***December 13, 2022 Commission Meeting Minutes Approved by Commission Vote on***

***January 10, 2023***

**The Maine Charter School Commission held a Regular Meeting on**

**Tuesday, December 13, 2022**

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| **Item Number** | **Agenda Item** |
| **1** | **Call to Order and Declare a Quorum** |
|  | 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 1:08pm and a quorum was declared.  Commission members present were Wilson Hess, Norm Higgins, Tom Keller, Tori Kornfield, Jim Handy, Nichi Farnham, and Leigh Weisenburger Albert.  Also present were Lana Ewing, David Hartman (*via Zoom*), Amy Allen (*via Zoom*), and Dania Heard.  *Commission member, Nichi Farnham, read the Commission’s Vision Statement.* |
| **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. Lana 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 | **Comments from Commission Chair**  Chair Hess shared that Lana Ewing has been appointed as Interim Executive Director and welcomed her back from parental leave.  He also shared that David Hartman will continue on a contract basis as the Acting Deputy Director.  Dania Heard, part time administrative assistant, was introduced and Chair Hess thanked Amy Allen for the work she has done through the staff transition(s) over the past several months. |
| 3b | **Committee Reports**   * Tom Keller - Member, School Performance Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee * Nichi Farnham - Chair, Finance Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee * Norm Higgins - Chair, Ad-Hoc Search 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 | **Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda**  Chair Hess added item #10c - “To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center’s Request to Add an Additional Facility” with no objections. |
| 4 | **Meeting Minutes Approval** |
| 4a | To Consider the Minutes from the October 11, 2022 Business Meeting  A copy of the draft minutes was distributed for review and consideration.  **Moved by Tom Keller; seconded by Leigh Weisenburger Albert, and voted unanimously by those present** to approve the minutes from the October 11,2022 Business Meeting. |
| 4b | To Consider the Minutes from the November 8, 2022 Business Meeting  A copy of the draft minutes was distributed for review and consideration.  **Moved by Tom Keller; seconded by Jim Handy and voted unanimously by those present** to approve the minutes from the November 8, 2022 Business Meeting. |
| **5** | **Public Comment\*** |
|  | Representative Bruce White who represents District 109 (Waterville) shared his support for Maine Academy of Natural Sciences and recognized the “valuable educational opportunity” the school provides to students in the area.  Becky Dennison - Threshold Director at Maine Academy of Natural Sciences - introduced two current Threshold students – both sharing letters that they sent to their state representatives letting them know what the charter school means to them and asking how they feel about charter schools.  Dick Durost - Vice Chair of Maine Arts Academy’s Governing Board - thanked the Commission on behalf of the board, staff, and students for support in getting into their own building.  Bob Kautz - former Executive Director of the Maine Charter School Commission - encouraged the Commission to seek feedback from charter schools on what qualities they would like to see in the next Executive Director.  Tonya Arnold - Community Regional Charter School board member and Monhegan Island School superintendent - shared that the Commission’s vision speaks of meeting the needs of students who have not been met elsewhere and indicated that the standards on the new Performance Framework are “unattainable” and hopes that the new members of the Commission will look at the framework and create measures that “recognize and reward” the positive changes that charter schools are making in students’ lives across the state of Maine. |
| **6** | **Presentations** |
| 6a | Chris Indorf of the Children’s Collaborative gave an overview of Maine Connections Academy’s SY 2021-22 Independent Third-Party Evaluation. |
| 6b | Dr. Mary Madden of Dr. Mary Madden and Associates gave an overview of Maine Virtual Academy’s SY 2021-22 Independent Third-Party Evaluation. |
| **7** | **Executive Director/Commission Staff Report** |
| 7a | Update on HCA  David shared that staff meets weekly with the HCA team to review progress on the Closure Plan timeline. |
| 7b | Update on SY2021-22 Annual Monitoring Reports  There are eight more reports that need to be reviewed for consideration and approval – Baxter Academy for Technology and Science, Community Regional Charter School, Ecology Learning Center, Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences, Harpswell Coastal Academy, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, Maine Arts Academy, and Maine Connections Academy.  The School Performance Committee has had an opportunity to review both the Baxter Academy for Technology and Science and Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences reports and will review the others at its next meeting.  These reports will be presented to the full Commission at its January 10th meeting. |
| 7c | Media Update *(None)* |
| **8** | **Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report** |
| 8a | Certified 2022-23 Enrollment  A copy was distributed for review. |
| 8b | SY2022-23 Resident District Breakdown  A copy was distributed for review. |
| 8c | SY 2022-23 Resident Town Breakdown  A copy was distributed for review. |
| **9** | **Unfinished Business** |
| 9a | To Consider the Approval of the Commission’s Staff Retirement Benefit *(Tabled Until Recalled)* |
| **10** | **New Business Requiring Approval** |
| 10a | To Consider the Approval of Dr. Mary Madden’s Proposal to Conduct Maine Virtual Academy’s SY2022-23 Independent Third Party Evaluation  A copy of the proposal was distributed for review and consideration.  **Moved by Nichi Farm; seconded by Tori Kornfield and voted unanimously by those present** to approve Dr. Mary Madden’s Proposal to Conduct Maine Virtual Academy’s SY 2022-23 Independent Third Party Evaluation. |
| 10b | To Consider the Approval of Student Academic Proficiency Amendment  A copy of the proposed amendment and overview of the MDOE’s Through Year Assessment was distributed for review and consideration.  **Moved by Nichi Farm; seconded by Jim Handy and voted unanimously by those present** to approve the proposed Student Academic Proficiency Amendment. |
| 10c | To Consider the Approval of Ecology Learning Center’s Request to Add an Additional Facility  A copy of the request was distributed for review and consideration.  The school is awaiting final inspection by the State Fire Marshal's Office and it was suggested that the Commission grant authority to the Executive Committee to approve this request contingent upon the inspection.  **Moved by Norm Higgins; seconded by Nichi Farm and voted unanimously by those present** to grant authority to the Executive Committee to approve this request contingent upon the inspection. |
| **11** | **New Business Requiring Notification and Acceptance** |
| 11a | New Governing Board Members:   * 11a.1 Katherine Dumais (ACADIA Academy) * 11a.2 Jon Mercier (ACADIA Academy) * 11a.3 Andrew Carlton (Maine Arts Academy) * 11a.4 Shelley Reed (Maine Arts Academy)   Resignations: *None*  Term Outs: *None*  Recent Departure/New Vacancy:   * John Larouche (Maine Connections Academy)   No formal action required by the Commission. |
| 11b | FY23 Budget vs. Actual Report  A copy of the dashboard report was presented for review.  No formal action required by the Commission. |
| **12** | **Future Topics** |
| 12a | January   * To Consider the Approval of the following 2021-22 Annual Monitoring Reports:   + Baxter Academy for Technology and Science   + Community Regional Charter School   + Ecology Learning Center   + Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences   + Harpswell Coastal Academy   + Maine Academy of Natural Sciences   + Maine Arts Academy   + Maine Connections Academy   February   * To Consider the Approval of the 2021-22 Annual Report to the Commissioner |
| **13** | **Announcements** |
| 13a | This Month’s Celebrations *(None)* |
| 13b | Important Dates *(None)* |
| 13c | Portfolio Calendar Items  *(None Reported)* |
| 13d | Next Regular Business Meeting – January 10, 2023 *(Room #103, Cross Office Building, Augusta)* |
| **14** | **Adjourn** |
|  | Chair Hess declared adjournment at 3:31pm 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.*