



VISION

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL
COMMISSION

All of Maine's children will have access to a vibrant ecosystem of diverse schools so that all of them can become happy, healthy and thriving citizens

September 2022 Business Meeting of the Maine Charter School Commission

September 13, 2022 Commission Meeting Minutes Approved by Commission Vote on October 11, 2022

The Maine Charter School Commission held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2022

| Item Number | Agenda Item |
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| 1 | Call to Order and Declare a Quorum |
| | <p>The meeting held in person and via Zoom in accordance with the Commission's remote meeting policy, was called to order by Commission Chair, Wilson Hess, at 1:01pm and a quorum was declared.</p> <p>Commission members present were Nichi Farnham, Shelley Reed, Wilson Hess, Tom Keller, Tori Kornfield (<i>via Zoom</i>), and Jim Rier (<i>via Zoom</i>).</p> <p>Also present were Gina Post and Amy Allen (<i>via Zoom</i>).</p> <p><i>Commission member, Shelley Reed, read the Commission's Vision Statement.</i></p> |
| 2 | Reminders |
| 2a | This meeting is being recorded via Zoom. |
| 2b | We ask members of the public to hold comments until public comments are being heard. |
| 2c | When speaking, state your name and speak slowly and clearly and loudly enough for the captioner to pick up your comments. Gina will interrupt if the captioner is having a difficult time hearing what is being said. |
| 3 | Comments from Commission Chair, Committee Reports and Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda |
| 3a | <p>Comments from Commission Chair</p> <p>Chair Hess shared that it was "great to be at MEAA" and enjoyed the tour that he had prior to the meeting and expressed the importance for Commission members to visit schools to see, hear, and experience what is happening on the campuses.</p> <p>He also congratulated schools on the opening of a new school year.</p> |
| 3b | <p>Committee Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelley Reed - Chair, School Performance Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nichi Farnham - Chair, Finance Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee Wilson Hess - Chair, Executive Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee |
| 3c | <p>Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda</p> <p><i>None</i></p> |
| 4 | <p>Meeting Minutes Approval</p> |
| 4a | <p>To Consider the Minutes from the August 9, 2022 Business Meeting</p> <p>A copy of the draft minutes was distributed for review and consideration.</p> <p>Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jim Rier and voted unanimously by those present to approve the minutes from the August 9, 2022 Business Meeting.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Public Comment*</p> |
| | <p>Sherry Gilbert, Maine Arts Academy Board President, shared that the Academy will be hosting the Pihcintu Multicultural Girls Choir on September 24th. Tickets will be \$10 at the door and additional donations will support Maine Arts Academy's "Help Us Build A New Home Fund".</p> <p>Bob Kautz, former Executive Director of the Maine Charter School Commission, shared that while onboarding future Commission members it is important to point out the differences between the financing of public charter schools vs. the financing of regular public schools (i.e., access to transportation funding, buildings, and other loans) and reminded Commission members that public charter schools do not have access to local dollars.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Presentations</p> <p><i>None</i></p> |
| 7 | <p>Unfinished Business</p> |
| 7a | <p>To Consider the Approval of the Commission's Staff Retirement Benefit</p> <p>Motion to table until a recommendation is received and reviewed by the Executive Committee.</p> <p>Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jim Rier and voted unanimously by those present to table until a recommendation is received and reviewed by the Executive Committee.</p> |
| 8 | <p>New Business Requiring Approval</p> <p><i>None</i></p> |
| 9 | <p>New Business Requiring Notification and Acceptance</p> |
| 9a | <p>The following new governing board member appointments were announced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theresa Overall - Community Regional Charter School Robert Dodge - Maine Academy of Natural Sciences <p>The following resignations were announced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stacy Stevens - Maine Academy of Natural Sciences Maggie Allen - Maine Arts Academy <p>There were no term outs to report.</p> |

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| | <p>Moved by Shelley Reed; seconded by Jim Rier and voted unanimously by those present to accept notifications of new board members as presented.</p> |
| 9b | <p>FY23 Budget vs. Actual Report</p> <p>A copy of the new report format was distributed for review.</p> <p>Moved by Nichi Farnham; seconded by Shelley Reed and Voted unanimously by those present to accept the FY23 Budget vs. Actual Report in its new format.</p> |
| 10 | Executive Director/Commission Staff Report |
| 10a | <p>Update on Progress of HCA Charter Renewal</p> <p>The Renewal Visit with the school is scheduled for September 14th. Staff will meet with focus groups (students, parents/families, and school staff) as well as members of the Governing Board and Leadership Team. A site visit report will be created and submitted to the Commission for review prior to the Public Hearing which will be held on September 29th.</p> <p>Since staff last updated the Commission on the progress of the consolidation work being done on campus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two yurts have been framed and are still under construction. ● The school reports that the temporary classrooms are functioning adequately. ● They are approximately 81% enrolled with 171 students (enrollment goal is 210 students). ● They are now fully staffed with the exception of a Business Manager who has been hired and will begin on September 19th. |
| 10b | <p>Update on End of Year Monitoring</p> <p>Staff reported that four schools were on cycle for a monitoring visit (ACADIA Academy, Ecology Learning Center, Maine Arts Academy, and Maine Connections Academy) and that staff opted to visit two schools that were not on cycle – Community Regional Charter School and Maine Arts Academy – as the conditions for renewal had just been met.</p> <p>Two of these visits were done in June and four were done in August. Site visit reports have been completed and will be part of the 2021-22 Annual Monitoring Reports which staff anticipate will be ready for Commission consideration at the November meeting.</p> |
| 10c | <p>Update on Performance Framework Amendments</p> <p>Staff reported that eight charter contracts needed to be amended with the new performance framework. That process is complete. Neither the CRCS nor the MeANS charter contract required amendments as the new framework was included in their recently signed contracts.</p> |

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| | <p>Staff held two performance framework information sessions for board members and school staff to attend. Between the two sessions, there were 24 attendees. Both sessions were the same and staff went through the framework indicator by indicator to be sure that schools understood the expectations. A satisfaction survey was disseminated after both sessions and feedback was very positive.</p> |
| 10d/10e | <p>Update on MeANS and CRCS Intervention Level 2</p> <p>For both MEANS and CRCS, staff have issued an intervention letter and developed a process for continuing to monitor areas that were conditions for renewal and have added a few more that are areas of concern (attendance rates, graduation rates, academic performance).</p> <p>Staff will conduct a fall meeting, a mid-year meeting and an end of year meeting to track and monitor progress.</p> |
| 10f | <p>New Baxter Academy Executive Director</p> <p>Anna Marie Klein-Christie has been hired as the new Executive Director at Baxter Academy. She began in early September. Staff have been in contact with her and look forward to working with her throughout the year.</p> |
| 10g | <p>Media Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New principal aims to bring stability in wake of Harpswell Coastal Academy's hectic year |
| 11 | Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report |
| 11a | <p>Charter Public School Enrollment/Unenrollment (<i>Previously Tabled</i>)</p> <p>A copy of the year-end portfolio data for the 2021-22 school year was distributed for review and discussion.</p> <p>This data is looked at on a monthly basis and staff report that they look for “trends and red flags” and reach out to schools for clarification as needed.</p> <p>Commission members expressed an interest in seeing this data on a more regular basis. Staff will prepare and present the portfolio data along with individual school data to the School Performance Committee at least quarterly.</p> |
| 12 | Future Topics |
| 12a | <p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Vote on HCA Renewal • Q1 Governing Board Chair Convening <p>November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of SY21-22 Annual Monitoring Reports <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maine Connections Academy's Independent Third-Party Evaluation Presentation • Maine Virtual Academy's Independent Third-Party Evaluation Presentation |
| 13 | Announcements |
| 13a | This Month's Celebrations |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulations to Lana on the birth of her baby boy, Luca Jonathan Forrest, who was born on September 7th. |
| 13b | Important Dates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Hearing for Renewal, Harpswell Coastal Academy/9 Ash Point Road, Harpswell and via Zoom/September 29th (4:30-6:00pm) |
| 13c | Portfolio Calendar Items <i>(None Reported)</i> |
| 13d | Next Regular Business Meeting – October 11, 2022 <i>(Room #103, Cross Office Building, Augusta)</i> |
| 14 | Adjourn |
| | Chair Hess declared adjournment at 2:22pm with no objections. |

** The Charter School Commission does not allow airing of complaints in public meetings regarding Commission and charter school employees or school employment matters, in order to protect employee privacy, to comply with Maine law and pursuant to our contractual relation with the schools. To the extent that the Commission receives complaints and concerns relating to school employees in writing, those concerns will be reviewed and addressed by the Commission and its staff outside of a public meeting. This meeting is not the appropriate forum for such comments. You are free to direct your concerns in writing to the Commission's Executive Director, if you have not done so already.*