

Goodwill Arkansas Education Initiatives, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
August 23, 2017

Presiding: Margaret Ellibee, Chair

Members Present: Chris Amsler
Jonathan Crossley
Margaret Ellibee
Cassandra Green
Douglas Jackson
William Gaddy
Denise Luft
Brian Marsh

Members Not Present: Margaret Bates

Staff: Sylvia Murchison
Cindy Varner
Jessica Foreman
Becky Lockett

Call to Order

Chair Margaret Ellibee called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Goodwill Board Room at 7400 Scott Hamilton Road, Little Rock, Arkansas. **Chair Ellibee** did roll call and recognized a quorum with eight of nine members present. **Mr. Douglas Jackson** was connected to the meeting electronically by telephone until 5:10 p.m., at which time he attended in person.

Item 1: Minutes of the July 19, 2017 Meeting

Denise Luft made a motion to approve the minutes with one change to correct Denise Luft's name from Diane to Denise. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3: Board Member Training

Chair Ellibee moved the board training up on the agenda so that **Mr. Freddie Scott**, Operations Manager, Arkansas Department of Education, could conduct the training earlier in the evening. Mr. Scott provided training to the board in regard to the following topics: roles and responsibilities of a school board; The Excel Center critical success factors; power, duties, and legal issues; and characteristics of a highly effective board. Mr. Scott informed the board that they would need nine hours of professional development by December of next year. **Chair Ellibee** asked whether the board was subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), since it is a public school board. **Mr. Scott** responded affirmatively that the board is subject to the Arkansas FOIA.

Item 2: Operations Report

Brian Marsh gave a report on the status of facility construction. Construction will be completed by the end of September 2017.

Cindy Varner gave an update to the board regarding the school calendar and stated that following communication with the Arkansas State Charter Panel of the Arkansas Department of Education, the school would be allowed to start on October 16, 2017. She distributed an updated school calendar based on the October 16 start date. She gave an update on the status of enrollments for the school as follows.

- Total applications received is 222
- 46 declined or withdrawn. Of the declined or withdrawn applications, 9 were due to not meeting the age requirements, and 37 withdrew due to living outside the commutable area
- 125 students selected during the lottery drawing on August 23, 2017,
- 51 individuals are on the wait list

Ms. Varner reported that staff would be traveling to Indianapolis, Indiana on August 27-31 to visit The Excel Center schools and see the model in action. She reported that an open house for the students and their families would be held on October 4 from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Cindy Varner requested the Board's approval of eight professional staff hires for the Excel Center. The recommendations were Kim Kight as Office Manager, Susan Bruson as Special Education Instructor, Carloas Wilson as Science Instructor, Eric Buswell as English Instructor, Joy Williams as Math Instructor, Edna Wetherington as English/Reading/Social Studies Instructor, Raveen Robinson as Math Instructor, and Courtney Jackson as Life Coach. **Jonathan Crossley** made a motion to approve the staffing recommendations. **William Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. **Ms. Varner** stated that efforts to hire a school director was still ongoing.

The board acted on an employee handbook that was presented in the agenda packet. **Cassandra Green** made a motion to adopt the employee handbook as presented. **Chris Amsler** seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Item 6: Financial Report

Sylvia Murchison reported that vision and dental insurance were not available to employees through the public employees' benefits division. She stated that Goodwill voluntary insurance products for dental, vision and life insurance can be made available to GAEI employees with board approval. A summary of the benefits was in the agenda packet. **Chris Amsler** made a motion to approve the offering of voluntary insurance for dental, vision, and life insurance to the Excel Center employees. **Williams Gaddy** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 8: Adjournment


Chair Ellibee announced that the board would go into executive session to discuss an employment matter and consideration of admittance of an individual that is a registered sex offender to the school. **William Gaddy** made a motion to adjourn the board meeting and enter executive session.

Brian Marsh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:47 p.m.

Chair Ellibee called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. on a motion by **William Gaddy**. **Douglas Jackson** seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously, and the meeting was called to order.

Chair Ellibee stated that the next meetings of the board were September 21, October 19, November 16, December 21, January 18, February 15, March 15, and April 19. She stated that due to state law that any meeting of the board that considers personnel policies or matters must be held after 5:00 p.m. Consensus of the members was to hold all meetings of the board on the third Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. on a motion made by **Brian Marsh**, seconded by **Douglas Jackson**, and approved unanimously.



Chair Signature

1-3-18
Date

Cindy Varner
Board Recorder