



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
418 Bumps River Road, Osterville, MA 02655
January 11, 2023 – 5:00PM Cracker Barrel / 5:15PM – Call to Order

I. Cracker Barrel Discussion 5:00 PM

This section of the meeting was reserved for informal discussion and information sharing among members of the Board of Directors. No discussion occurred at this meeting.

II. Meeting of the OPEB Trustees 5:15 PM

III. Call to Order 5:24 PM

Mr. McGee called the meeting to order at 5:24 PM. The meeting occurred in a hybrid fashion with participants present in person and attending virtually through the Zoom application. The recommendations associated with conducting a public meeting virtually were shared with Board members as required.

The posting of this Board meeting included means for public participation by telephone. Attendees were able to join the meeting by calling:

Phone Number: 1-929-205-6099
Meeting ID: 821 9368 0772
Phone Passcode: 5781115
Zoom Passcode: CapeCod

Mr. McGee noted the order of the meeting included the necessity for all votes to occur through a “roll call” process. Each member of the Board was required to “sign in” verbally.

Board members and Collaborative staff who attended the meeting virtually have “R” for “remote” noted after their names. In attendance were:

Cape Cod Technical HS	Scott McGee, Vice Chair
Bourne	Maureen Fuller - R
Brewster	Casey Mecca - R
Dennis-Yarmouth	Phillip Morris - R

Mashpee
Monomoy
Nauset
Orleans
Truro
Upper Cape Cod RTS
Wareham
Wellfleet

Don Myers – R
Jessica Rogers – R
Cathryn Lonsdale
Ian Mack – R
Kolby Blehm – R
Robert Fichtenmayer
Joyce Bacchiocchi – R
Jill Putnam – R

Treasurer
Secretary

William (Bill) Friel
Elizabeth (Beth) Deck

Also in attendance were:

Executive Director
Business Manager
Assistant Business Manager
Accounting & Finance Coordinator
Waypoint Program Director
STAR Program Director
Operations Manager

Paul Hilton
R. Patrick Murphy
Amy Lipkind
Marc Dupuis – R
Dr. Kara Peterson – R
Julia Bryant
Anders Erikson - R

IV. Executive Session

Mr. McGee indicated it was necessary to enter into Executive Session and read the purposes stated in the agenda.

- a. **To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel;**
 - Leave Requests
 - Business Operation Personnel Planning
 - Discussion of Program Staff Salary Schedule for FY2024

- b. **To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. (Mr. McGee so declared.)**
 - Status of Occupancy of Henry T Wing School with Town of Sandwich
 - Renovation of Laurence MacArthur Building, South Yarmouth

Mr. Fichtenmayer made a motion that the Board vote to enter Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rogers. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Rogers – yes, Mr. Blehm – yes, Ms. Putnam – yes, Ms. Lonsdale – yes, Mr. Fichtenmayer – yes, Mr. Mack – yes, Ms. Bacchiocchi – yes, Ms. Mecca – yes, Ms. Fuller – yes, Mr. Myers – yes, Mr. Morris – yes, Mr. McGee – yes.

The motion passed.

The Board entered Executive Session at 5:27 PM

V. New Business

a. Programs/Services

- Waypoint Academy
 - Enrollment
 - Programming
 - Facility Developments

Dr. Peterson discussed enrollment and programming at Waypoint Academy. She noted that staff had been looking forward to getting into the new building. She explained that, over the December break, she and the facilities staff had moved furniture from the storage pods into finished classrooms and she informed the Board that the space “looked terrific.” Dr. Peterson indicated that a “scope of work” plan was being developed for the move, which would divide the process into three moving segments. She noted that the final segment would be scheduled to occur in June so the building should be ready to open for the extended school year program in July. Dr. Peterson expressed her thanks to Mr. Koser, the program’s culinary arts teacher, for his assistance in planning the kitchen at the new school.

Dr. Peterson indicated she had some staffing concerns for the upcoming school year. She explained that there were a number of staff members who lived “over the bridge” who will have their commute increased significantly by the move.

She also noted that referrals to Waypoint Academy continued to come in and that high school was “getting busy” due to this influx of new students.

Dr. Peterson indicated that the Second Quarter at Waypoint was scheduled to close on January 20th. She noted that, on January 27th the program staff were to visit the new building during scheduled professional development.

She indicated that Junior and Senior high school students planned to attend boat building classes in February and that one high school student had become a paid “student intern” and was working one period per day.

Dr. Peterson closed with an invitation to all Board members to visit the program. She indicated that lunch was served at 12:15 each day, and that, with appreciation to the culinary arts program, lunch was a very good meal.

- STAR Program / Osterville

- Enrollment
- Programming

Ms. Bryant provided an overview of the current and projected enrollments and programming for the STAR Program. She indicated school staff members had been noticing an increase in the Collaborative's social media presence. She noted that the program had been working to develop positive school culture and community. She indicated that recently all staff members were issued Collaborative sweatshirts.

Ms. Bryant expressed her thanks to Board members for the gift cards, which were presented to STAR staff along with the sweatshirts. She became emotional as she informed the Board that one staff member shared that she would not have been able to provide a holiday dinner without the gift card.

Ms. Bryant also noted that, leading up to the winter break, staff and students had participated in an ugly sweater day and students (and some staff) also had a pajama day.

Ms. Bryant described a new program where fifth grade students had begun visiting students in the younger classrooms to read to fellow students. She noted *The Polar Express* was popular prior to break.

Ms. Bryant described the K-2 therapy group which Ms. Brooks, the school social worker, had been convening. Students were encouraged to discuss feelings. Ms. Bryant also discussed the 18-22 year-old students who, thanks to outreach done by their teacher Ms. Serpico, were participating in programs at Cape Villages (a housing program for adults with special needs on Cape Cod).

Ms. Bryant explained current trends with staffing and student referrals. She noted that two paraprofessionals had recently resigned, one before break and one immediately after. She also noted that two students planned to move out of the program, one to different programming and the other out of state.

Ms. Bryant indicated that she had begun to shift students between classrooms to accommodate incoming referrals, and expressed her concerns that, without additional staffing, it would be difficult to accept many more referrals.

- Transportation

- Revisions to District Agreements Discussion

Mr. Hilton provided an update regarding current issues and opportunities with Collaborative transportation.

He discussed ongoing revisions to the costing templates associated with Member Districts Memoranda of Agreement. He noted that these changes / adjustments continued to be necessary as changes were made for service delivery. He explained that changes include consolidation of routes and changes in standard route times.

Mr. Erikson outlined some of the challenges faced within the past two weeks due to an increase in COVID cases. He noted that absences averaged two people per week – and put additional pressure on existing staffing issues.

Mr. Erikson described some of the responses he had received to the gift cards. He noted that transportation staff were extremely thankful, expressing consistently that this was a wonderful surprise and had been provided at a perfect time.

He indicated that recruitment and training of new drivers had continued. Mr. Erikson reported that, at the time of the meeting, only the one potential driver for Nauset was nearing completion of training. He explained the six to eight-week process for new drivers to proceed from a learners permit to a road test. He indicated that social media postings and road and bus signs had begun to have an impact with responses. Mr. Erikson expressed his belief that the ads proposed by Mr. Murphy would be a game-changer.

Mr. Erikson expressed kudos to the drivers, administrators, dispatchers and lot supervisors who had worked incredible hours to get students to school. He noted that the days were long – 5:30 AM to 6:00 PM – and challenging.

- District Operations Updates

- Nauset Regional – Mr. Erikson indicated that there continued to be one open route, which had been covered by dispatch and administration. He noted that there were additional challenges due to the leaves-of-absence of two drivers. He expressed that the consolidation of some routes resulted in the need for some bus routes to have longer wait times and/or longer periods of time that students were on the school bus(es). Mr. Erikson informed the Board that a new driver was waiting for the scheduled road test and would hopefully provide some support in the near future.

- Monomoy – Mr. Erikson indicated that there were still four (4) open routes, with one driver scheduled to be on leave through January.
- Nantucket – Mr. Erikson indicated that one driver that had been in training became licensed at the start of November and began a route.
- Bourne – Mr. Erikson was happy to report two new drivers had started on Bourne routes. He noted that one driver had formerly worked for the Collaborative, and an additional, fully licensed driver started after the winter break.
- Mashpee – Mr. Erikson reported that all routes were currently staffed.
- Truro - The Truro Public Schools maintains a cadre of four (4) drivers.

Ms. Putnam asked about new driver “enticement” and the recruitment process. She noted that a survey of Collaborative drivers had been recently conducted and wondered if it provided any pertinent information.

Mr. Murphy indicated the survey had been created in response to a specific request from one of the member districts. He explained that approximately 50% of Collaborative drivers had responded. He indicated that the majority of the drivers expressed that they liked their job, primarily because of the children. The biggest challenge the drivers noted was inconsistent or non-existent follow-up regarding student discipline issues. Mr. Murphy commented that, based upon discussions between school business managers, school bus drivers were the hardest job to recruit for.

Mr. Hilton spoke about ads that were being prepared by the Collaborative to aid in driver recruitment. Mr. Murphy indicated that the ads would be geographically scheduled to run in the Cape Cod & Plymouth regions. He noted that targeted demographic groups had determined the channel line-ups and times for broadcasting. Mr. Murphy indicated that these ads were scheduled to launch January 17. Mr. Hilton informed the Board that social media was being used to assist in recruiting paraprofessionals, with two paraprofessionals having been interviewed as the result of that campaign.

Mr. Hilton discussed a recent article which had been published in the Bourne Enterprise regarding the shortage of school bus drivers. He

noted some Nauset parents had expressed concerns regarding the consolidation of routes which increased students' ride time.

Mr. Mack asked if the Collaborative had compared driver rates to other companies to see if the Collaborative had remained competitive. Mr. Hilton responded that the rates had been adjusted upward by 12% in November 2021, and that the competitiveness of these rates continued to be monitored. He noted that there is no existing "pool" of drivers to draw from and it was a challenge not to pull drivers away from private vendors serving member districts.

Mr. Mack commented that the provision of school transportation services was "afloat" but "hanging by a thread." He shared concerns about confusing announcements that were made at the end of the school day (in the Nauset area) directing students to different buses as routes were reorganized on the fly, and wondered if the Collaborative was on the brink of not having buses and drivers to get students home from school.

Mr. Hilton explained the Collaborative had been perpetually planning contingencies. He explained that, in Nantucket, the pool of drivers had been reduced from 8 to 2.5 drivers, and working with the schools and parents, changes were made to make the process functional. He highlighted that, when difficult situations occurred, communication with the school district had to be seamless, consistent and clear.

- **Therapies**

Mr. Hilton provided an update regarding the provision of services within the Collaborative and to districts (and others). He noted that the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional Schools had recently contracted for Physical Therapy (PT) capacity. He also indicated that the Collaborative was currently working with that district and PT staff to assess the capacity to expand the contracted time.

- **Special Projects**

Dr. Bogden was not present at the meeting. Mr. Hilton provided a brief overview regarding items considered as "Special Projects" of the Collaborative.

- **Bridgewater State University (BSU)**

Mr. Hilton indicated that the Collaborative continued to offer coursework in partnership with BSU through the cohort of students progressing towards their licensure in Moderate or Severe Special Education.

Mr. Hilton updated the Board regarding an initiative to develop a “cabinet” of administrators from the region to work with BSU in securing quality and relevant professional development and licensure support programming for staff in the region.

- Virtual High School – Mr. Hilton briefly noted that schools were in their spring semester registration process and that their selection of VHS courses had increased the total VHS registrations to date from 151 to 182.
- Advanced Studies & Leadership Program ASLP
Mr. Hilton discussed the planning for ASLP Summer 2023. He noted Mr. Kelleher had scheduled and offered a number of district meetings with prospective students/families regarding the Summer 2023 program. Mr. Hilton indicated that Mr. Kelleher had continued to develop the activities for Summer 2023, including a number of exciting new opportunities.
- Curriculum Directors Meeting
Mr. Hilton indicated that the Curriculum Coordinators had continued to meet to develop coordinated, collaborative opportunities. He noted that the group recently began to meet in-person again with sites for the meetings rotating among participating districts.
- Collaborative Framework for Educator Evaluation (CoFFEE)
Mr. Hilton mentioned that this course had been regionally designed for new administrators/ department heads who are, or will be, responsible for supervision, observation, and / or evaluation. He noted that the most recent CoFFEE course cohort began in early October and continues to meet monthly.
- SEI Teacher Endorsement Course
Mr. Hilton referenced that the SEI endorsement course was fully subscribed and began on October 11th. He indicated that the SEI Teacher Endorsement course focuses on current theories and evidence-based instructional practices related to the teaching of English Language Learners.

VI. Old Business

a. Treasurer Evaluation

Discussion

Mr. Hilton indicated that the Board must annually facilitate the evaluation of the Collaborative Treasurer. He noted that Mr. William Friel was first appointed as the Treasurer of the Collaborative in May 2017. He also noted that Mr. Friel continued to do an exceptional job in this role.

Mr. Hilton, Ms. Lipkind and Mr. Murphy have met regularly with Mr. Friel.

Mr. Hilton indicated an evaluation would be completed as required by statute each year, and asked members of the Board to offer feedback regarding the performance of the Treasurer to supplement the evaluation, which would be completed by the Executive Director and Business Manager for consideration by the Board.

b. Strategic Planning

Discussion

Mr. Hilton discussed the need for a regional process of Strategic Planning. He noted challenges would continue to increase as districts (and the Collaborative) must address the challenges of the post-pandemic public school environment.

Strategic items that were proposed for the focus of discussion at the Annual Legislative Breakfast on February 3rd include:

- The challenges of securing the necessary human resources (staff) to meet the instructional and operational needs of the districts in the region, now and in the future.
- It was recommended that particular focus be placed upon the challenges for areas such as:
 - Transportation (drivers),
 - Special Educators and
 - English Language Learner Teachers.
- The common theme of the challenge of housing was also be a proposed focus for discussion /activity.

Mr. Hilton noted private schools received financial support which was not available to educational collaboratives. He indicated that many of these private special education schools would increase tuitions by 14%.

c. FY23 Reconciliation and Update

Mr. Murphy provided an overview of the status regarding the FY23 reconciliations regarding revenue and expense related to the Spending Plan and Budget. He informed the Board that expenses had been tracking against revenues in accordance to the spending plan and said that no significant adjustment was expected.

VII. New Business

a. FY23 Warrants

VOTES

- | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| • #25 | VOTE | • #27 | VOTE |
| • #26 | VOTE | • #28 | VOTE |

Ms. Putnam made a motion that the Board vote to group Warrants #25, #26, #27 and #28, and to vote to approve these Warrants. Mr. Fichtenmayer seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Rogers – yes, Mr. Blehm – yes, Ms. Putnam – yes, Ms. Lonsdale – yes,
Mr. Fichtenmayer – yes, Mr. Mack – yes, Ms. Bacchiocchi – yes, Ms. Mecca – yes,
Ms. Fuller – yes, Mr. Myers – yes, Mr. Morris – yes, Mr. McGee – yes.

The motion passed.

d. Change to Mileage Rate

Mr. Hilton noted in June 2021 the Board voted to tie the mileage reimbursement rate paid by the Collaborative to the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service. As of January 1, 2023, the IRS increased the rate to \$0.655 per mile.

e. OPEB Transfer

VOTE

Mr. Hilton recommended that Board consider a vote to transfer the FY2021 OPEB accrual of \$180,000 to the OPEB Trust Fund.

He explained that these funds had been accrued as obligated for “OPEB” in FY2021; however, the Board has previously recommended that the actual transfer of the OPEB funds to the *irrevocable* trust not occur until the completion of the following fiscal year (FY22) audit process. This audit was accepted and voted at the December meeting.

Mr. Fichtenmayer made a motion that the Board vote to authorize the transfer of the FY2021 OPEB accrual of \$180,000 to the OPEB Trust Fund. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Rogers – yes, Mr. Blehm – yes, Ms. Putnam – yes, Ms. Lonsdale – yes,
Mr. Fichtenmayer – yes, Mr. Mack – yes, Ms. Bacchiocchi – yes, Ms. Mecca – yes,
Ms. Fuller – yes, Mr. Myers – yes, Mr. Morris –yes, Mr. McGee – yes.

The motion passed.

f. Planning Legislative Breakfast for 2023

Discussion

Mr. Hilton noted that topics for the Legislative Breakfast were discussed earlier in the meeting under “Strategic Planning.”

Mr. Hilton had been in discussion with representatives for the delegation and received a commitment for the Legislative “Breakfast” to occur on Friday, February 3, 2023. He indicated that preference was for a hybrid meeting, allowing people to attend both virtually and in person. Legislators had committed to attendance from 9:00AM until 10:30AM.

Mr. Hilton sought assistance from the Board in planning the event. Members of the Collaborative Subcommittee are Mr. Morris and Mr. Mack.

VIII. Minutes

a. December 14, 2022

VOTE

Mr. Mack made a motion that the Board vote to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2022 meeting. Mr. Fichtenmayer seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Rogers – yes, Mr. Blehm – yes, Ms. Putnam – yes, Ms. Lonsdale – yes,
Mr. Fichtenmayer – yes, Mr. Mack – yes, Ms. Bacchiocchi – yes, Ms. Mecca – yes,
Ms. Fuller – yes, Mr. Myers – yes, Mr. Morris – yes, Mr. McGee – yes.

The motion passed.

IX. Other

Mr. Hilton referred to the facilities advisory which had been included in Board packets. He noted that MOEC was working with educational collaboratives across the state to change eligibility requirements for funding.

X. Adjournment

Ms. Putnam made a motion that the Board vote to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fichtenmayer seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Rogers – yes, Mr. Blehm – yes, Ms. Putnam – yes, Ms. Lonsdale – yes,
Mr. Fichtenmayer – yes, Mr. Mack – yes, Ms. Bacchiocchi – yes, Ms. Mecca – yes,
Ms. Fuller – yes, Mr. Myers – yes, Mr. Morris – yes, Mr. McGee – yes.

The motion passed.

The January 11, 2023 meeting of the Cape Cod Collaborative Board of Directors adjourned at 6:29 PM.