

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Illinois State Charter School Commission**

Monday, February 13, 2012

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Prairie Crossing Charter School, Byron Barn, 1571 Jones Point Road, Grayslake, Illinois 60030

- A. Commission Chair Greg Richmond called the Meeting to order at 3:15 p.m., and took roll.
 - 1. Present in Person: Glen Barton, Sean Denney, Jaime Guzman, Mike Jacoby, Angela Rudolph, Paul Swanstrom, Rudy Valdez, Chair Richmond. Absent: Patricia Van Pelt Watkins. Commissioner attendance sign-in sheet attached as Exhibit A. The Chair acknowledged the presence of Commission staff Nowaczewski and ISBE Staff Saba.
 - 2. All present rose and said the pledge of allegiance.
- B. Section II of the Agenda
 - 1. Section IIA. Chair Richmond called for a Motion to Adopt the Proposed Agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Barton moved that the Agenda be approved as the Commission's order of business. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Valdez and passed unanimously on a voice vote. The Agenda is attached as Exhibit B.
 - 2. Section IIB: Chair Richmond called for a Motion to approve the Jan. 9 Minutes.

MOTION: Commissioner Valdez moved that the Minutes of the Jan. 9 meeting be approved. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Swanstrom. There was no discussion. Chair Richmond called for a voice vote; the Motion passed unanimously.
- C. Section III. Public Participation
 - 1. Chair Richmond thanked the Prairie Crossing Charter School leaders, Board and community for hosting the Commission's fourth meeting, and gave some background on the Commission's purpose and activities to date. Chair Richmond then welcomed members of the public to speak, noting that 5 persons had signed in to speak. The Public Participation sign in sheet is attached as Exhibit C.
 - 2. Public Participation Speakers:
 - a. Mr. Gregorach, President of the Woodland District 50 School Board, spoke concerning charter school funding, and distributed a document, attached as Exhibit D.
 - b. Mr. Leonard, Associate Superintendent, Woodland School District 50, spoke concerning charter school funding, and distributed a document, attached as Exhibit E.
 - c. Jill Gottfried, policy manager, Illinois Network of Charter Schools, briefed the Commission on INCS' recent design institute for 35 applicants planning to file charter school proposals in Illinois in 2012. Materials distributed are attached as Exhibit F.
 - d. Forrest Seagel, graduate of PCCS, now a junior at Grayslake Central High School, talked with the Commission about the quality of the PCCS environmental curriculum. He credited his success in high school to PCCS, especially the school's encouragement of independent learning.

e. Ms. Gilday, Superintendent, Fremont School District 79, echoed Mr. Leonard's and Mr. Gregorach's concerns and hoped for a shared solution regarding funding charter schools.

D. Reports

1. Section III A1. Chair's Report regarding implementation of Commission as an agency.
 - a. The Chair reported on space issues, and staff's outreach with CMS staff at the Thompson Center; the development of the GOMB budget book with a placeholder of \$500,000 and a staff of 3; an update on funds remaining in the Walton grant in the amount of \$24,000, which is expected to last till mid-March 2012.
 - b. The Chair also discussed charter funding and the comments made during the public participation session.
 - c. The Chair summarized the Draft Policy on Gifts, Grants and Donations, included in the February Agenda Book, noting that while no vote was anticipated at the February meeting, the Chair encouraged the Commissioners to discuss the policy:
 - 1) Several Commissioners, (Barton, Jacoby, Swanstrom), expressed interest in an anonymous fund, but noted unlikelihood of complete anonymity.
 - 2) Other ideas mentioned included: first, two separate funds, one for appellate work, to which contributions would not be accepted, and another for educational work; second, a 501c3 was suggested to hold an independent funding stream that would be governed by a subset of the Commission members. The Chair promised to explore these ideas.
 - 3) Commissioners also discussed that individual Commissioners should not reach out for funding without discussing such with the Chair, and that once an ED was hired, the ED would be the likely person to solicit donations.

E. Action Items

1. Item IVA. Adopt Operational Plan for Commission's First 18 Months. Chair Richmond introduced Mike Jacoby, Chair of the Operations Committee, and Larry Stanton, the consultant who helped the Commission develop the plan, and noted how important having a plan was to continue fund-raising. Commissioner Jacoby noted, first, his thanks to all the Commissioners for taking the time to dialogue with Mr. Stanton regarding the Commission's goals. Second, Jacoby noted that the plan also contained a budget which was slightly different from the draft budget circulated to the Commission earlier in 2012. Third, Jacoby noted that the plan contained an operational "dashboard" in the appendix that would help keep the Commission on track. Consultant Stanton then introduced the plan, noting who he interviewed, and how the plan was grouped into short term priorities for the next 6 months, and longer term priorities, for the next 18 months. Stanton then reviewed these priorities, all of which are set out in detail in the plan, attached hereto as Exhibit G. Commissioners Barton and Denney complimented Stanton on pulling the many goals of the Commission together. Specific questions were asked regarding the number of schools estimated for approval in the 18 month period, and appeals of renewal denials, and how such would be administered by the Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Barton moved that the Commission adopt the Operational Plan as written. The motion was seconded, and without further discussion, unanimously approved.

2. Item IVB. Chair Richmond described the Hiring Plan for the Commission's Executive Director, noting that the Plan contemplated posting the attached job description, which had been

reviewed by Swanstrom and Jacoby, in March, selecting semi-finalists for interviews in early April, and interviewing the two finalists at the Commission's April 16, 2012 meeting. The Chair indicated that he would take charge of this process, and appoint a sub-committee to assist. Commissioners inquired and the Chair clarified that ED would be an employee of the State of Illinois, and the description would be posted on the state website, as well as other locations.

MOTION: Commissioner Swanstrom moved that the Commission adopt the proposed hiring plan and Commissioner Guzman seconded the Motion. The Chair called for a vote, and the hiring plan was unanimously approved.

3. Item IV C. Timeline for Amending Administrative Rules. The Chair noted that the key element at present it was to insure that the rules align with the statute as amended in the 2011 legislative session. While more could be done to the rules, the contemplated revision would make the necessary "clean up" provisions, and would also identify the standard of review that the Commission would employ for appeals. The Commissioners noted that fewer public meetings were needed to vet the rules, and that the website could be best used for soliciting public comment, once the rules were ready to submit to the public.

MOTION: Commissioner Swanstrom moved that the Commission adopt the proposed plan for amending the administrative rules; Commissioner Rudolph seconded the Motion, and the plan for was unanimously approved.

4. Item IV. D. Acceptance of LIFE Academy Appeal. The Chair noted that the Commission had agreed to formally acknowledge and accept every appeal that was timely filed and complete.

MOTION: Commissioner Jacoby moved that the appeal be accepted; the Motion was seconded. After the discussion noted below, the motion carried unanimously.

Staff announced the timeline for the appeal and requested volunteers for the hearing date of Monday, February 27, 2012. The Commissioners discussed the agenda for the hearing, and a Commissioner asked for a copy of the record on appeal.

- F. New Business: Chair Richmond inquired if Commissioners had new business, but none was identified.
- G. Announcements: Chair Richmond inquired whether there were announcements.
 1. No announcements were made, but the Chair noted that the Agenda Book contained the notice of the March 12 Meeting at the Southland Charter School, and that an agenda similar to the one used at PCCS would be used for that meeting. The Chair also noted that if the Thornton appeal continued on the timeline announced, the vote would take place at the March meeting.
- H. Information Items
 1. Chair Richmond highlighted: (1) the entire Agenda Book was not printed, due to the voluminous nature of the Biennial Report and the Prairie Crossing Charter School information, but referred the Commissioners to the PDF version of the Agenda Book should they wish to review these items in more detail; (2) the Chair also noted that the potential Early College Appeal, in which the last of eleven districts voted on Jan. 9, 2012, was not going to be appealed by the applicant; and (3) that Rich Township had decided not to appeal further the Illinois First Circuit Appellate Court's decision to uphold ISBE's authorization of the Southland Charter High School.

I. Other Business

1. Chair Richmond inquired if there was any further business, but none was identified.

MOTION: Commissioner Valdez moved to adjourn; Commissioner Rudolph seconded and the Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Richmond adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Draft Dated March 5, 2012.