***August 6, 2019 Business Meeting Minutes Approved by Commission Vote on September 10, 2019***

The Maine Charter School Commission held a regular Business Meeting in Room #103A/B of the Cross Office Building - Augusta, on **Tuesday, August 6, 2019**

1. **Call to Order and Declare a Quorum**

The meeting was called to order by Commission Member, Laurie Pendleton, at 9:31am and a quorum was declared.

Commission members present were: Laurie Pendleton, Nichi Farnham, Dr. Fern Desjardins, Shelley Reed, Jim Rier and Jana Lapoint.

Commission members absent were: John Bird.

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

1. **Members of the Public Are Asked to Sign In**

Laurie Pendleton reminded those present to sign-in if they had not already done so.

Members of the public present were: Scott Barksdale *(Harpswell Coastal Academy)*; Roger Brainerd *(MACS)*; Judith Jones *(MACS)*; Samantha Hogan *(Pine Tree Watch)*; Lauren Thompson *(Maine Connections Academy)*; Chad Strout *(Maine Connections Academy)*; Nathan Cloutier *(Eaton Peabody)*; Lisa Packard – 9:43am *(Ecology Learning Center)*; Travis Works – 9:45am *(Cornville Regional Charter School)*.

1. **Reminders:**
* **This meeting is being recorded.**
* **Please turn off your cellphones to silent or vibrate.**
* **Private conversations should be held in the hallway and not during the meeting.**
1. **Election of Maine Charter School Commission Chair**

Motion to elect Nichi Farnham as Chair of the Maine Charter School Commission for a one-year term effective September 2019.

**Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present** to elect Nichi Farnham as Chair of the Maine Charter School Commission for a one-year term effective September 2019.

1. **To Consider Action Relative to Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda**

None

1. **To Act Relative to Accepting as Printed the Minutes of the July 1, 2019 Business Meeting**

No Discussion

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Dr. Fern Desjardins and voted as follows – five (5) yes; one (1) abstain/Nichi Farnham** accept as printed the minutes of the July 1, 2019 Business Meeting.

1. **To Accept FY19 Budget vs. Actual – July Report**

No Discussion

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jim Rier and voted unanimously by those present** to accept the FY19 Budget vs. Actual – July Report.

1. **To Accept FY20 Budget vs. Actual – August Report**

No Discussion

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jim Rier and voted unanimously by those present** accept the FY20 Budget vs. Actual – August Report.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

**9a. To Consider and Approve Intervention Protocol**

A copy of the Intervention Protocol was distributed for review and discussion.

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present** to approve Intervention Protocol for Commission work with further review in November.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

**10a. Discussion and Vote to Either Approve the Ecology Learning Center Application to Continue to an In-Person Interview and Public Hearing or Deny the Application with No Further Action**

The Maine Charter School Commission Review Team recommends Ecology Learning Center’s application be forwarded for a Commission Interview and Public Hearing. The Review Team was unanimous in its decision that Ecology Learning Center’s application be recommended for further consideration as a Maine Charter School. The Review Team believes that “meeting” or “exceeding” nearly all of the application criteria would likely ensure that the applicant’s ability to open and operate a successful public charter school, the Ecology Learning Center.

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present** to approve the Ecology Learning Center Application be forwarded for a Commission Interview and Public Hearing.

**10b. Discussion and Vote to Either Approve the Sheffwood Academy Application to Continue to an In-Person Interview and Public Hearing or to Deny the Application with No Further Action**

The Maine Charter School Commission Review Team does not recommend Sheffwood Academy’s application be forwarded for a Commission Interview and Public Hearing. The Review Team was unanimous in its decision that Sheffwood Academy’s application not be recommended for further consideration as a Maine Charter School. The Review Team believes that not “Meeting” an abundance of application criteria would likely jeopardize seriously the applicant’s ability to open and operate a successful public charter school, the Sheffwood Academy.

**Moved by Jana Lapoint; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present** to deny the Sheffwood Academy Application with No Further Action.

1. **REPORTS**

**11a. Chair – Nichi Farnham**

None

**11b. Vice Chair – John Bird**

None - Absent

**11c. Executive Director – Bob Kautz**

Important News From HCA

Carrie Branson has resigned from her position at Harpswell Coastal Academy and the Governing Board has hired Scott Barksdale as HCA’s new Head of School.

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present** to accept notification of Scott Barksdale’s hiring as Head of School at Harpswell Coastal Academy.

MeANS Head of School and Governing Board Update

Matthew Newburg has been hired as the Head of School at Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.

**Moved by Jana Lapoint; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present** to accept notification of Matthew Newberg’s hiring as Head of School at Maine Academy of Natural Sciences.

MeANS has three new members serving on its Governing Board – Sally Beaulieu, Scott Byrd and Kim Patnode.

**Moved by Jana Lapoint; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present** to accept notification of new MeANS Governing Board members.

Bob noted that MeANS is considering increasing the number of Governing Board members from 11 to 15 which the current By-Laws would allow.

MeVA Academic Administrator

Bob reported that MeVA has created a new Academic Administrator position and that Donald Fournier has been hired to fill the position.

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted unanimously by those present** to accept notification that Donald Fournier has been hired as MeVA’s new Academic Administrator.

Update on DOE Eight-Year Charter School Program Study to be Reported to the Education Committee

Bob shared that the Department of Education will be issuing an RFP for an independent study on the Maine Charter School program to be conducted. The Department has asked for assistance in offsetting the cost of the study to be conducted. Bob has authorized up to $30,000 from the Commission to support the DOE in its efforts.

**Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jana Lapoint and voted as follows by those present – (4) in favor; (2) opposed (Nichi Farnham and Jana Lapoint)** to fund up to $30,000 for the DOE to do independent study of Maine’s charter school program.

Bob indicated that we need to be looking at the assignment of School Liaisons. Baxter will need a replacement after Jana’s term on the Commission has ended and a permanent liaison will be needed for Maine Connections Academy. Bob also indicated that a replacement is needed to fill Dr. Mike Wilhelm’s vacancy on the Finance Committee.

**11d. Director of Program Management – Gina Post**

Gina shared that Board and Administration visits with schools have begun. Baxter’s visit was held on August 5th. They are currently interviewing for an open Head of School position. Once that position is filled, the focus will be on hiring a Dean of Students.

Binders containing the Ecology Learning Center and Sheffwood Academy applications are available for anyone who would like a copy. Gina reminded Commission members that the Commission Interview and Public Hearing will be held on August 7th at the Augusta Civic Center and that at the September 10th Business Meeting a vote will be taken regarding moving the application to contract/charter negotiations.

Gina reported that the Special Education class she attended in July went very well. She shared that it was extremely intense but feels like she is better prepared to know what questions to ask the schools when presented with a need to do so.

The Bates College visit will be held on October 10th at 4:30pm.

1. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

**12b. Next Business Meeting Date – *September 10, 2019 (Room #541/Cross Office Building)***

1. **OTHER COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**

The Commission thanked Laurie Pendleton for chairing today’s Business Meeting.

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Roger Brainerd shared that the 2019 Independent Charter School Symposium hosted by the Coalition of Public Independent Charter Schools will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico beginning on November 17th and ending on November 20th.

1. **ADJOURN** – Meeting was adjourned at 11:48am.

**Moved by Dr. Fern Desjardins; seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present to** adjourn.