



LIONHEART CLASSICAL ACADEMY CHARTERED PUBLIC SCHOOL
Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting August 8, 2024

DRAFT MINUTES

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of Lionheart Classical Academy Chartered Public School ("LCA") took place on 8/8/2024 at 10 Sharon Road, Peterborough, New Hampshire. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Kim Lavallee. Board members present included: Chair Kim Lavallee, Vice Chair Bailey Sweet, Treasurer Kristie Greenwood, Jason Nero, David Somero, and Brian Walsh (being a quorum of the Board). Secretary Lori Finn attended via Zoom. Attorney Christopher Pyles from Sulloway & Hollis. The Chair noted that this was a public meeting and that notice of the same had been duly posted in accordance with state law.

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a reading of the mission statement and mission moment by Principal Dobbs.

I. Public Comments

Chair Lavallee reviewed the policy for public comments, policy BEDH is linked in the agenda for the expectations from the public during this time, including a 3-minute time limit for each person.

A. Richard Merkt – Lionheart Founder – Spoke about when they first started planning the school. Described when they first met with Hillsdale, how they gave them the advice that you need good leadership early on. He indicated how much that has proven true. They also told them that they need a maven, and that we have a maven in Kim Lavallee. He thanked Chair Lavallee profusely, saying that Lionheart would be nowhere without her. He also shared the process of initially finding a location for the school. He talked about how many buildings and plots of land they looked at that did not meet their needs. He stated if we did not have this building, we would be 2 years behind like another Seacoast charter school.

B. Leo Plante – Lionheart Founder. Gave words of encouragement and shared with the board that he has spoken with many donors who remain committed to the school. He indicated that we could expect more donations coming in by the end of 2024. He reviewed the biographies of current board members posted on the website and was impressed by the qualifications of those serving. He said that whatever our challenges are, there is nothing we cannot beat. He offered thanks to staff, faculty, and board members. He said it takes a lot to get where we want to go, and to keep up the good work.

Chair Lavallee wanted to take a moment after public comments and express gratitude to Paulie Seppala and his crew Adam and Sawyer, Jared Sauvola, Kara Nero, for their time and labor on projects around the school. She also thanked Shawn Seppala and Triumph Interiors for the materials donated to complete the projects and Boulder Ridge Mechanical donated time and resources to repair HVAC issues. This was a great deal of time, and resources donated by many and appreciated.

II. Secretary Report: Secretary Lori Finn presented the Secretary's Report.

A. Minutes of Board's Regular Meeting held on June 13, 2024, that were approved at the 7/11 meeting were posted on the website. A question was submitted by Mr. Kevin Brace regarding the omission of the last name of Kimberly Lavallee in the motion to nominate her for chair. An additional comment was to understand the recusals. This was the result of a misunderstanding and corrected to reflect board members in attendance. Trustee Nero motioned to approve the minutes from the 6/13/24 meeting pending these corrections, seconded by Treasurer Greenwood. No further discussion. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea), Greenwood (Yea) 7-0-0

B. Draft minutes of the Board's Regular Meeting held on 7/11/24 were posted on the website. Vice Chair Sweet asked that the following sentence be included: Howard Kooligan is training our group at the Finance Committee meeting on July 31st. Trustee Nero requested correction to Section V-C (Facility Walkthrough). The facility walkthrough was conducted with several contractors. The building inspector for the Town of Peterborough was not present. Treasurer Greenwood motioned to approve the minutes from the 7/11/24 meeting pending these corrections, seconded by Trustee Walsh. No further discussion. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea), Greenwood (Yea)

Action Item: Secretary Finn will make corrections to minutes from 6/13 and 7/11 and submit to LCA for posting.

III. Treasurer's Report

Chair Lavallee noted that Kristie Greenwood is taking over as the new Treasurer. She has met with our CPA, Caitlin Blundell. Kristie turned the report over to Caitlin Blundell to present the monthly financial report: [Monthly Financial Report - Lionheart Classical Academy Chartered Public School \(July 2024\).pdf](#) Trustee Nero thanked Ms. Blundell for all of the hard work she does to help with the school on the accounting side. Treasurer Greenwood asked Ms. Blundell if she would share her insights on the financial health of LCA. Ms. Blundell indicated that she works with at least 10 charter schools and LCA is the strongest financially. She said there is always sufficient money in the account. Cash flow projections show plenty of funds through October 2024, and a \$170,000 cash surplus is expected if we stay on track with the approved budget. She said that we should be proud our school is in such a great place.

Chair Lavallee requested clarification of donations and naming rights after receiving questions from the public. The pledge was for \$1 million, paid out in 10 payments of \$100k, for the naming rights of the school. It was recorded as revenue in the year that the pledge was paid. It was originally satisfied with a stock gift that is not currently worth anything. The financial statement is in process and the auditors are aware of this and will look to make sure it is accounted for appropriately. Trustee Sweet asked if there is a plan for spending down the CSP grant. Ms. Blundell indicated that it is in process right now.

IV. Principal Dobbs's Report. Principal Dobbs presented his report: [Principal Board Report 8.8.24](#)

- Reached out to five local Classical colleges to develop a candidate pool for future school years. Every school responded. They indicated they have been waiting for LCA to establish a connection.
- Construction updates
- Fundraising updates
- Hiring: As of last month, there were 11 FT positions that needed to be filled. Only one full-time teaching position remains open at this time. Interviewing candidates for Technology and Guidance Counselor. He discussed revising the Facilities Director position. Now that hiring is nearing completion, contracts will be sent out.
- Mission Moment-provided in the beginning of the meeting.
- Open House scheduled for 8/29/24 (4-6 pm). There will be two sessions where parents can meet with Principal Dobbs. School store orders can be picked up then. Parents will have the opportunity to meet new staff. The school will be in touch with some families about some books that still need to be returned.
- Information on school supplies will be coming out shortly.

V. Parent Council

Josh Prather, Chair for Parent Council, spoke about the purpose of Parent Council, upcoming activities,

and how to get involved. The Parent Council is designed to facilitate a great opportunity to help parents who desire to invest regularly through their time and resources to participate in a variety of activities that benefit the staff, students, and the larger Lionheart community. Its objectives are to:

- Collaborate with the school administration to plan parent and school events and help manage important projects.
- Coordinate and/or sponsor parent education, outreach, festivals, various committees, clubs, and other activities that contribute to the life of the school.
- Coordinate class and school fundraising activities and oversee the allocation and disbursement of funds that have been raised with oversight from the administration.

He indicated that he is excited by the amount of fundraising planned for this year, and to actually see events on the calendar now is really exciting. They will be holding a meeting shortly for parents to attend. If you join you will be added to the app they use to share information. Parents interested in becoming involved can be a room parent, attend meetings and other activities. There is more room for parents who want to volunteer.

VI. Finance Committee

A. Fundraising Calendar: Trustee Nero discussed the new fundraising calendar. He is pleased by the amount of work that everyone has brought to the table. He said that he looks forward to partnering with Parent Council too. He is looking for the most effective and efficient fundraising efforts and investigating how to better include the local community. He thanked Ashlee Wheel and Amy Evans for their work on the calendar. This year, everything is in order so we can plan ahead. The calendar will be uploaded to the website, and there will be a “donate here” button to facilitate donations.

Chair Lavalley indicated that she would like the LCA website to mirror other charter schools she has been involved with. Lionheart is currently posting all monthly financial reports received over the last two plus years, audits, 990 tax returns, agendas and other items. The Lionheart employee who usually posts is currently on a well-deserved 2-week vacation. She worked the night before vacation until about 10:30 PM to begin posting documents. In the interim, Principal Dobbs and Ashlee Wheel called the website company, learned how to post documents and helped the process keep moving forward with an updated website. Big thank you to both for taking this on.

B. Finance Committee Minutes / New Policy: Trustee Nero described a new policy on acceptance of [Gifts, Grants, and Bequests](#) that was discussed at the Finance Committee meeting. The draft policy is on the website for public review and comment, and it will be put up for review at the next board meeting.

C. Facility Update:

1. Trustee Nero reported that a fourth meeting with the landlord has been scheduled. Roundtable is flying in to participate with Trustee Nero and Vice Chair Sweet.
2. Playground and multipurpose room are off limits for the time being. The engineer who did the site plan met with Trustee Nero, David Somero, and Ross Kukish. He will work with the town and LCA to see what can be done about the playground.
3. Fourth grade classrooms are almost finished, and they look forward to getting carpets cleaned once that is done. The committee has a recess supply list which the CSP grant will cover. All of the safety lights in the south wing need to be replaced/fixed because they do not work. Hopefully the CSP grant will cover that as well.

4. The multipurpose room is not able to be occupied at this time. The permit was never pulled for the room, and multiple safety issues need to be resolved before that is taken care of. Chair Lavallee noted that we need to discuss a new policy indicating any improvements requiring a permit will need board approval and the permit before starting work in the future. The Finance and Organizational Committees will develop that policy.

Action: Begin developing new policy for permits at the next Organizational Committee meeting.

VII. Organizational Committee

A. Executive Director Search. Vice Chair Sweet indicated that the search is progressing. One candidate flew in to meet with the board, those on the search committee, and other LCA representatives. If the board is still interested in pursuing the second finalist, he is available to fly in during the week of 8/19. ACE continues to support us. Dennis McKinney noted that our job description does not mention fundraising. Vice Chair Sweet will update to include that responsibility.

B. Charter / Bylaws. Vice Chair Sweet reported that proposed changes to the bylaws and charter have been on the website for the last 30 days. These were discussed at the 7/11/24 meeting. The charter changes include moving from a maximum of eight to nine board members (approved by vote last month subject to SBOE approval), clarifying language, ensuring compliance with RSA 194: B, correcting mission, updating vision statement, and adding enrollment. She broke down the numbers and explained why the current language does not work. Trustee Nero motioned to accept the proposed changes to the charter. Trustee Walsh seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Nay), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea), Greenwood (Yea).

Vice Chair Sweet expressed appreciation for the questions asked of the board, because it helped us to clarify. The goal for the bylaws was to simplify and refer back to the charter when possible. Treasurer Greenwood motions to approve proposed changes to the bylaws. Trustee Nero seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea), Greenwood (Yea).

B. Upcoming Meetings: August meeting moved to 8/19. September meeting moved to 9/9. Trustee Sweet circulated a document for board succession and planning. She would like to start this discussion at the 10/7 meeting so we can invite future board applicants to join committees in advance.

Action: Add Board Succession and Planning to 10/7 Organizational Committee meeting agenda.

VIII. Academic Committee: Secretary Finn announced the August meeting of the Academic Committee rescheduled to 8/19. September meeting will be held 9/9.

IX. Committee Meetings and Other Information

Chair Lavallee reported efforts to clarify and simplify. We will try to post draft template board agendas through June and committees, we are now linking all documents to the agenda. There is now a Right to Know section on the website for everyone to have access to. If one person requests information and it is public then everyone should have access to it. We have changed the board page with links to each section and have started uploading financials and other information.

XI. Board Retreat

Chair Lavallee reported plans to schedule a board retreat and training, January or February 2025. We need

4 hours of availability, possibly held on a Saturday.

Action: Chair Lavallee will coordinate and schedule the board retreat and announce date at next regular board meeting.

Chair Lavallee announced the next Regular Board meeting will be 9/12 @ 6 pm.

Chair Lavallee stated the non-public portion would begin and read the reasons are RSA 91-A:3, II (b) and RSA 91-A:3, II (e). A question was raised about (e) and after further clarification the reason should be stated RSA 91-A:3, II (d).

As guests began to depart board members thanked them for their continued support and donations to Lionheart. Treasurer Greenwood motioned to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3, II (b) and (d), hiring/promotion of a public employee and lease/real estate negotiations. Trustee Nero seconded to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91 – A:3, II (b) and (d). The Board entered into a non-public session at 7:24 pm. Board approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Greenwood (Yea), Finn (Yea). 7-0-0

Vice Chair Sweet motioned to exit non-public at 8:43 PM, and Trustee Somero seconded. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea), Greenwood (Yea). The Board returned to public session at 8:43 pm. Trustee Nero motioned to seal the minutes from the non-public session, seconded by Trustee Walsh. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Greenwood (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea). Vice Chair Sweet made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Somero. Approved by roll call: Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Greenwood (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea). 7-0-0

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Greenwood. Approved by roll call: Public meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm. Walsh (Yea), Nero (Yea), Somero (Yea), Greenwood (Yea), Lavallee (Yea), Sweet (Yea), Finn (Yea). 7-0-0

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Finn

Minutes were approved by the Board on 9/12/24 at the Regular Board Meeting.