***November 10, 2020 Business Meeting Minutes Approved by Commission Vote on December 8, 2020***

The Maine Charter School Commission held a regular Business Meeting via Zoom on **Tuesday, November 10, 2020**

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| **Item Number** | **Agenda Item** |
| **1** | **Call to Order and Declare a Quorum** |
|  | The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair, Nichi Farnham, at 1:07pm and a quorum was declared.  Commission members present were: Nichi Farnham, John Bird, Shelley Reed, Dr. Fern Desjardins, Jana Lapoint and Jim Rier *(left the meeting at 5:30pm during Executive Session)*.  Also present were Bob Kautz, Gina Post, Amy Allen and Jasmine Canwell. |
| **2** | **Reminders** |
| 2a | This meeting is being held as a Zoom webinar and protocol will be followed. A brief presentation of how the meeting will be conducted will be shared. |
| **3** | **Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda** |
|  | Nichi Farnham requested moving “Public Comment” after the School Liaison Reporting Section of the Agenda.  Agenda Item #5f – To Consider and Approve Maine Academy of Natural Sciences’ 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report will be tabled until the next Business Meeting as the school has not had sufficient time to review the report.  **Moved by Jim Rier; seconded by John Bird and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea;** **Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to accept the requested adjustments to the agenda. |
| **4** | **Requires Notification to and Acceptance by the Commission** |
| 4a | Presentation of Maine Connections Academy’s Independent Third-Party Evaluation  A copy of the Independent Third-Party Evaluation was distributed for review and discussion. Chris Indorf, Project Manager for Southern Maine Administrative Collaborative was in attendance to present his findings.  **Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by John Bird and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to accept receipt of Maine Connections Academy’s Independent Third-Party Evaluation. |
| 4b | Presentation of the Plimpton Research Year Two Graduation Study  A copy of the Maine Charter School Commission Graduate Study Second Year Report was distributed for review and discussion. This study was conducted to provide the Commission and schools information on the schools’ previous graduates and their success after graduation. Lisa Plimpton of Plimpton Research was in attendance to present her findings.  **Moved by Jim Rier; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to accept receipt of the Plimpton Research Year Two Graduation Study. |
| 4c | Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences’ New Administrative Team Member – Roberta Polland (Business Manager)  Dr. Fern Desjardins reported that Roberta Polland has been hired as the new Business Manager at Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences. A copy of Roberta’s resume was distributed for review.  **Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by John Bird and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to accept notification of Roberta Polland’s hiring as Business Manager at Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences. |
| 4d | Maine Academy of Natural Sciences’ New Governing Board Members – Robin Cyr, Shannon Webber, and Jesse Wechsler  Copies of Governing Board Member Information Sheets for Robin Cyr, Shannon Webber, and Jesse Wechsler were distributed for review and discussion.  **Moved by John Bird; seconded by Jim Rier and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to accept notification of Maine Academy of Natural Sciences’ new governing board members – Robin Cyr, Shannon Webber, and Jesse Wechsler. |
| **5** | **Requires Notification to and Acceptance by the Commission** |
| 5a | Minutes from the October 6, 2020 Business Meeting  No discussion.  **Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jim Rier and voted unanimously by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to approve as printed the minutes of the October 6, 2020 Business Meeting. |
| 5b | FY21 Budget vs. Actual – November Report  A copy of the November report was distributed for review and discussion.  **Moved by Jim Rier; seconded by John Bird and voted unanimously by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea to** accept the FY21 Budget vs. Actual – November Report. |
| 5c | To Consider and Approve Maine Arts Academy’s Request to Amend School Mission  A copy of Maine Arts Academy’s Request to Amend School Mission was distributed for review and discussion.  In July, Maine Arts Academy Board of Directors and Head of School met to create a new strategic plan for the next five years. As part of the planning process, the school has submitted a request to amend its mission and vision. Maine Arts Academy believes the new mission and vision accurately reflect what the school is now and better aligns with its new strategic plan.  Maine Charter School Commission staff, consultant, and school liaison reviewed the request and accompanying materials and recommends the approval of the request to amend Maine Arts Academy’s mission, vision, and tagline as follows:  **Mission:**  Providing a rigorous college and career preparatory curriculum and well-rounded arts education to enrich the lives of our students  **Vision:**  Nurturing the next generation of leaders to become invaluable citizens at the heart of Maine’s cultural, economic and social well-being  **Tagline:**  Maine’s only free public high school for the arts  **Moved by John Bird; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to approve Maine Arts Academy’s Request to Amend School Mission, Vision and Tagline as written. |
| 5d | To Consider and Approve ACADIA Academy’s 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report  A copy of the ACADIA Academy 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report was distributed for review and approval.  **Moved by Jim Rier; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to approve ACADIA Academy’s 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report. |
| 5e | To Consider and Approve Harpswell Coastal Academy’s 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report  A copy of the Harpswell Coastal Academy 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report was distributed for review and approval.  **Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by John Bird and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – yea** to approve Harpswell Coastal Academy’s 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report. |
| 5f | To Consider and Approve Maine Academy of Natural Sciences’ 2019-2020 Annual Monitoring Report  Tabled until next Business Meeting. |
| **6** | **Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report** |
| 6a | Current Enrollment Statistics and Data Collected Through Epicenter  Certified 10/1 student enrollment data is still being reviewed and “approved” by the MDOE. A draft copy of enrollment data including contracted enrollment, actual enrollment, grades served, special education numbers and economically disadvantaged counts was distributed for review. Staff will continue to update the numbers as more data becomes available.  Epicenter is the portal that Commission staff use to collect required reports and other information directly from the schools. A list of current Epicenter submissions was distributed for review. |
| 6b | Panorama SEL Survey Update  Gina reported that three schools participated in the Social Emotional Learning Survey provided through the Commission’s contract with Panorama education. Schools have just received the results. Survey results are at the individual student level and can assist the school in making plans for each student. |
| **7** | **Executive Director/Commission Staff Report** |
|  | ***School-Related Items:*** |
| 7a | COVID-19 Updates  Gina shared that MCSC staff have continued to hold monthly check-in meetings with the Heads of School and Board Chair with the understanding the frequency of the meetings could be increased should the need arise.  Gina also shared that three of the ten schools have reported cases of COVID-19 within their school and have closed for a period of time. Schools have been working with the CDC, their school nurse, and their school health advisors to develop the most appropriate plan for their school. |
|  | ***Commission-Related Items:*** |
| 7b | Charter School Program Study - “The Impact of Charter Schools on Maine’s Education System”  A copy of the Charter School Program Study, “The Impact of Charter Schools on Maine’s Education System,” conducted and prepared by Analytic Insight was distributed for review and discussion. |
| 7c | NACSA Post-Conference Update  Bob shared that this year’s NACSA Leadership Conference, held virtually from October 13-30, 2020 was well-attended by Commission staff, members, and consultants. Preliminary feedback from participants has been positive. |
| **8** | **Comments from Commission Members** |
| 8a | Chair – Nichi Farnham  None |
|  | School Liaison Assignments  A few years ago, MCSC moved from having review teams of 3 Commission members to 1 Commission member serving as School Liaison with the staff and consultants as the review team.  When the switch to liaisons was implemented it was the intention that liaisons would be rotated through the various schools on an annual or bi-annual basis in order to be familiar with multiple schools in the MCSC portfolio. However, when the Commission went down to 6 members and 1 had an expiring term, the Commission decided to hold off on moving liaisons while awaiting the appointment of new members.  As it has been some time, and there is no indication of the 3 new members being appointed (as there is now a second Commission member with an expired term), it seems that reassigning the liaisons is appropriate at this time.  In creating the new assignments, many circumstances were considered including, but not limited to:   * Which schools would be entering renewal in spring 2021 * Having Commission members with expired terms serving as liaison to only 1 school * Geographic proximity of liaison to school * Commission member strengths related to the needs of the schools and schools’ governing boards * Previous affiliation with the school as a review team member   Assignments are as follows and will take effect beginning November 2020:  ACADIA Academy – Jana Lapoint  Baxter Academy for Technology and Science – John Bird  Community Regional Charter School – John Bird  Ecology Learning Center – Nichi Farnham  Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences – Shelley Reed  Harpswell Coastal Academy – Dr. Fern Desjardins  Maine Academy of Natural Sciences – Nichi Farnham  Maine Arts Academy – Dr. Fern Desjardins  Maine Connections Academy – Jim Rier  Maine Virtual Academy – Jim Rier |
| 8b | Vice Chair – Dr. Fern Desjardins  Dr. Fern Desjardins reflected upon comments shared earlier by Jim Gemmell, Maine Arts Academy governing board member, and concurred with the continuing need to educate on the importance of Maine’s public charter schools. |
| 8c | School Liaisons  Jana Lapoint shared that Baxter conducted a study in which approximately 150 parents participated in assessing their level of performance during COVID.  Dr. Fern Desjardins highlighted the recent Fiddlehead news article “Outdoor Classrooms a Silver Lining for Fiddlehead,” featured in the Commission Connection. |
|  | **Public Comment\*** |
|  | None |
| 8d | Search Committee Update and Possible Executive Session  Dr. Fern Desjardins provided a brief update from the Search Committee regarding applications received for the Executive Director position. A total of 34 applications were received.  Motion to Enter into Executive Session to Consider the Employment of an Executive Director for the Maine Charter School Commission.  A motion was made at 3:47pm. In accordance with: ***Title 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS, Chapter 13: PUBLIC RECORDS AND PROCEEDINGS, Subchapter 1: FREEDOM OF ACCESS, §405. Executive Sessions.***  **Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Jim Rier and voted by roll call as follows: Nichi Farnham – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Jim Rier – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; John Bird – yea** to enter into Executive Session to Consider the Employment of an Executive Director for the Maine Charter School Commission. |
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|  | Return from Executive Session  The Commission returned from Executive Session at 6:10pm.  No official action to be taken.  Dr. Fern Desjardins requested it be noted that the Commission will be involved with the Search Committee in conducting the second round of interviews with the top candidates for the Executive Director position. Two Special MCSC Meetings will be scheduled to conduct the interviews in Executive Session. |
| **9** | **Announcements** |
| 9a | Submission of Travel and Expense Vouchers  Nichi Farnham shared that submissions will need to be signed and returned to the office. |
| 9b | Next Regular Business Meeting – December 8, 2020 *(Location to Be Determined)* |
| **11** | **Adjourn** |
|  | The meeting was adjourned at 6:13pm.  **Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted by roll call as follows: John Bird – yea; Dr. Fern Desjardins – yea; Nichi Farnham – yea; Jana Lapoint – yea; Shelley Reed – yea; Jim Rier – absent** to adjourn. |