

MINUTES OF THE
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 7, 2015

The monthly meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board was held at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7, 2015, at the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art located in Laurel, Mississippi. In attendance were:

Tommie Cardin, Chairman
Dr. Bonita Coleman-Potter
Johnny Franklin
Chris Wilson
Dr. Carey Wright

Vice Chair Krystal Cormack and Dr. Karen Elam participated by teleconference.

Board Chairman Tommie Cardin called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

ITEM I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was previously circulated to all Board members for review.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to adopt the agenda, as presented.

MOTION: Dr. Wright

SECOND: Mr. Wilson

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

ITEM II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the June 1, 2015 meeting were previously distributed to the Board members for review. Chairman Cardin noted two typographical corrects to be made.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion for approval of the Minutes of the June 1, 2015 meeting, as amended.

MOTION: Dr. Coleman-Potter

SECOND: Mr. Franklin

There being no further discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

ITEM III. CHAIR REPORT

Chairman Cardin reported that he, along with Chris Wilson and Marian Schutte, attended the National Charter Schools Conference in New Orleans, LA in June. He stated that they had a very productive day, which included meetings with potential charter school operators who have expressed interest in coming to Mississippi, as well as a meeting with Representative Charles Busby. He commended Ms. Schutte on coordinating those meetings and ensuring a productive day.

Chairman Cardin further commended Evan Emenegger on his work with the Board during his summer internship and stated that Evan would be making a presentation of his work product later in the meeting. Chairman Cardin thanked Evan for his hard work, dedication and commitment this summer and wished him well as he continues his career.

ITEM IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Schutte reported that Dr. Chambers has asked that she extend her appreciation for the warm welcome to last month's meeting and how much she enjoyed visiting Mississippi in both the Jackson area and the Delta. Ms. Schutte stated that she will continue to meet with Dr. Chambers until October when the leaders program will culminate at the NACSA conference in Denver, CO.

She further reported that the Board has funds available for members who wish to attend the NACSA conference on October 19 – 22 and asked that anyone interested in attending let her know as soon as possible as the registration fee is lower for early registration. This conference, she stated, features sessions designed specifically for authorizers.

Ms. Schutte also recognized Evan Emenegger and reported that he will be sharing with the Board the work he has done on www.charter.ms.org, an information website for future charter applicants.

She next discussed the charter school federal grant program. She stated that the USDOE has opened the grant competition to state education agencies. The funds are to be used for post-award implementation planning and start up expenses, and up to 5% of the funds can also be used for administrative purposes. She is working with MS First who has worked with MDE on several grant competitions. MDE will be applying for this grant. The due date for the application is July 16th, and the grants will be awarded in late September. Ms. Schutte stated further that there is approximately \$116M in funds available under the program, and the USDOE estimates that approximately 12 grants will be awarded. The awards will be for grants spanning five years and will total a little more than \$10M each.

Ms. Schutte reiterated what Chairman Cardin reported pertaining to the National Charter Schools conference and briefly discussed the meetings and contacts she, Chairman Cardin and Mr. Wilson were able to make during that program.

Lastly, Ms. Schutte updated the Board on the start-up subgrants approved during the June meeting. She has received applications from both RePublic and Midtown, and all of the information has been delivered to Cornerstone. As soon as a few unanswered questions are resolved, the money will be release to them. The money must be spent by December 31, 2015, and are to be used for start up purposes only. ReImagine states that they will use their portion of the funds on salaries to fund the CMO level positions that have been conducting start up activities, and Midtown will use theirs for furniture and/or technology. Any fixed assets will be required to be documented as part of their inventory policy and will revert to the local district should the charter school close.

ITEM V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Applications Committee

Mrs. Cormack briefly reviewed some background information on the current application cycle to date and spoke specifically about the two proposals that were deemed eligible to proceed to stage two during the June meeting: (1) Republic Schools, Inc., who proposed to open two schools in the Jackson Public School District; and (2) Phoenix Project Community Development Foundation, Inc., who proposed one school in the Natchez-Adams School District. She stated that it is important to remember that stage two is a quality threshold review which looks at the bare minimum requirements the applicants must meet in seven areas. A finding of substantially adequate must be found in all seven of these areas to proceed to stage three. She reported the stage 2 findings as follows:

Republic Schools, Inc. had no areas in which it was found to be substantial inadequate. The committee recommends that Republic Schools, Inc. be advanced to stage three, and that one interview be conducted for the proposal for these two schools.

Phoenix Project Community Development Foundation, Inc. received substantially inadequate ratings in two of the seven areas, student population and start up plan. Based on those findings, the committee recommends that the Board deny Phoenix Project Community Development Foundation, Inc.'s charter proposal.

Evan Emenegger presented his work on the website www.charterms.org. Ms. Schutte stated that she anticipates having the website completely operational by October 1, 2015.

B. Performance and Accountability Committee

Dr. Coleman-Potter reported that both RePublic Schools and Midtown Public have signed and submitted their contracts. Now that an approved contract template is in place, the contract can be provided to an applicant shortly after their approval to operate a charter school is granted so that the execution process can begin prior to the school opening.

In terms of the Performance Framework, Ms. Schutte stated that the committee is working with the schools to set up the schools-selected indicators that are a part of their academic framework. Dr. Coleman-Potter stated that the committee has been working on the academic criteria along

with Ms. Schutte working with the schools to identify the objective data the schools will use to meet this part of the academic framework. Once these school-selected indicators are complete, the committee will bring the framework indicators to the Board, hopefully in October, for approval so that the schools have some “buy in” in terms of how they will be monitored and evaluated.

ITEM VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2015 Request for Proposals: Stage 2 Results

Vice Chair Cormack made a motion that the Board ratify the recommendation of the Application Committee to move Republic Schools, Inc. forward to Stage 3 of the 2015 RFP cycle.

MOTION: Mrs. Cormack

SECOND: Dr. Coleman-Potter

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

Vice Chair Cormack made a motion that the Board adopt a resolution to deny Phoenix Project Community Development Foundation, Inc.’s charter school proposal based on the substantially inadequate findings in the 2015 RFP Stage 2 evaluation.

MOTION: Mrs. Cormack

SECOND: Mr. Franklin

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

B. Executive Director Evaluation

Chairman Cardin stated that the proposed Executive Director evaluation tool had been distributed to the Board at the June meeting for review and comments. No comments have been received.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve the Executive Director evaluation tool as presented.

MOTION Mr. Franklin

SECOND: Dr. Wright

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

C. Cornerstone Consulting FY16 Contract

Chairman Cardin announced a need to recuse himself from voting on this item and left the room asking that Dr. Coleman-Potter temporarily chair the meeting in his absence.

Ms. Schutte stated that the contract has been revised since the FY15 contract to reflect the changes in the scope of duties since she came on board and has taken over some of those

operational duties, and stated further that the amount of the contract is the same as the Board approved during the June meeting for the FY16 budget.

Dr. Coleman-Potter requested a motion to approve the proposed Cornerstone Consulting FY16 Contract.

MOTION: Mr. Franklin

SECOND: Mr. Wilson

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried. Chairman Cardin did not participate in this vote.

D. Approval of Invoices

Dr. Coleman-Potter stated that before the Board for consideration is Cornerstone Consulting Invoice No. 3725 for services rendered May 1 – May 31, 2015 in the amount of \$705.50.

Dr. Coleman-Potter requested a motion to approve payment of the invoice, as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Franklin

SECOND: Mr. Wilson

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried. Chairman Cardin did not participate in this vote.

Chairman Cardin returned to the room following the consideration of these two items.

Ms. Schutte discussed other payments in need of consideration at today's meeting as being travel reimbursements for the Board July meeting, as well as the National Charter Schools Conference registration fee. Copies of these invoices have been previously provided to the Board members for their review.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion for approval of the payment of these invoices.

MOTION: Mr. Franklin

SECOND: Dr. Wright

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

ITEM VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEM IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on September 2, 2015 in Jackson, Mississippi.

ITEM X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Cardin reminded everyone that there would be a public forum held at 5:30 following today's meeting.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Dr. Wright

SECOND: Mr. Franklin

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

ADOPTED, this the 2nd day of September, 2015.



TOMMIE S. CARDIN, Chairman