



MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY	Mr. Leo Pacheco, Chairman of the Board
SECRETARY	Mrs. Teecy Matthews, Secretary Protempore
ATTENDEES	Mr. Leo Pacheco, Dr. William Murry, Mrs. Nneka Nwakoby, Mrs. Kelly Thompson Mrs. Teecy Matthews
NOT IN ATTENDANCE	Mrs. Debbie Hart, Mrs. Corrin Collier
ATTENDING GUESTS	Mr. Don Schroeder, Ms. Elizabeth (Liz) Stephan, Ms. Susan Kile, Mr. Curtis Fuller (Building Hope), Ms. Jennifer Roach and Mr. Tommy Turner (McIntosh Area School)

AGENDA ITEM 1

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Verification of Quorum and Opening Statement	Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:	
Chairman Pacheco verified quorum and opened the meeting by acknowledging and welcoming attendees and guests. He laid out the agenda for the meeting, and shared that the Board would be voting for three new board members.	
MOTION:	RESULT:
NONE	

AGENDA ITEM 2

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Approval of Current Agenda	Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:	
MOTION:	RESULT:
A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. MURRY AND SECONDED BY MRS. NWAKOBY TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.	The motion was carried unanimously and approved.

AGENDA ITEM 3

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Approval of the Last Board Meeting Minutes	Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:	

MOTION:	RESULT:
A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. NWAKOBY TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT THE MINUTES; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. THOMPSON.	The motion was accepted and carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 4

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Treasurer's Report	Dr. William Murry
DISCUSSION:	
Dr. Murry delivered the Treasurer's Report and gave a brief overview. The Treasurer's Report continues to reiterate our solid financial standing.	
MOTION:	RESULT:
A MOTION WAS MADE BY DR. MURRY TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT THE TREASURER'S REPORT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. NWAKOBY.	The motion was accepted and carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Board Nominations	Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:	
<p>Mr. Pacheco announced that the Board would be voting on new board nominees, presented at the last board meeting. He shared that normally, the nominees would go through the Nomination Committee, but in light of how small our board is, nominations through the committee are being presented to the full board.</p> <p>All board nominees – Mr. Don Schroder, Ms. Elizabeth Stephan, and Ms. Susan Kile were present.</p> <p>Mr. Pacheco shared with the nominees the process in which they would be voted in, including an opportunity for each of them to ask questions and answer any questions from current board members. He expressed that they would not become full-fledged board members until after they completed the requirements of the State, and that they could participate in the discussions, but would not be allowed to vote until they complete this process. He shared that Mrs. Matthews would provide them the information for proper vetting and compliance.</p> <p>Mr. Pacheco started with Mr. Schroder and presented his resume to the remaining board for review. Mr. Schroder was given the floor to briefly explain his background and interest in becoming a board member. Mr. Schroder shared that he is a parent of a current student enrolled in OCMS, and has a background in construction, real estate, and middle school education through his church.</p> <p>Ms. Susan Kile reiterated her experience in finance and accounting, having served as a CFO for several years. She also shared how she wrote a successful government grant for \$500,000 for a previous employer.</p> <p>Ms. Elizabeth (Liz) Stephan shared her background in law, having been in legal practice in another state, but not currently practicing law as she just recently moved to Ocala.</p>	

After each presented themselves to the Board, Mr. Pacheco opened the floor for questioning, before calling for a vote on each candidate, individually.

MOTION:	RESULT:
DR. MURRY MOVED TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT MR. DON SCHRODER; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. NWAKOBY.	The motion was carried and accepted unanimously.
MRS. NWAKOBY MOVED TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT MS. SUSAN KILE; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DR. MURRY.	The motion was carried and accepted unanimously.
DR. MURRY MOVED TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT MS. ELIZABETH STEPHAN; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. KELLY THOMPSON.	The motion was carried and accepted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 6

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Executive Director Report	Mrs. Teecy Matthews
DISCUSSION:	
<p>Mrs. Matthews shared the current status of the school with the Board, including that we are currently sitting at around 160 students. She shared that they have recently conducted mid-year testing to gage proficiency in specific areas, and stated that the students are progressing really well. She is optimistic that the school could end up with a "B" grade this year.</p> <p>Mrs. Matthews announced the date for the 3rd Annual Bunco Fundraiser to be held on March 27, 2020 at the Fraternal Order of Police Foundation. She asked the Board members to consider donating items to the silent auction.</p>	
MOTION:	RESULT:
NONE	

AGENDA ITEM 7

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
Approval of New Attorney Hire	Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:	
<p>Mr. Pacheco announced that the Board has approved by majority vote to hire Jacksonville based Arnold Law Firm, LLC to represent us in charter and education matters. The firm charges a \$3,000 retainer and a discounted hourly rate of \$80-285, which is pretty standard.</p>	
MOTION:	RESULT:
NONE	

AGENDA ITEM 8

AGENDA ITEM:		PRESENTER(S):
Association Membership		Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:		
<p>Mr. Pacheco shared that during the last board meeting the Board discussed the options of joining both a charter school association and a non-profit association. After conducting due diligence and getting recommendations from others, he identified and requested the Board approval joining the Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools and the Florida Non-Profit Alliance.</p> <p>The Florida Consortium’s membership is based on student count at \$4 per student. Which would currently cost us \$656 to join.</p> <p>The Non-Profit Alliance’s membership is \$150 per year.</p> <p>He reiterated that both would be advantageous to us moving forward due to the list of benefits each provides to the charter and non-profit sectors. Mrs. Matthews concurred and expressed her excitement about the school moving to the next level and how both associations would greatly benefit our future. She plans on actively being involved in both associations.</p>		
MOTION:		RESULT:
A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. NWAKOBY TO JOIN THE CHARTER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. THOMPSON.		The motion was carried and accepted unanimously.
A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. THOMPSON TO JOIN THE NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATION; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. NWAKOBY.		The motion was carried and accepted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 9

AGENDA ITEM:		PRESENTER(S):
Facilities		Mr. Leo Pacheco and Mrs. Teecy Matthews
DISCUSSION:		
<p>Mr. Pacheco shared that the school was now at a critical point with regard to facilities. The lease in our current facilities is up for renewal April 2021, but time is of the essence in order to prepare for our future needs. He shared that during previous discussions, the Board unanimously agreed that the school should grow and expand.</p> <p>The school’s current charter allows for up to 250 students to be enrolled. However, the current facility will only permit up to 170-175 students at full capacity, which does not permit for any further growth or expansion of programs.</p> <p>He shared that our current landlord, Mr. David Cope, has been more than generous in helping us renovate the current facility beyond its original intent as a retail location, in order to meet the needs of our students. However, there is nothing more that can be done with the current facility. This places the school at a decision point. The school would either have to stay as-is with no capacity to grow or relocate to a larger facility.</p> <p>After two years of searching for property in Ocala that would either meet zoning laws for assembly or permit the type of build-out necessary for school functionality, the options are extremely slim. Most spaces are either other retail locations in strip malls and provide little more than what we currently have, or simply do not have the space to meet even our current student needs.</p>		

Mr. Pacheco shared that the school reached out to the District regarding Evergreen Elementary’s facilities should that school close at the end of this year, even inquiring about helping the District by expanding our charter to accommodate students in that zone. However, the District never responded other than opening it up for an RFP for a few days. Mrs. Matthews has since learned that the State has approved for the District to have one more year with a third-party consultant before making a final decision on the fate of Evergreen Elementary.

As a result, Mr. Pacheco re-engaged in conversation with Building Hope – an organization that provides funding to charter schools for facilities. He asked Mr. Curtis Fuller, a representative from the organization, to share with the Board a little about what they do and how they work. Mr. Fuller shared that the organization would find and buy land, build a school, and lease-back the property to the school for a period of 3-5 years, at which time, the school would typically purchase the remaining balance of the property. The lease payments would go toward the purchase. The overall transaction would basically be a seller-financing scenario for that period.

Mr. Pacheco shared that commercial lenders often won’t finance non-profit or charter organizations, so funding would need to be pursued through other means. Mr. Fuller shared stories of schools that used bond-funding, and shared that others in his organization would help the school determine the right pathway for funding, as he was not the expert in that field.

Mr. Pacheco encouraged the Board to also think about expanding the school’s charter to include high school. Under advisement by both our attorney and a person he met who works with the State as a charter school approver, both stated we should add 9-12th grades. Mr. Pacheco recommended we pursue working with Building Hope to identify land and work on building a school. However, he suggested we also work on expanding our charter to include a high school in order to remain competitive in the future, as well as fill the current void in Marion County for a charter high school.

His idea was to identify a piece of property and begin immediately building the middle school in time to open for Fall 2021-22 school year. And then on the same piece of property begin building the high school in time for the 2022-23 school year with plans of starting with 9th grade the first year, following by the next grade level each year thereafter, until we had two schools operating fully on the same campus. Mr. Fuller suggested we write a new and separate charter for the high school rather than expand our current charter so we could qualify for new charter funding.

Mr. Fuller also recommended we start by creating a Facility Committee to work on this project going forward. Mr. Schroeder offered to be on that committee. Mr. Pacheco agreed, asked for a motion to approve the creation of the Facility Committee. Upon approval, Mr. Pacheco, Mr. Schroeder, and Mrs. Matthews were added to the committee.

Ms. Susan Kile recommended a Finance Committee to work on the financial aspect of the facility and feasibility of future growth and expansion. The Board had previously approved a Finance Committee, so no vote was necessary. Mr. Pacheco asked Ms. Kile to head up that committee and work with Mrs. Matthews and Dr. Murry to learn our current financial processes and create a report for the Board to review.

Mr. Pacheco concluded the topic by sharing that time is critical because even though we have a little over a year before our lease expires, realistically, it could take us 18 months to build or even renovate a current facility (once leased) to be prepared for Fall 2021.

The Board agreed to work with Building Hope to further identify potential property, review feasibility studies and financial commitments going forward to ensure this is a viable option. The committees will report back to the Board at the next Board meeting.

MOTION:

RESULT:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PACHECO TO APPROVE THE CREATION OF A NEW FACILITY COMMITTEE; THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MRS. NWAKOBY.

The motion was carried and accepted by majority vote.

AGENDA ITEM 11

AGENDA ITEM:	PRESENTER(S):
New Business	Mr. Leo Pacheco
DISCUSSION:	
<p>Mr. Pacheco shared that the Governor recently announced sweeping changes to the curriculum, including the elimination of common core and some positive changes to high school civics and math, among others. As a result, most impacts would be at a higher level, but should be considered if we decide to go with adding a high school.</p> <p>Furthermore, he encouraged the Board to begin thinking about identifying our niche. He recommended we look at identifying exactly what OCMS is, what makes us unique in the academic field, what do we offer that would be a “selling” point to families going forward. Mrs. Matthews shared one selling point is the smaller classroom and more personalized attention students receive. Mr. Pacheco agreed and encouraged the Board to begin thinking more strategically about how we compete in the near future as charter schools continue to grow and become more available. He recommended we look at an over-arching business theme and think about adding interactive, hands-on learning experiences that tie into the business theme no matter the industry.</p> <p>Mr. Schroeder shared how programs like FFA and community-based learning experiences have engaged students in learning skills outside the classroom. Mr. Pacheco shared that that was exactly what he was talking about – community engagement and experiential learning opportunities.</p> <p>The Board will continue to work on our identity going forward, particularly if we add a high school, and begin to think strategically about revising our mission and vision statements.</p> <p>The Board will vote on those revision at our annual meeting in June/July.</p>	
MOTION:	RESULT:
NONE	

ANNOUNCEMENTS	
	None

NEXT MEETING SET FOR	Thursday, April 23, 2020 – 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM – Location TBD
ADJOURNMENT	A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Thompson, Seconded by Mrs. Nwakoby. The meeting adjourned at 1:03 PM.