Jacob Kennedy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Rodarte seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Emily Salazar adjourned the meeting at 7:19 pm.