

Goodwill Arkansas Education Initiatives, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2017

Presiding: Brian Marsh

Members Present: Chris Amsler
Jonathan Crossley
Margaret Ellibee
William Gaddy
Denise Luft
Brian Marsh

Members Not Present: Margaret Bates
Cassandra Green
Douglas Jackson

Staff: Jessica Foreman
Leslie Heizman
Becky Lockett
Sylvia Murchison
Brian Marsh
Cindy Varner

Call to Order

Brian Marsh called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. in the Goodwill Board Room at 7400 Scott Hamilton Road, Little Rock, Arkansas. **Mr. Marsh** did roll call and recognized a quorum with six of nine members present. **Mr. Marsh** requested that members introduce themselves.

Item 1: Minutes of the May 19, 2017 Meeting

Chris Amsler made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 2: Board Bylaws

Brian Marsh reported to the Board that the bylaws as presented in the agenda were drafted by an attorney for inclusion in the Excel Center Charter application to the Arkansas Department of Education, which was ultimately approved. **Margaret Ellibee** asked a question regarding the statement on page 11, section 5 of the bylaws regarding whether GAEI would purchase insurance. **Sylvia Murchison** responded affirmatively that insurance would be purchased for the school. **Margaret Ellibee** made a motion to approve the Board Bylaws as presented. **Denise Luft** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3: Election of Officers and Drawing of Terms

Staggered one, two, and three year terms were drawn by each member. The results of the random drawing were:

One-Year Terms – Denise Luft, Douglas Jackson

Two-Year Terms – Jonathan Crossley, Cassandra Green, William Gaddy

Three-Year Terms – Margaret Ellibee, Chris Amsler, Margaret Bates

Jonathan Crossley drew for absent members, Margaret Bates, Cassandra Green, and Douglas Jackson. **Brian Marsh** did not draw a term due to his representation on the Board as Interim CEO & President of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas, Inc.

Brian Marsh opened up the meeting for nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair. He stated that other officers, such as Treasurer and Secretary, could be added at the will of the Board. He reported that according to the bylaws, if the Board chooses not to elect a Secretary or Treasurer, the Vice-Chair will assume those duties.

Chris Amsler made a motion to nominate Margaret Ellibee for Chair and Jonathan Crossley for Vice-Chair. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion and moved to cease nominations. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 5: Operations Report

Cindy Varner gave a report on the Excel Center model. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is on file with the official board meeting file. Cindy Varner gave a report of the timeline of the school opening, which is tentatively set for October 16, 2017. She reported that the date is tentative pending approval of a waiver request submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education to waive the required start date of the school. She provided the Board two school calendars – one starting in October 2017, and the other starting in January 2018.

Jonathan Crossley made a comment regarding the need to keep students engaged. **Cindy Varner** explained the role of the Life Coaches in keeping students engaged. **Margaret Ellibee** asked a question regarding whether students were drug tested. **Cindy Varner** explained that students for The Excel Center would not be drug tested; however, depending on their co-enrollment in The Academy for job training, they may be required to undergo drug testing for certain employers. **Margaret Ellibee** asked how students would be assessed to determine their beginning skill level. **Cindy Varner** responded that the particular assessments to be used were still be considered and a decision had not been made. **Margaret Ellibee** referred Ms. Varner to Erin Dail at UAPTC as a resource for pre-assessment.

Brian Marsh gave a report regarding the school facilities and stated that construction on the building would be complete in August.

Cindy Varner explained to the Board that a waiver was submitted to the Arkansas Department of Education Charter Panel to request a start date later than August 2017. She stated that the waiver request would be considered on July 19 at the Charter Panel Hearing. **Brian Marsh** requested the

Board's approval of the waiver request. **Denise Luft** made a motion to approve the waiver request. **Chris Amsler** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Cindy Varner requested the Board's approval of three professional staff hires for the Excel Center. The recommendations were Rebecca Lockett as Lead Life Coach, Jessica Foreman as Lead Instructor, and Steven Vaughan as EAST Facilitator. **Margaret Ellibee** made a motion to approve the staffing recommendations. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Item 6: Financial Report

Sylvia Murchison provided a report on the FY 2018 School Budget, which was provided in the agency packet. **Margaret Ellibee** made a motion to approve the FY 2018 budget as presented. **Chris Amsler** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia Murchison requested the Board's approve to add the following persons as authorized bank signatures for The Excel Center operations.

Brian Marsh, Interim President/CEO
Sylvia Murchison, Chief Financial Officer
Leisa Wamsley, Vice-President of Donated Goods
Cindy Varner, Vice-President of Workforce Development

Chris Amsler made a motion to approve the signature authorities as presented. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sylvia Murchison reported that at the May 19 meeting, a recommendation was made and approved to the Executive Committee to adopt the Goodwill retirement and benefits package for Excel Center employees. She reported that we subsequently learned that since The Excel Center is a public high school, employees must be provided benefits through the State's Employee Benefits Division and Arkansas Teacher Retirement System. She requested that the Board repeal the action taken on May 19 and to approve the adoption of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System and Arkansas Employee Benefits for teachers. **William Gaddy** made a motion to repeal the action taken on May 19 and adopt the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System and Employee Benefits Division benefits. **Jonathan Crossley** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.


Sylvia Murchison requested that the Board approve the purchase of Educators Legal Liability Insurance to cover The Excel Center. **Margaret Ellibee** made a motion to approve the purchase. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 7: Board Meeting Dates

Board member compared calendars and reached consensus to meet on the Third Thursday of each month at 9 a.m.

Item 8: Adjournment

Chris Amsler made a motion to adjourn. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.



Chair Signature

1-3-18
Date

Cindy Varner
Board Recorder