Maine Charter School Commission

DRAFT – MINUTES PENDING COMMISSION APPROVAL JULY 7, 2015.

MINUTES

The Maine Charter School Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2015, at the Burton Cross Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta, Maine.

I. Call to Order

Chair, Shelley Reed, called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

II. Roll Call

The following Members were present: John Bird, Nichi Farnham, Jana Lapoint, Laurie Pendleton, Ande Smith, Mike Wilhelm, and Shelley Reed, Chair.
Also in attendance were Bob Kautz, Executive Director; Gina Post, Director of Program Management and Deanne Lavallee, Administrative Assistant.

III. Adjustments to the Agenda

A. Michele LaForge with four Baxter Students, parents and teacher attended this meeting to do a presentation on how Baxter is using snow days.
The Students from Grade 10 were: Mae Rosenstein, Ethan Frederick, Ben Ostergaard and from Grade 11 – Vincent Aliquo. The presentations were fabulous and, most importantly, the enthusiasm expressed by the students on their snow-day work is inspiring! They are given the opportunity to use these days to create a plan for their time, explore fields of interest to them while strictly and rigorously connecting to the standards, assessing the learning and discussing in valid ways. There is a proposal process to identify goals; then to plan, start, iterate, change/adjust/revise, and then reflect. This is also instilling the concept that the *school day* does not have to be confined to the required place, time or process – education can happen any time – anywhere. The Baxter Snow-day Coordinator Elke Perks, as well as, the two parents – Kathy Ostergaard and Laurie Spugnardi conveyed appreciation for the learning and accomplishments of the Baxter Students with the implementation of this program. The Commission thanks Baxter for their presentations in celebration of National Charter School Week.

B. Moved by Mike Wilhelm; seconded by John Bird and voted unanimously to accept Fiddlehead School of Arts and Science notification of new board member, Alison Moser.

C. For the record: MeANS revised Performance Indicators were received this morning for the Review Team to evaluate and make recommendation to the Commission for July 7, 2015, meeting.

D. Maine Association of Charter Schools is hosting lunch for the Commission and Staff today.

IV. Acceptance of Minutes

A. Moved by John Bird; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously to accept the April 7, 2015, Minutes as written.

V. Officers' Reports

A. Chair

1. Recognition of National Charter School Week May 3 – May 9.

   I would like to acknowledge the Commission Members who have traveled this path before us: Marilyn Temple Tardy, Jim Banks, Donald Mordecai, Richard "Dick" Barnes, Heidi Sampson and William Shuttleworth, who have done a lot of work in terms of getting the Commission off the ground and the schools in existence. And, certainly, the work of MACS, who for 30 years said "We think charter schools are important and we want them to come to Maine to give our families and students choice.

2. We are excited to have Gina Post as our Director of Program Management. Gina comes from the "adult education" world, the teaching field. She is a detail person and will be a really good asset. Gina is a friendly presence, with a sense of humor and capacity to engage right away. She will have the job of working with each of the schools and have a good working relationship with them.

3. Charter School Evaluation Summaries – Sent to the school's leadership and are due on or before 5-22-15. Please take an evaluation form and envelope to return it as soon as you can to the office. Also, the Executive Director will have an opportunity to score his strengths and things to work on. Committee to summarize results. This will be part of our June 8 Strategic Planning.

B. Vice Chair

C. Executive Director

1. Meeting with Public Charter Schools Cooperative – April 9, 2015, will be meeting again sometime the last week of May. They are quite well organized; time is well spent focusing on the issues they need to work on – compliance, payroll, legal services, lobbying, advertising, transportation, legislation and its effect on them. The Cooperative takes notes and keeps minutes; they have sub-committees.

2. Extracurricular-Interscholastic – You have a copy of the letter from the Commissioner, as well as, the letter from RSU 75 in response. I have had conversation with people at Maine School Management trying to see if they would be willing to participate on the Committee that Karl Francis has suggested for the charter school heads and the different professional organizations to come together to resolve. Still waiting to hear back from MSMA; their process takes more time

3. Maine Connections Academy Summer Celebration Tuesday, June 9, in Winthrop at the Y Camp. Commission Members and one guest are invited. RSVP is by May 15.

4. Yesterday, the Senate made an exception and took the charter school funding bill and took it off the Special Appropriations Table so the bill is now headed for the Senate moving into final approval and ready to go to the Governor for signature after the Senate acts on it. Appropriations Committee voted unanimously it *ought to pass*.

VI. Unfinished Business

A. 127th Legislature First Session, Public charter schools LDs.

1. LD 696. An Act To Establish a Moratorium on the Establishment of Virtual Charter Schools.

Shelley Reed: Very strong push back from the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee on Virtuals and their request was a side-by-side distinction between Maine Connections and Maine Virtual.
What we believed is the nature of a virtual in itself stood alone not pitted against the first one approved. Is it an innovative design for students in Maine. We are holding our virtual schools as small entities; we are monitoring them tightly. From the beginning of this session, particularly one party, is very negative about including a second virtual school in our portfolio.
On April 21, I provided the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee with a side-by-side comparison using their two applications and contracts. There has been no response from the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee.
Because I could not give them a definitive response that says we will not have another virtual school, they moved forward on this bill for a moratorium on virtual schools. But at the same time, there is an LD asking for a State-run Virtual where the different school districts could take advantage of on-line learning.
We need to continue doing a thorough job in conducting our business. I think this Commission makes good decisions with integrity.

Bob Kautz: Both Shelley and Jana as Chairs, have expressed concern about the image of the Charter Commission before the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee. When presenting to the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, they want to come away with the *Committee* continuing to respect the Commission. The Commission is well thought of and respected for the work being done. I have spoken to some of the people in regard to what went on and we need to have a little better system for when there is a request from the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee that it is made clear to us what they are asking for. In moving forward, both (the *Committee* and the Commission) will take responsibility for making sure it is clear. They understood the difficulty of a day's turn around.

2. From Roger Brainerd, MACS, LD 1047 asking for a private charter school partnership in order to have kids come in and be part of the charter school from Maine, but have the opportunity to pull from across the country or in other countries some private tuition paying students to round-out a music program (Snow Pond – John Wiggin). Has been reviewed Education and Cultural Affairs Committee; they did not pass it.

Roger Brainerd: John Wiggin's preferred course is not legislation, but to have the Commission approve the "reserved space" concept in its interpretation of the current law. I agreed with his preference, but expressed that it would be risky and that he should, if possible, get a clarification from the Commission before he invested in a full application. I offered to ask the Commission for "clarification" on his behalf. To that end and to help the Commission in its deliberations,

John Wiggin called me after his meeting with the Commissioner, Deb Friedman, and Rep. Pouliot last week. They apparently were supportive of John's request to be able to reserve space for out-of-state tuition-paying students, and Deb is investigating "language" that could be used to that effect – using LD 1047 as the vehicle to amend the charter law. Apparently, Sen. Langley is "holding" LD 1047 in committee and Rep. Pouliot is hoping to change the mind of one member who voted ONTP, so the bill will be reconsidered.

Shelley Reed: Deb Friedman sent us an email regarding the conversation with the Commissioner and she. She did not feel that John Wiggins had accurately described what was going on. The Department is not working on any change.
We talked to the charter school leaders and they thought it would be great to have tuition students. Private/Public charter school – how could it work?

Roger Brainerd: We have been talking about this for a year. It would make possible a residential facility. They would need to reserve space for the tuition student, which is not provided for in our law. Only if you have space, you can enroll them. We are nervous about impacting some of the core principals of the charter movement – all students have an equal opportunity to enroll. The Department concludes that you cannot reserve space in a charter school.
No problem with a private school and a charter school collaborating; would require two separate boards.
This could work for a public school, however, there is a VISA problem; out-of-country students can only stay for one year in a public school. At a private school, students can stay for the full four years.
This would be applicable to any charter school that wants a residential program; it would help with financial issues and would allow students throughout Maine to be able to attend thematic schools.
A non-profit to operate the residential piece and the charter school becomes the service provider for the private school.
We are hoping the Commission will take leadership in evolving the RFP to accommodate for this private/charter school as a residential model.

Ande Smith: We need someone to come forward with what they want the Commission to consider as opposed to something for us to design. Like the virtuals, you come and tell us how you want to do it.

Bob Kautz: The Commission deals with a private/charter school with MeANS and that negotiation with the Commission established the precedence that there could not be a single board for both.
Use the MeANS experience to fashion their application (Snow Pond).
Clearly cannot reserve space. The law clearly states has to be open to Maine Students and the only time tuition students can be accepted is if their approved capacity is less than anticipated.

John Bird: Echoing in my mind are Michele's words from her earlier presentation: "*Education is changing; we better change with it.*" - when it comes to borders and when it comes to the issue of residential – the global village we are living in – Chinese students in Searsport. There is something

there that tells us we better adapt to what is going on in the world. I hope MACS will keep pursuing and bring something to us that we can react to and may say something about the law that we are administering now that will need to change. Our job is not to be the crucible for doing that – it is to say "yes or no" based on what we have in front of us. Maine has already several schools who have done this work: MCI, Fryeburg Academy, Washington Academy. These schools are trying to stay alive by finding ways to do it.

Shelley: We met with Rep. Pouliot exploring the idea – could it work – being open to "is there going to be something different with charter schools."

Bob Kautz: With the Virtual, we asked and received suggestions from the virtual school people regarding things that should be in the RFP and taken into consideration. If John and MACS has seen some things that are direct impediments that are within the law that could become part of the RFP, we would need to know. The unfortunate thing – we are asking the Commission today to approve the final version of the RFP for this year, which will be issued June 10.

Ronnie Weston, Bull Moose Group, Organizational Development and Fundraising Consultant working with Snow Pond: Snow Pond Arts Academy (John Wiggins) has tremendous support both from arts educators, regular educators, music educators and possibly funders. Funding is the challenge.
As you continue to look at issues, ultimately, all schools will benefit from an opportunity of being able to bring private-pay tuition students into the school.
My only question for you is: Do you think that the language *on space available basis that the charter school may charge tuition to out-of-state students* is literally limited to that they do not fill their enrollment?

Bob Kautz: Yes.

Ronnie Weston: Only other option is to have an entity, not necessarily a school; the New England Music Camp Association is an association, which is already a non-profit has the facilities to provide the residential component that may be coming before you as part of their application. They would be providing the residential component for the public charter school.

Bob Kautz: Good-will Hinckley is residential for the students who are Maine residents in the public charter school. The New England Music Association could become the organization that provides the residence for the students of the public charter school, they would have to be Maine students. The applicant would have to show a budget for the public charter school that supports the enrollment figures submitted. Cannot be an artificially inflated number – show a budget for 100 students, but ask for 200 to have 100 tuition students.

Ronnie Weston: The other possibility is the tuition students go to Messalonskee and then do an after-school program at the charter school. Is there any indication from the letter of intent stage about concept that we could get feedback on?

Shelley Reed: No, it is simply an entity telling us that they are interested and moving forward with an application.

B. Fiddlehead response to April 8, 2015, requirements for 2014-2015 Enrollment Waiver.

Shelley Reed: Fiddlehead has provided the letter of explanation, a new budget for 2015-16 with the proposed increase in enrollment figures and the current enrollment.
Yesterday, Jana, Bob and Shelley met with Jacinda Cotton-Castro, Julie Fralich and their new board member Alison Moser and Nichi Farnham via phone.
As part of the end-of-year visit, we will be talking about contract compliance with the Board and for the remainder of the year, they will send us the monthly enrollment. Alison Moser is working with the school to ensure that the school and the Board are communicating.

Bob Kautz: This is an example of a charter school trying to operate on a thin margin with the executive director doing everything. The Board now realizing that they need to provide more support, which is reflected in the next year's budget allowing for the addition of staff.

C. Fiddlehead Discussion – Approval of Material Amendment for Increase in Enrollment 2015-2016.

Bob Kautz: The Review Team reviewed the budget and they are showing the population that they need to be able to financially operate a school that still meets the mission and vision of their application. They had not anticipated special education costs to the extent that it is; two adults in every classroom. The 2015-16 Budget with proposed enrollment increase provides funding for increased attention and learning, maintain the two teachers in the classroom, etc.
With 111 students on the waiting list, there is a legitimate demand; the enrollment increase is an assertive response to the demand.

Jana Lapoint: They have the facility now to do that – they have more classrooms to accommodate the increase.

John Bird: If the school is a success in terms of mission and vision, and there experience with the students has caused this to occur, the Review Team needs to tell us that this is something they would recommend.

Shelley Reed: They need to hire a coordinator of teaching and learning to get this off Jacinda's plate, which the budget reflects and the Governing Board totally supports. The addition of students to each class changes the dynamics and Fiddlehead needs to maintain their mission and vision. Parents want small classes, the mission of the school is what we signed up for and we want it from Pre-K through Grade 5. The Review Team is recommending this material amendment for an increase in enrollment for 2015-2016 be approved.

Moved by Mike Wilhelm; seconded by John Bird to approve with the condition of more discussion before a vote.

Mike Wilhelm: In the operation of any public school system, there are always unknown needs and there should be some contingency to accommodate, especially in the arena of Special Education. Options are increasing enrollment in the confines of how we look at the charter school revenue to keep the schools viable, I don't think we have much choice.

Shelley Reed: I think this is how the Review Team feels.

Bob Kautz: Alison Moser, the newest appointee to their governing board, is acting as their treasurer and she gave every appearance of being on top of being sensible. She pushed to make sure they have a contingency line included in the budget, which they did not have before.

John Bird: In terms of this enrollment adjustment, how does this affect the resident district's enrollment.

Shelley Reed: They cannot take students from Gray-New Gloucester. The balance will not be affected. Gray-New Gloucester has a waiting list for the Pre-K; parents are delighted that they have a spot for the Pre-K.

Ande Smith: How are we protecting this? This is asking to increase enrollment by a third in the school; adding another 30 kids who are coming from somewhere; plus another 10%.

Shelley Reed: They are adding a Grade 4 this coming year and Grade 5 in 2016-17, which is another 18 kids.

Bob Kautz: For the first three years, the law prescribes how many they can accept by grade level from each resident district. Next year is their third year, so they are still under the law to observe the percentage caps. The following year there is no cap.

Shelley Reed: In Year 2, we gave them 14 additional students over the 56 in the contract.

Bob Kautz: If the law changes, this will be diminished because no longer will they be charged on the number of students.

Ande Smith: If the superintendent considered it a threat to his enrollment base for the viability of his school and we give them license to accept 30 more kids, that is a big change; while still a small school with 128 kids from Pre-K to Grade 5.

Jana Lapoint: Out of the 110 students, 8 (approximate per class) are from Gray-New Gloucester is what they told us.

John Bird: After Year 3, this is a non-issue; it could be an issue to the resident district.

Bob Kautz: Not to the resident district, right now they are paying a per pupil amount directly from them.

Laurie Pendleton: They are still loosing kids; there is just someone else writing the check.

Shelley Reed: Once the kids get in this school, they are not leaving. The waiting list is primarily Pre-K and Kindergarten wanting to be enrolled.

Bob Kautz: Their biggest churn is pre-school; because the parents want the pre-school experience and not enough spots in the resident district.

Ande Smith: From the Review Team prospective, is the facility adequate to take on a third more enrollment without impacting its model and the free flow of the place – not physically can you put them in there like the fire marshal – but, will it work well with what they are trying to do?

Shelley Reed: They are saving an empty classroom for 4th and 5th Graders. In the new section, they have a center area, I think they would divide into classrooms.

Ande Smith: Contract Section 2.3.5 Proposed new language:

The Charter School may make modifications as to the number of students in any particular grade and number of students within a class to accommodate staffing exigencies and attrition patterns provided such modifications are otherwise consistent with this Charter.

This language removes any collar on how many kiddos and how many classes they are going to have. This language opens the way for them to change radically the number of kids in a particular grade. There is no restriction for us to influence or demand they do something, there is nothing contractually enforceable.

Bob Kautz: The language would allow having 1 student in a grade and 35 in another grade. We need a suggestion of language to provide reasonable flexibility. We were with them as they were struggling to come up with a language to be able to take care of that issue – of not being limited to 18, but not drifting away from it by any large margin.

> *The Charter School may make **minor** modifications as to the number of students in any particular grade and number of students within a class to accommodate staffing exigencies and attrition patterns provided such modifications are otherwise consistent with this Charter.*

Ande Smith: I would recommend at least the addition of the word "minor." This does not invalidate our ability to say – "that is too much."

Bob Kautz: I would be surprised if there is any opposition from them on that.

Mike Wilhelm: I will amend my motion

Previous motion withdrawn by Mike Wilhelm; seconded by John Bird.

Moved by Mike Wilhelm; seconded by John Bird and unanimously voted to approve the material amendment for 2015-2016 regarding enrollment as submitted with the exception of the last sentence, which will include the word *"minor"* between the words *make* and *modifications.*

D. June 8, 2015, Strategic Planning Meeting will be here in Rooms 103A and B; lunch will be provided by the Cross Café.
There will be a small planning team: Bob Kautz, Shelley Reed, Gina Post, John Bird, Ande Smith. Others, please, submit items for the agenda.
Conference Call: Monday, May 22, at 10 a.m.
Agenda needs to be posted by Monday, June 1, 2015.

VII. New Business

A. Harpswell Coastal Academy Governing Board Changes.

Moved by John Bird; seconded by Mike Wilhelm and voted unanimously to accept Harpswell Coastal Academy's notification of new board members, Cynthia Shelmerdine and Eileen Horner.

B. Monitoring Process Spring 2015.

How do we get a sense of what the school thinks they are accomplishing?

End-of-year Visit Letter:

- Expectation is a narrative of the raw data.
- Two weeks prior to the meeting – reports should be in for the review team.
- Four Sections: Academic, Organization, Governance and Financial.

Monitoring is a year-long process and with the addition of the Program Manager, will help the schools to be current with the ongoing data needed throughout the year.

With not much time in one day, visits need to be focused and on-task by asking the same questions with their answers to create a standard report for each school. The questions were developed by a committee using the performance measures for each group: governing board, administrators, teachers, parents and students.

Participant Schedule:

- Begins with the Governing Board - with the questions formulated with the performance measures for each group.
- Next the School's Administration Team –with the scripted questions.
- It will be a working lunch to process the information received from the governing board, the administrators and special education. This will give us the school's perspective when we talk with the parents and students in the afternoon.
- The afternoon will be with five simultaneous meetings – Bob will be with the Parents; Gina with the Advisory Council/Community Partners and the Review Team members with Students, Teachers or in a Classroom.
- Review Team Meeting.
- Summary with the School Administrators and Governing Board available.

John Bird: Process is not over with the End-of-Year visit. There will be another visit with the complete data and the school's analysis of their data including any identified improvements needed to fulfil the performance targets for the next school year with the Governing Board and School Administrators. This is similar to an accreditation of the public schools.

Followed by the Team's written report; evaluated by the Governing Board/School for any perceived inaccuracies – then to the final copy.

Laurie Pendleton: The schools will need a lot of hand-holdng – they should have been collecting this data, but have they? I think this is a great start that needs more work – will be good to work on it on June 8th.
Is it clear that the final report that the school writes is not the MCSC final monitoring report?

John Bird: If they don't analyze their own data, it makes no sense at all. If the schools do not take a look at themselves, they are not going to grow as an institution. The idea is to put the responsibility on them where it properly belongs and we are assessing their assessment of themselves. It may be an adjustment. We do it this year with patience and understanding, but within another year – they will be better off.

Laurie Pendleton: Schools that have been around for a year or two, need to be aware that even though they might have new performance measures that are based on Smarter Balance, they have prior data that they should be looking at – we have not asked them to do that yet.
This is not just a reflection of this year, but a reflection since they started using the historical

data. Cornville showed what it looked like in Year 1, Year 2, Year 3.

MeANS does not have as much historical data; they should be reporting on whatever they can. At first, had many students enrolling to finish or to do their senior year only.

Mike Wilhelm: I would think they would want to follow the historical data with a cohort from year-to-year.

Ande Smith: MCA meeting in 13 days; what to tactically expect from them?
Previously, we gathered the reports and made comments on each line item (report).
The other version used was a descriptive narrative of the school.
To get the right content for the final report, you need to ask the right questions.
Is the vision to have a report that looks like this **Summary Report Template** or is it a report that looks like Jana's?

Shelley Reed: The Review Team Chair will have the chart we have been using –

- **The Summary Report Template** will be sent out for their initial summary for how well they are doing. And, this is what they will also use as their final one.
- They have the list of documents to prepare.
- Initial letter with some instruction of expectations – previously sent to Connections and Fiddlehead.
- **The Summary Report** template with revised columns for the Review Team to write its report.

Shelley Reed: Cornville's final report from last year -

- Chart for **notes and comments from visit** and **outcomes**.
- Summary Page.
- Commendations.
- Recommendations.
- Closing Summary.

Mike Wilhelm:

- Provide the school's copy of **the Summary Report** to the Team before we arrive. We will have a conversation about the results while there.
- Then a Review Team Conference Call to talk about all of it.
- Then the Chair will put report together.

John Bird: The schools do the best they can do in the time before our visit.
The Team concentrates on questions that show how they see their results.
Not using reports/data that is not finished yet.
Final report will be written after the school has looked at everything, given their take on it, answered your questions and then you (team) decides with a follow-up meeting at least with the Administrators.

Bob Kautz: Maine Connections has the National Connections doing a lot of the analysis and writing together the reports.

Shelley Reed: Use the questions, focus our conversations; the Review Team is in charge to

review – not to be a show and tell. Review Team Chair focusing on what the end-game is – get as much information as you can. With six schools, we need to have a standardized way of doing it.

Bob Kautz: This will be fraught with *interpretation*; a new experience with the same stuff in a different way. There will be issues we cannot anticipate. We are hopeful that this is going to provide more data, especially observational data, by meeting with the governing board and administrators to do in-depth discussion of topics with them; giving more time to those two groups.

Summary Report Template last page … *provide specific evidence of how your school successfully implemented its mission and vision during this school year.*

Shelley Reed: for this first one, we will process as much information as they have and then we will know what we know need to follow up on.

The questions for the Governing Board, Administrators, Teachers, Parents and Students were developed from the performance measures and metrics – *how do we get at this information?*

Bob Kautz: The expectation is to gather as much evidence in regard to the different parts of the performance indicators as to how they, as a governing board, are overseeing it, test how knowledgeable they are of it, how much involvement they have had, their commitment to it. What problems have you been presented? What challenges and how have you addressed it? Are you conducting a formal review of the CEO?

Laurie Pendleton: Star the priority questions for the Review Teams – do others as time allows. So we all ask the same core questions.

Bob Kautz: The Review Team having a pre-review, end-of-year meeting to discuss – "How are we going to do…?" Who is going to attend each session? For that school, we really need to hone in on this more than that … This could be a conference call for this year so everyone knows what their assignments are.

Shelley Reed: We have schools coming up on their 4th year and this information becomes critical.

C. RFP Issue Date Wednesday, June 10, 2015 and Rubric for 2016.

Updates: Gifted and Talented language and appropriate dates throughout the documents.

RFP Informational Meeting Wednesday, June 17, 2015.

Bob Kautz: Because of the feedback Shelley has had from the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee regarding Virtuals a discussion is needed.

Shelley Reed: The sentiment expressed here this morning is that you want to be open to receiving something that could be substantially different. My suggestion to the Edcuation and Cultural Affairs Committee is that in the beginning of the Virtual RFP we add: *"Successful applicants would show a distinction between the two established virtual academies."*

Bob Kautz: Previous comments on the subject of Virtual applications:
How do we know that something so different than from what we have …

Would have to show there is something significantly different than what is already here. If we do not do a virtual request for proposal, the decision is already made before we see something truly different.
John Bird: This doesn't mean we have to approve a virtual school.

Shelley Reed: If we put it out there, we are encouraging people to submit an application. I am not sure we are ready to say that we have enough monitoring under our feet and now we are going to go with another one.

John Bird: I would be amazed if we receive another virtual application.

Jana Lapoint: I did not want to see another virtual until we had time to do what we already have. Being that as it may, I do not like Education and Cultural Affairs telling me to do anything; at this point, if the Commission is going to request another virtual applicant, I would vote for it.

Ande Smith: I would not be in favor of another virtual that looks as closely similar as the two we have – although they are legally dissimilar as virtuals. Leaving the door open for someone to come in with something innovative, we should take it on. I do not expect it.

John Bird: The idea of discouraging or encouraging what is out there – in general principle this is not a good idea.

Bob Kautz: Blended would use the Brick and Mortar Application. Any concept that uses a "school facility" would be blended.

Shelley Reed: Should we add line: *"Successful applicants would show a distinction between the two established virtual academies."*

Laurie Pendleton – Ande Smith: Already in the RFP and reflected in the current law.

Moved by Ande Smith; seconded by Jana Lapoint and unanimously voted to approve the updated 2015 RFP for 2016 to be issued June 10, 2015, both Virtual and Regular, and the accompanying Rubrics.

D. From Roger Brainerd, MACS – a request to consider a two-phase application process to a) satisfy the requirements of the federal charter school grant program, and b) allow founding groups an opportunity to "test their visions" before investing their limited resources in completing a high-stakes full application. A decision to explore the idea and implement it next year, if it proved appropriate, would likely suffice.

Roger Brainerd: We are hoping the Federal Government is going to be announcing a state-level charter school grant; supposed to be done on the 15th, but not yet.

If the State should get this grant, the primary use is for start-up planning for founding groups. It would help to support the whole movement to get some planning money.

To be eligible to receive the Federal Government requires that the non-profit has submitted an application. This is a huge and costly step. Looking at the possibility of doing a Phase 1 Application – providing a vision and plan – having submitted this application would make them

eligible for the planning grant. If you were to make a decision to do this for the next year, it would help the State application for the Federal Government to see this happening.

Judith Jones: Rhode Island has structured their two-phase application precisely to make it possible for first phase applications to result in a "charter application" and the ones that are approved receive the State Education Agency Money (SEA) from the Feds to finish the application.

Founders have to put in an application to a chartering authorizer. They don't have to have it approved.
The total amount of the SEA Grants depends on the number of sub-grants the State Department of Education plans to put out. The State Department of Education applies for this not the authorizers.

With only three slots left, how does Maine put in a strong application? We have to work with the school districts to become authorizers. Rhode Island's process may be more feasible for some of the school districts to be authorizers themselves.

The incentive for the State Department of Education is they will receive 5% of the total money for their own charter school office to hire a charter school coordinator.

Ande: This should be on **our agenda for the June 8th meeting** to talk about rule changes.

John: Thinking of applications that have been inadequate and we have to go through it and then give the bad news, this process of approving a vision, based on our own experience, is something worth looking at improving the stewardship of our charge.

Laurie: With some grant money, we could assume the end application will be better.

Jana: We can easily take that application and know what we need to see in the first round.
What is the program going to do, what is it going to look like and how do you plan to implement?
It would be a pleasure to work on it.

VIII. Other

A. The National Association of Charter School Authorizers conference is October 19- 22 in Denver, Colorado.
Potential participants: Jana Lapoint, Laurie Pendleton, Gina Post, Mike & Donna Wilhelm, John and Mary Alice Bird.

B. Reappointed Members to the MCSC – Interview with the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee has not yet been scheduled. Bob will check with Dr. Phil McCarthy for a date and time.

IX. Announcements

A. Turn in Expense Account Vouchers at the end of the meeting.

B. May 21 – MACS is sponsoring a Reception with Stefan Huh, National Office of Charter Schools, Washington D.C. Director Huh, will be visiting MeANS on the 21st and MeANS and Cornville on Friday, the 22nd. These are the two schools who received the 3-year Non-SEA Federal Charter School Program Grant in 2014. More Reception details to follow. Bob Kautz, Shelley Reed, Gina Post, will attend. **Others?**

C. June 2, 2015, is the new date for the Fiddlehead End-of-Year Review Meeting beginning at 9:00 a.m.

D. Strategic Planning: **Monday, June 8, 2015,** Time: 9:30 a.m. RM 103 A & B Commission Member and Staff Continental Breakfast and Lunch provided.

X. Public Comment

None.

XI. Adjourn

Motion by John Bird; seconded by Laurie Pendleton and unanimously voted by those present to adjourn at 1:40 p.m.

P/CSC/Meeting Minutes/5-5-15 DRAFT Business Meeting Minutes.