



**Minutes from the PUBLIC MEETING of the
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
GREENWOODS CHARTER SCHOOL
468 Domino Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19128
February 22, 2018**

This meeting was duly advertised in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Law in the Philadelphia Inquirer.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM by Dawn Prall George, who opened the meeting with a Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The Pledge was followed by a tribute and moment of silence for the victims of mass shootings at schools over the last several years.
2. **Roll Call.** A roll call of those in attendance was taken. Trustees in attendance: Dawn Prall George, Jen Weikert, Debi Durso, Reuben Mills (CEO). Others in Attendance: Jeffrey R. Stacey, Esq.; Leigh Ann Bonck, Omnivest.
3. **Announcement of Executive Sessions**
 - a. Board Chair announces that an Executive Session was held prior to the start of the meeting in order for the Board to consult with administration regarding filling vacancies in open positions, and in order for the Board to consult with its attorney to receive legal advice regarding potential litigation in connection with labor and employment matters.
 - b. Board Chair announces that an Executive Session will be held prior to the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
4. **Election of Trustees**
 - a. *Action.* To elect Robbin Smart to the Board of Trustees, filling the remainder of the term for former member Brody, which expires at the annual meeting in 2019. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso. J. Weikert shared information about R. Smart's background and reasons for wanting to serve on the GWCS Board.

Vote: Yes: 3 No: 0 Motion carried

R. Smart was administered the oath of office and was congratulated by her fellow Board members.

5. Public Comment

- a. *Comment by Rachel Vahey; parent* – continued concerns about the current and future state of Green Woods Charter School, citing three years of flux for parents and students.

- b. *Comment by Tim McDonald; parent* – outlined the five responsibilities of the CEO of Green Woods Charter School as defined in the job description posted in June 2016, including Leadership; Strategic and Organizational Planning; Positive School Culture; Board Partnership; and Fundraising and Marketing, and asked for a response in 30 days.
- c. *Comment by Brianna Kimbrell; Vice-President of GWCS Student Council* – Statement was read into public record by D. Durso in Brianna’s absence – Thanked the Board for the donation towards the 8th grade trip.
- d. *Comment by Liz Kinder; parent* – expressed concerns that the Board did not accept the nomination of many potential Board candidates and requested the governance chair step down.
- e. *Comment by Tara Harrison; parent* – expressed concerns about the loss of teachers, particularly the 7th grade math teacher; bullying in the middle school; and inconsistencies in the uniform policy.
- f. *Comment by Chelsea Badeau; parent* – commented on her reasons for choosing Green Woods Charter School, including the science classes, environment focus, and parent involvement, but is concerned that many teachers leaving without exit interviews is having impact on students.
- g. *Comment by Chloe Chris; 7th grade student* – concerned with the school discipline, describing the school like a prison environment with no mirrors in the bathroom and recess and lunch being taken away. Concerned about the loss of teachers in middle school.
- h. *Comment by Olivia Stepnowski; 5th grade student* – Would like to see more hikes, more opportunities for students to go outside, more field trips, and a playground.
- i. *Comment by Walt Stepnowski; parent* – expressed concern that the EIC curriculum is not in effect and that teachers need to invent their own resources since they don’t have any. He shared some of his own resources from his Chemistry and math classes with the Board.
- j. *Comment by Corey Cave; parent* – Impressed with the school campus, but surprised that there is no playground and that PTA money was used to purchase adult-sized equipment that students don’t use. Believes Board communication is completely broken.
- k. *Comment by Jill Woehrmann; parent* – expressed concern about several aspects of the school, including a breakdown in communication channels, outdoor space, the need for a diverse and skilled Board, a lack of urgency to recruit Board members. Asked the parent community to consider a School Advisory Council to bridge the communication gap.
- l. *Comment by Kirk McClarren; parent* – believes the teacher turnover is an alarming trend. Cited lack of communication and no discussion forum with the Board and administration. Concerned that parents have expressed concern to the Board and no action has been taken.
- m. *Comment by Kim Birkmire; former staff member* – expressed concerns with the size of the Board and that candidates are being rejected. Asked for information on the fundraising efforts of the Board and a succession plan.

- n. *Comment by Heather Cowley; parent* – stated that the Board by-laws are not being followed and believes that there is no quality leadership on the Board.
- o. *Comment by Douglas Cowley; parent* – recommended a timeline for teacher contracts and the release of the school calendar for the following school year. Believes the school should build a playground immediately.
- p. *Comment by Kristina Skladaitis; K-2 Science teacher* – has been a teacher at Green Woods Charter School for 14 years and reminded the community that the school is still new and nothing is perfect. Urged patience from all parties.
- q. *Comment by Nicole Gofman; parent and staff member* – believes Green Woods Charter School is an amazing school with dedicated teachers, supportive parents, and excited students, but the school needs stability and consistency from the Board.

6. **Changes to Agenda.** Items 9b, 9c and 9d, concerning new hires, employment matters, and board officership were added to the agenda.

7. Approval of Minutes

- a. *Action.* To approve the minutes of the public meeting of December 21, 2017 as presented to the Board. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso.

Vote: Yes: 4 No: 0 Motion Carried

8. Updates and Reports

- a. *Information.* Board Chair Report from Dawn Prall George, including working with the CEO and Principal to provide leadership coaching for both, Board recruitment, and convening a Board retreat in April.
- b. *Information.* CEO Address from Reuben Mills, including becoming a member of the ECO Schools PA under the National Wildlife Federation, coordinating activities with SCEE as well as summer opportunities for middle school students.
- c. *Information.* Student Life from Reuben Mills, including recognizing February Trailblazers and sharing 2017 PSSA results and current MAP data with parents.
- d. *Information.* PTA report from J. McClarren, including outlining the many fundraisers and family events planned for the spring and reviewed the use of PTA funds, including giving each classroom \$100 for supplies.
- e. *Information.* GWFEE report from J. Weikert, including an updated on the Golf Outing with Bob Saccone leading the committee for sponsors and volunteers.
- f. *Information.* Board Governance report from J. Weikert, including working with the Board Chair to interact with 11 potential Board candidates and organize the Board retreat in April

- g. *Information.* Finance Report from Leigh Ann Bonck of Omnivest
- h. *Information.* Report from counsel, J. Stacey. Mr. Stacey informed the Board of a new ruling by Commonwealth Court in *First Philadelphia Prep Charter v. School District of Philadelphia* that may pave the way for recovery of clawed back funds from the 16-17 School Year.
- i. *Action.* To approve the reports in 8(a)-8(h) above, as stated at the meeting and/or as presented to the Board. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso.

Vote: Yes: 4 No: 0 Motion Carried

9. Other Matters/New Business

- a. *Action.* To accept the resignation of Bonnie Emilius, effective February 20, 2018. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by R. Smart.

Vote: Yes: 4 No: 0 Motion Carried

- b. *Action.* To accept the resignations and approve the new hires as contained in the attachment presented to the Board. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso.

Vote: Yes: 4 No: 0 Motion Carried

- c. *Action.* To appoint DPG as Treasurer for the period February 22, 2018 until the next annual meeting. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso.

Vote: Yes: 4 No: 0 Motion Carried

- d. *Action.* To approve payment of \$3,000 dollars in incentive compensation to Reuben Mills, CEO, in accordance with Paragraph 3(b) of the July 1, 2017 Employment Agreement. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso.

Vote: Yes: 3 No: 0 J. Weikert - abstain Motion Carried

10. Adjournment

- a. *Action.* To adjourn the meeting. Motion made by J. Weikert and seconded by D. Durso.

Vote: Yes: 4 No: 0 Motion Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.