

HAMMOND URBAN ACADEMY, INC.
School Board Meeting Minutes Noted

October 16, 2014

In Attendance:

Board Members:

Kris Sakelaris (Board President)
Mark McLaughlin (Board Member)
Dave Ryan (Board Member)
Howard Cohen (Board Member)
Heather Cook (Board Member)
Anne Herbert (Board Member)
Janet Venecz (Board Member)
Kevin Smith (Attorney)
Rita Brusca-Vega (Board Member)

School Representatives

Dr. Sean Egan (School Leader)
Mahdee Iqbal (Business Manager)
La Tysha Sanders (Vice Business Manager)
Mira Projovic (Staff Member)

Not in Attendance:

Sheldon Cutler (Board Member)
Owana Miller (Board Member)
Robert Lendi (Board Member)
Kris Kantar (City of Hammond, Legal Counsel)

Board meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m by Board president Kris Sakelaris.

Motions Approved by School Board

- *Motion to approve September 18, 2014 meeting minutes-* Howard Cohen motioned; seconded by Anne Herbert. All in favor motion approved 9-0.
- *Motion to approve finance report-* Dave Ryan motioned; seconded by Anne Herbert. All in favor motion approved 9-0.
- *Motion to approve contracts for Kristin Mace and Dan White-* Mark McLaughlin motioned; seconded by Janet Venecz. All in favor motion approved 9-0.
- *Motion to approve La Tysha Sanders creating a fees collection policy draft-* Dave Ryan motioned; seconded by Howard Cohen. All in favor motion approved 9-0.
- *Motion to adjourn board meeting-* Dave Ryan motioned; seconded by Janet Venecz. All in favor motion approved 9-0.

New Correspondence

none

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School Leader Report

Discussion Notes

- In regards to the charter reauthorization process, Dr. Egan and Kris Sakelaris met with Ball State last month and will meet with Calumet College this week. Kris expects a formal vote from Calumet College in January.
- Dr. Egan read an email sent to him after a recent visit from leaders of Calumet College. The email was complimentary on all they had seen while spending a day touring HAST, particularly student engagement, classroom instruction, data, technology and school pride.
- Rita Brusca-Vega proposed to bring back the Curriculum Director position that was vacated when Debbie Snedden left. Howard Cohen sees this position as a resource discussion that needs to take place in the context with budget building because it will inevitably be a trade off with other resources. Dr. Egan proposed to bring this position to both schools interested in re-newing our charter and asking what support they could give us in filling this position.
- Preliminary school scoring from the DOE has given HAST middle school a B and the high school a D. Kris Sakelaris instructed Kevin Smith to contact other schools in similar predicaments to explore the possibility of an appeal.

Board Financial Inquires

- Specific notes on finance report:
 - Internet rate has gone down.
 - NIPSCO bill was strangely high (\$10,405.29) for 1 month and then went back down to normal the following month. Mahdee Iqbal has inquired as to why. Still waiting on a response from the company.
- A phone conference was held between Mahdee Iqbal, La Tysha Sanders, Dr. Egan, Robert Lendi and our accounting firm in Indianapolis in regards to the audit review, particularly 4 different documents, the main one being The Supplemental Audit report. Main items discussed were HAST's accounting and reporting principles. Specific areas of question were: double entry in the books for some building costs, payroll policies, pay rate scales, uncollected fees, write-off policy, registers for small clubs to be included in HAST financial reports and school lunch. Dr. Egan reported we will be composing a response shortly and will have a new audit for board members at the next meeting.
- La Tysha Sanders presented student fees for the year. Because fees are not completely determined before the school year begins, parents are typically not asked to pay anything up front and wait to receive their invoice in January. The board suggested asking parents for a deposit (\$100) upon student registration, followed by complete invoices being sent as soon as fees have been established and then throughout the school year until all fees are collected. The board made a motion to have La Tysha Sanders create a fees collection and payment schedule for next school year.
- Kevin Smith reported being contacted by an Indianapolis firm for future refinancing of the bond. This is a preliminary inquiry because refinancing cannot occur until August 2015. The initial proposal is quite favorable for HAST and would result in a 2 point reduction, a savings of \$2.8 mil-

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lion in the life of the bond and a yearly savings of \$100,000. Our current rate is 6.5% and the rate would be in the 4.38-5% range.

New Business

Public Comment

- Carlotta King requested a copy of the September and October Board meetings. She was explained that minutes first must be approved by board members at the following monthly meeting and once approved, will be electronically uploaded and available on the HAST website.
- Kitten Gray brought a copy of an email she sent to Ball State as well as spoke about a recent incident she had with Dr. Egan outside of a local Hammond restaurant during lunchtime. Ms. Gray claims she overheard Dr. Egan making derogatory comments about herself. Ms. Gray no longer has a student at HAST.
- Leslie Otero spoke on behalf of the incident Ms. Gray mentioned. Leslie was with Dr. Egan during the incident and claims Ms. Gray's interpretation of the events is false.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:00 p.m.