

SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

Board of Directors' Zoom Meeting
April 15, 2021
Minutes

Present: J. Cabral, R. Drolet, T. Lynch, R. Medeiros, J. Robidoux, J. Schoonover,
M. Canner, D. Heimbecker, J. Prendergast

1.00 - Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair R. Medeiros at 1:03 PM.

2.00 - Minutes of January 21, 2021

The minutes of January 21, 2021 were presented for review and approved.

Motion, J. Cabral: To approve the minutes of January 21, 2021
Second, T. Lynch

Vote, Unanimous

3.00 - Financial Information

3.10 - Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust

The Trustees will be meeting on June 17, 2021, to consider future funding initiatives.
Note: later in meeting changed to June 18, 2021.

3.20 - Updating of the FY 21 Business Plan/Budget

March has a profit of \$4,000, the Collaborative's year to date surplus is \$37,414. SCEC is budgeting an operating deficit of \$475,000 for FY202. There is reason to anticipate that FY21 fiscal year may end in a better position than the structured deficit would indicate. The Collaborative will save over \$100,000, due to an unanticipated health insurance holiday. Student enrollment is currently at 251 students and is below budget. Staffing is under budget. The programs are showing an overall surplus of approximately \$148,307 compared to a surplus the prior year of \$905,734. This is partially due to the number of days billed in September 2020 as well as additional COVID related expenses. In addition, SCEC anticipates a loss of revenue during the last 3 months of the year due to the reduced number of tuition days.

3.30 – Business Plan/Budget Considerations for FY22

Executive Director Heimbecker asked board members to keep in mind that SCEC is in union contract negotiations when thinking about the Business Plan/Budget for FY22. Although our staff must be licensed and work with very complicated students, our salaries are at the bottom

of all board member districts. We are trying to build capacity with the business plan and most of it is for our staff. The Business Plan/Budget is designed to get staff salaries closer to the middle of board member districts.

Board Chair Medeiros reviewed the proposed increases and stated that the 2.5% salary increases for union members is based upon ongoing negotiations.

Motion, T. Lynch: To accept the Business Plan/Budget for FY22 as presented
Second, R. Drolet

Discussion:

Superintendent Schoonover asked why tuitions are increasing 3% when salaries are increasing 2.5%. Executive Director Heimbecker responded that everyone is going up a step-in addition to a salary increase. Jennifer Prendergast spoke about the projected loss of \$475,000 for the prior year and projections to break even for this year. SCEC will not have surplus revenue to assist with FY22 funding. Executive Director Heimbecker explained that tuition is about enrollment and enrollment is key. The budget is based upon 252 students and the hope is to break even.

Superintendent Drolet asked if a 3% increase for salaries would make more sense, and Dr. Heimbecker reported that discussions are happening with the negotiation team and many factors will be considered and reviewed. The Executive Director reported that if negotiations lead to agreements in excess of 2.5%, the business plan is based includes the potential for savings that would allow for 3% salary increases.

Superintendent Robidoux asked for clarification on what is included in the Other Program Expense line item as well as the plan for programs that continue to lose money. Business Manager Jennifer Prendergast explained and listed all the items included in the specific line item. Dr. Heimbecker explained that SCEC has been working on program finances through the years while continuing to serve the students who need these programs. In addition, Donna Cranshaw-Gabriel is retiring and there will be no replacement for her. SCEC is looking at a 3-year plan for high end staff who retire, and their responsibilities are taken over by other staff to mitigate the continuation of loss.

Vote, Unanimous

3.40 - SCEC Financial and Control Policies

As existing policies are honed and new ones emerge, board member participation and oversight will be encouraged and solicited.

4.00 - Human Resources

4.10 - New Hires:

4.11 – Shannon Wetherell, Paraprofessional II, North Seekonk, 12 months

Motion, J. Cabral: To accept the new hire as presented

Second, J. Robidoux

Vote, Unanimous

4.20 - Transfers:

None

4.30 - Resignations:

4.31 - Hugh Gallagher, Paraprofessional II, at North Seekonk, 12 months

4.32 - Adam Kreizinger, Paraprofessional II at LIFE Academy, 12 months

4.33 - Mark Rhynard, Paraprofessional II at Gallishaw, 12 months

4.34 - Samantha Westgate, Paraprofessional II at Berkley Community, 12 months

4.35 - Chris Costa, Teacher at Gallishaw High School, 12 months (Note: added to Agenda by the Executive Director during the Board meeting, which was after the Board Backup had been sent to Board Members)

Motion, J. Cabral: To accept resignations as amended by Executive Director Heimbecker
Second, J. Schoonover

Vote, Unanimous

4.40 - Retirements:

4.41 - Donna Cranshaw-Gabriel, Administrator

4.42 - Peggy A. McCaleb, Speech and Language Pathologist

Motion, J. Robidoux, To accept the retirements as presented with regret
Second, J. Cabral

Discussion: Executive Director Heimbecker stated that both individuals have made positive long-term impacts upon SCEC. Donna Cranshaw-Gabriel has the expertise to design, implement, and support programs that are designed to meet the specific needs of all students. She is not being replaced, but she will be working at SCEC as a retiree to support Deep Learning initiatives.

Peggy McCaleb is a Speech and Language Pathologist who received her EdD at Johnson & Wales University. Dr. Drolet mentioned that given his experiences studying with her while working on his doctorate, he strongly supported adding "with regret". It was noted that although Dr. McCaleb is a licensed administrator, she will be working as a retiree one day per week as a SLP at SCEC.

Vote, Unanimous

4.50 - Terminations:

None

4.60 - Leave of Absence:

None

4.70 - Educational Leave:

None

5.00 - Executive Session:

None

6.00 - Building Program Update

6.10 - Repairs and replacements at most SCEC sites are being completed on an as needed basis.

6.20 - As part of our partnership with Fall River School Department, Richard Shannon has designed several partitions for their use. He has also been of assistance in East Providence.

The newly relocated reception area of the main office is the new home of Dennis Henriques.

7.00 - Policy and Procedures

7.10 - As current administrative policies and procedures are refined and new ones emerge, board participation and oversight will be encouraged and solicited.

8.00 - Internal External Professional Development – Prepared by Dr. Carolyn McKearney & Frank Gallishaw

8.10 - Internal Professional Development:

Executive Director Heimbecker reviewed internal professional development undertakings at SCEC.

Executive Director Heimbecker spoke about the (HGSE) “Schooling for Critical Consciousness of Racism and Racial Injustices” course that members of the SCEC Leadership Team attended. Board members asked about the course and Dr. Heimbecker stated that it was very useful and reassuring. Superintendent Schoonover said that it is worth the time and energy and led to good conversation. Participants must be willing to be vulnerable and transparent. Dr. Cabral also felt that participation in the course was well worth it.

8.20 - External Professional Development:

Executive Director Heimbecker reviewed all external professional development undertakings at SCEC.

Several member district staff are enrolled in the SCEC/BSU courses. SCEC buys the courses from Bridgewater State University (BSU) and students are charged 1/3rd of the BSU price.

9.00 - Superintendent Issues

- 9.10 - SCEC's Annual Report 2019-2020 and SCEC's FY20 Annual Independent Audit Report were both in full compliance with all reporting requirements. Executive Director Heimbecker noted that the teamwork of the SCEC community made this possible. Key individuals in this process were, Jennifer Prendergast, Jennifer Faria, Carolyn McKearney, Lisa Martiesian, Bethany DeNardo, Linda Cullen and Raymond Steele.
- 9.20 - The Influence 100 endeavors of Lisa Martiesian and Raymond Steele, have led the SCEC's Leadership Team to begin generating a proposal for presenting at the joint MASS/MASC conference in November 2021.
- 9.30 - Executive Director Heimbecker's current contract ends on June 30, 2022. Board Chair, R. Medeiros and Board Vice Chair, T. Lynch are the subcommittee and are recommending a 2-year contract extension. Vice Chair Lynch noted that they are very supportive of Dr. Heimbecker's work and need his leadership to continue. Superintendent Robidoux asked why an extension is considered now. Board Chair Medeiros explained that the Board Chair and Vice Chair will be leaving, and it is important for consistency and a transparent perspective. This will add 2 years to the existing contract and will extend the contract to 2024. Dr. Heimbecker added that this contract is based upon what other Executive Directors are making in the state and this puts him in the middle. He has not gotten an increase since this contract was renewed. The vote is to extend the contract and is not a vote on a pay increase.

Motion, J. Cabral: To extend the contract of the Executive Director to 2024
Second, T. Lynch

Vote, Unanimous

Board Chair Medeiros thanked Dr. Heimbecker for his leadership and stated that the subcommittee will keep board members updated. Dr. Heimbecker stated that he is an Executive Coach and wishes to continue with board members as thought partners.

- 9.40 - The Executive Director's Book Club

Dr. Heimbecker shared Don Lemon's newest book entitled *This is the fire: What I say to my friends about racism*. (2021) He stated that this book is uplifting and tells us that we are probably making a difference. It is reassuring and there is optimism.

- 10.00 - Other Superintendent Issues

- 10.10 - Board members agreed to continue to honor the Administrative Assistants this year, however due to COVID, there will be no luncheon. They will honor them by having board members give them gift cards and flowers.
- 10.20 - Board members will host an outdoor retirement celebration on the grounds of SCEC at 2201 GAR Highway for Superintendent Tom Lynch. This will be held after the board meeting and it has been proposed to change the date of the meeting from June 17, 2021 to June 18, 2021.
- 10.30 - It appears that all board members will be attending the Summer Institute in Falmouth this year. Reservations have been made at Sea Crest from Monday (7/12/2021) to Thursday (7/15/2021). Dennis Henriques and Leah Thibault from SCEC are available to assist you if you wish to

extend your stay through the weekend. If you wish to do so, you will need to provide a credit card number.

11.00 - Warrants:

Warrants will be signed via DocuSign.

12.00 - Other Items(s):

12.10 - Previewing and Discussing Leasing Property for Instructional Purposes

Executive Director Heimbecker reviewed the classroom space that is being leased at various sites from member districts and non-member entities. Coyle Cassidy and portions of the Swansea Mall are under consideration. He explained that the Collaborative Agreement directs that property can be leased through granting tuition credit. If not possible, SCEC boards have allowed owners to be paid. Jennifer Prendergast attended a MOEC meeting and informed board members that Jay Sullivan at DESE has asked Collaboratives to send information on credits. She also had to report to him which districts had current credits. Dr. Heimbecker suggested that this may be related to circuit breaker. Space at Coyle Cassidy could save on transportation costs for districts. In addition, the Swansea Mall space may be a useful solution going forward Superintendent Cabral noted that the Taunton Nursing Home, the Hopewell Elementary School and the 3rd floor of the Alternative High School may also be options. (Recorded in the Chat at 2:19 PM)

12.20 - Reviewing and Discussing Purchasing Property for Instructional Purposes

SCEC is also looking at properties to purchase in 2-3 years when leases are up. Executive Director Heimbecker thanked board members for use of their space.

Superintendent Schoonover left the meeting to attend a meeting at the high school. (Recorded in the Chat at 2:04 PM).

13.00 - Adjournment

Motion, T. Lynch: To adjourn meeting at 2:18 PM

Second. R. Medeiros

Vote, Unanimous