

Maine Charter School Commission

July 1, 2019 Business Meeting Minutes Approved by Commission Vote on August 6, 2019

The Maine Charter School Commission held a regular Business Meeting in Room #103A/B of the Cross Office Building - Augusta, on **Monday, July 1, 2019**

1. Call to Order and Declare a Quorum

The meeting was called to order by Commission Vice Chair, John Bird, at 9:33am and a quorum was declared.

Commission members present were: John Bird, Vice Chair; Dr. Fern Desjardins; Shelley Reed; Jana Lapoint; and Laurie Pendleton.

Commission members absent were: Jim Rier.

Also present were Bob Kautz, Gina Post, Amy Allen and Jasmine Canwell.

2. Members of the Public Are Asked to Sign In

John Bird reminded those present to sign-in if they had not already done so.

Members of the public present were: Judith Jones (*MACS*); Roger Brainerd (*MACS*); Nichi Farnham; Bill Nave; Dani Best (*Maine Academy of Natural Sciences*); Christine Sullivan (*Maine Academy of Natural Sciences*); Brittiny-Rae Perron (*ACADIA Academy*); Lisa Packard (*Ecology Learning Center*); Bill Doughty (*Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences*); Rachel Ohm (*Portland Press Herald*); Nathan Cloutier (*Eaton Peabody*); Vincent Micale (*Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences*); and Cheryl Clukey (*MACS*).

3. Reminders:

- ✓ **This meeting is being recorded.**
- ✓ **Please turn your cellphones to silent or vibrate.**
- ✓ **Private conversations should be held in the hallway and not during the meeting.**

4. Election of Maine Charter School Commission Officers

Election of Maine Charter School Commission Chair tabled until next Business Meeting.

Motion to elect John Bird as Vice Chair of the Maine Charter School Commission for a one-year term.

Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Laurie Pendleton and voted unanimously by those present to elect John Bird as Vice Chair of the Maine Charter School Commission for a one-year term.

5. To Consider Action Relative to Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

Agenda Item #8 – To Accept FY19 Budget vs. Actual – July Report will be tabled as the report is not yet available.

Add Agenda Item #10h – To Consider and Approve Minor Administrative Regularities to New School Applications

Moved by Laurie Pendleton; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present to accept additions to the agenda.

6. To Act Relative to Accepting as Printed the Minutes of the June 4, 2019 Business Meeting

No discussion.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Dr. Fern Desjardins and voted unanimously by those present to accept the minutes of the June 4, 2019 Business Meeting.

7. To Accept FY19 Budget vs. Actual – June Report

A copy of the report was distributed for review and discussion.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Dr. Fern Desjardins and voted unanimously by those present to accept the FY19 Budget vs. Actual – June Report.

8. To Accept FY19 Budget vs. Actual – July Report

Tabled until August 6, 2019 Business Meeting.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9a. To Consider and Approve Intervention Protocol

Tabled until August 6, 2019 Business Meeting.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10a. To consider and Approve Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences' Request to Increase Grade Span

A copy of the Request to Increase Grade Span was distributed for review and discussion.

Staff, consultant, and school liaison recommend the approval of the requested expansion to add grades 7 and 8, adding 7th grade for the school year 20-21 and grade 8 for school year 21-22.

Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present to approve Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences' Request to Increase Grade Span.

10b. To Consider and Approve ACADIA Academy’s Request to Change School Calendar

A copy of the Request to Change School Calendar was distributed for review and discussion. This request will change the existing calendar to show 4 professional development days at the start of the school year and reducing the number of student days from 179 to 175.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Laurie Pendleton and voted unanimously by those present to approve ACADIA Academy’s Request to Change School Calendar.

10c. To Consider and Accept Maine Academy of Natural Sciences’ Governing Board Member Resignation – Mara Casey Ticken

A copy of the resignation was distributed for review and discussion.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present to accept Maine Academy of Natural Sciences’ Governing Board Member Resignation – Mara Casey Ticken.

10d. To Consider and Accept Maine Arts Academy’s Governing Board Member Resignation – Jessica Crowell

A copy of the resignation was distributed for review and discussion.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present to accept Maine Arts Academy’s Governing Board Member Resignation – Jessica Crowell.

10e. To Consider and Accept Maine Connections Academy’s Independent Third-Party Evaluation

A copy of the Independent Third-Party Evaluation was distributed for review and discussion. Bill Nave was in attendance to present his findings.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present to approve Maine Connections Academy’s Independent Third-Party Evaluation.

10f. To Consider and Approve the Appointment of a Temporary School Liaison for Maine Connections Academy

Laurie Pendleton will serve as the temporary school liaison for Maine Connections Academy. She serves as the current school liaison for Maine Virtual Academy and has served on Maine Connections Academy’s Review Team in the past. The assignment of a permanent liaison will be discussed when the Commission membership is at full strength.

Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present to approve the appointment of a temporary school liaison for Maine Connections Academy.

10g. To Consider and Approve Proposed Changes to Regular Maine Charter School Commission Meeting Dates and Times

Beginning in September 2019, Business Meetings will be held the 2nd Tuesday of each month beginning at 1:00pm.

Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present to approve proposed changes to regular Maine Charter School Commission meeting dates and times.

10h. To Consider and Approve Minor Administrative Regularities to New School Applications

Bob Kautz shared that while conducting completeness reviews of the new charter school applications it was discovered that one of the applications had exceeded the maximum word count in two separate sections of the application. In one section the word count was exceeded by 10 words and in the other section by 3 words.

Staff used the word count feature in Microsoft Word as well as counting words manually. Both exercises resulted in slightly different counts.

Staff recommended that minor administrative regularities to new school applications be allowed for this situation with the understanding that during the next RFP process there will be a clear description of how words will be counted.

Moved by Laurie Pendleton; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present to approve minor administrative regularities to new school applications.

11. REPORTS

11a. Chair – Vacant

None.

11b. Vice Chair – John Bird

None.

11c. Executive Director – Bob Kautz

NACSA Leadership Conference

This years' conference will be held October 21-24, 2019 in St. Louis, MO. Flights and hotel space need to be booked and the early bird discount for registration will be available until the end of August. Let Amy Allen know if you plan to attend so that arrangements can be made.

Legislative Updates

Bob shared that the three bills affecting Maine's public charter schools – LD 307, LD 513, and LD 1638 – all went into law without the Governor's signature.

Budget Discussion

Bob shared that comprehensive notes to accompany the budget are being worked on and will be presented for review and discussion at the next Business Meeting.

Bates College has requested that the Commission meet with their education students. Discussion surrounding the details in the very early stages. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

11d. Director of Program Management – Gina Post

RFP Update

Two applications were received prior to the June 21st deadline and have been deemed complete:

- The Ecology Learning Center, located in Montville, will serve students in grades 9-12 and plan to have 96 students enrolled in its 3rd year of operation.
- Sheffwood Academy, located in Topsham, will serve students in grades 6-12 and plan to have 700 students enrolled after its 4th year of operation.

Capacity Interviews for both applicants will be held on July 29th and July 30th.

MeVA Update

The Year 4 Performance Report and Renewal Guidance was submitted to Maine Virtual Academy on Friday, June 28th. The school has two weeks to review and clarify any perceived inconsistencies.

NACSA Leaders Alumni Convening

Gina shared that alumni of the NACSA Leaders Program met recently in California.

Website

InforMe has presented a prototype that is currently being reviewed for changes, accuracy, etc. A demonstration of the prototype will be shared at the next Business Meeting.

School News

- Graduations have taken place at all schools with the exception of Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.

Gina shared that she will be attending a week-long Special Education Law Class next week at Thomas College.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

12a. Turn in Expense Vouchers at the End of the Meeting

12b. Next Business Meeting Date – August 6, 2019

13. OTHER COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

Jana Lapoint commended MACS for the work that was done during this legislative session.

Dr. Fern Desjardins shared that she attended Nichi Farnham's interview with the Education & Cultural Affairs Committee and felt that there was a great deal of negative energy amongst the members of the Committee and feels that the Commission needs to do a better job of sharing the good work that the charter schools are doing.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Brainerd from MACS shared that they submitted a bill regarding e-rates which was passed during this legislative session. The bill they submitted regarding high-cost special needs funding has been tabled until next session. He shared that across the country there were 72 bills submitted affecting charter schools. Of those 72 bills, all but 2 were submitted by Democrats.

Judith Jones shared her concerns regarding LD 1638 and the way non-State Board of Education members will be appointed to the Maine Charter School Commission. These four seats will now be appointed by the Governor eliminating the State Board of Education from making recommendations/nominations. Who will make these recommendations/nominations to the Governor's Office? This is a process issue that needs to be explored further.

13. ADJOURN – Meeting was adjourned at 11:57am.

Moved by Jana Lapoint; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present to adjourn.