



A Traditional American Education

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**February 16th, 2023, at 6:30 PM via Zoom**

**1.0 Meeting Call to Order**

The February Board meeting for the LTA Board of Directors was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Mr. Geitner. The Board initially planned to meet at the LTA facility; however, due to a mechanical water issue this could not happen. The Plan is to meet at LTA for the next Board Meeting scheduled in March.

**2.0 Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum**

The following board members logged into Zoom.com: Mr. Michael Johnson, Mr. Bill Garrett, Mr. Michael Peterson, and Mr. Tim Geitner; Mrs. Jeanie Stutts-Blucher was absent.

**3.0 Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance**

Those in attendance were welcomed and invited to join the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4.0 School Mission & Vision**

Mr. Geitner opened the meeting by reading both the Liberty Tree Mission and the school's Vision statements.

**5.0 Founding Fathers Quote.** Mr. Geitner read the Founding Father's Quote

**6.0 Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Geitner requested that a motion be made to approve tonight's agenda, so moved by Mr. Garrett, seconded by Mr. Peterson, motion carried, vote 4-0.

**7.0 Public Comment**

Mr. Geitner reads public comment rules and procedures.  
Mr. Garrett briefs the public on the procedures to speak.

Rachel Arugula - Stressed that Board members must be parents or members of the community and requested what parent(s) have been recommended to be Board members. Would like to know why the Board has not responded to parent's emails.

Wendy Cross - Does not think that scheduling Public Comments in the beginning of the meeting is conducive to parents. There is a shortage of English teachers, how is LTA handling it. Renewable fees were also mentioned.

Mr. Geitner mentioned that he will address LTA hiring later in the agenda. Replied to on responding to parents' emails, Mr. Geitner makes every effort to respond to as many emails as possible, he was out of town this last week, which reflects the reduction of responding to emails. He also mentioned that he plans to continue to meet with parents and teachers.

**8.0 Board Member Report**

Mr. Garrett notified the Board that his resignation would be effective at the end of this meeting.

Mr. Peterson is interested in receiving LTA's financial report and making resolutions and new signers for our accounts.

Mr. Johnson is interested in reviewing the IT proposals and identifying a way forward. Mr. Geitner mentioned that he met with teachers for two hours earlier in the month. He plans on meeting with teachers and staff every other Friday. He also has plans on hosting another Meet & Greet, pending availability of schedules. LTA building is closed on Friday due to frozen pipes, in-turn, building water turned off.

## **9.0 Principal Report**

### **9a. Unified Improvement Plan**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed the Board that the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) is available on-line, need to go to the state Department's website to view. LTA was exempt this year, due to LTA being on performance status. The District asked that LTA develop a plan, in which Mrs. Stahnke has started. A District rep will meet with Mrs. Stahnke tomorrow on Zoom and go over the UIP, make suggestions, corrections, then it will be ready for release. Ms. Tina Vitavitch, second in command to Mr. Franko, will be assisting Mrs. Stahnke with the drafting of the UIP.

### **9b. Buses**

LTA is planning on picking up the two new buses tomorrow. Received invoice to replace tires, the firm took care of one and billed LTA for the other - \$750. School name is listed on the side of the buses. Buses will be parked where there are cameras for security reasons. Mr. Geitner wanted to commend Mr. Markel in researching and making the purchases of the buses as seamless as possible. Mrs. Stahnke mentioned that LTA was spending about \$600 per bus per event. The addition of these new buses will benefit the Athletics department as well as a huge savings. A third vehicle is on LTA property, used for D49 food service to transport food service items.

### **9c. IT Proposals**

Mrs. Stahnke provided some background information regarding IT support. Teachers need to perform some of their tasks on laptops, and student testing is frequently being done on computers. Next year CMAS testing will be required to take place on computers. Other computer centric tasks are required which drives LTA to ensure we have a robust, scalable and efficient network. LTA currently has latency challenges with limitations on how many hosts the network can support. Mrs. Stahnke reached out to IT professionals for recommendations and services proposals. Mrs. Stahnke received three proposal bids, two from one vendor (On Site) and one from another {Charter Tech Services, (CTS)}. Both vendors toured LTA and surveyed the existing IT infrastructure. Mr. Geitner requested that Mrs. Stahnke provide an overall view of the proposals and if there was one the really stood out on return on investment. Mrs. Stahnke provided to the Board the overall proposal(s) per vendor. CTS has local technicians available to be on site once a week, in turn, perform whatever tasks that are required. Cost is \$2,200 per month, if LTA requires additional services regarding the technician, then LTA would be billed an additional \$2,200 per month per technician. The other vendor, On site, would perform remote services, phone support for all users, firmware updates, patch management, and security testing on the network. Costs \$5,810 per month. The other proposal from On Site is more in depth in support, infrastructure analysis, upgrades, mapping topology, and documentation to name a few items, Cost would be \$ 11,125 per month. Our current infrastructure is not outdated, it does need to be "tweaked" to make it more reliable and scalable. Mrs. Stahnke hopes that having one technician on site, once per week would be beneficial to everyone. Minor challenges are currently being handled by a LTA member who has knowledge on general IT anomaly fix actions and a husband whose background is in IT, assists as needed. Previous tech support was costing LTA an estimate of \$1,700 per month. Board members asked questions to Mrs. Stahnke on support details, terms and conditions, how is summer months handled, etc. Contracts are open ended; LTA can make

changes and or cancel the contract at any time. There are discounts if LTA agrees to longer contracts. LTA does have statutory constraints, in turn, would have to be careful on length of contracts. Mrs. Stahnke mentioned that she is trying to prepare for CMAS testing, last year LTA experienced numerous network challenges which caused disruptions and delays, not to mention the stress it placed on the students. All proposals do not cover purchasing additional devices. Both vendors are aware of the importance of ensuring LTA's infrastructure is ready for CMAS testing.

#### **9.d Lottery**

Lottery will happen next Tuesday; Mrs. Gasper provided the following to Mrs. Stahnke: four grades where the number of parents who applied exceed the number of available seats. Kindergarten, ten applications over limit, fifth grade, six over limit, seventh grade three over limit, and eighth grade, two over limit. Lottery will happen to rank the names against availability. Possible future discussion might involve whether LTA will want to continue to use the lottery. Some schools are going to a first come first serve process, that is earliest parents who apply will receive the open seat(s). In the lottery process, a parent who applied last may receive a seat, where as a parent who applied early will not. Something to look at and may require a policy change. Mrs. Stahnke will do a review on second floor capacity and provide to the Board relatively soon, there may be space available for additional students. Concurrent enrollment was brought up, LTA needs to offer students this curriculum. Mrs. Stahnke plans to work on this process this spring to be ready by the fall semester. Three teachers that can teach will have to go to the Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) and meet their requirements. It will be cheaper to host the first level of classes in LTA than to bus students to PPSC. Average price to teach at LTA is \$150 per credit hour, most low-level classes are three credit hours, bringing the total cost for one class to \$450. If the student went to PPSC it would cost \$450 per credit hour, for a total of \$1,350. Mr. Geitner mentioned the Board needs to take a deeper dive into what it would take to host college level classes, with hopes of having a better understanding by the May timeframe. Mrs. Stahnke recommended to the Board that we have our understanding in line by April timeframe, in-turn, make a recommendation by May to meet the fall semester timeframe. Mr. Garrett mentioned that the Board passed a motion to agree to providing Concurrent Enrollment policy sometime during a summer meeting, need to research and confirm. There will be placement test, and other minimum requirements, prerequisites that must be posted before the fall timeframe. About 90 percent of the costs is taken care of by the state. LTA will have some costs that will not be reimbursable. Possible delay with CHSAA enrollment due to current LTA challenges. Mr. Markel will have a meeting with the CHSAA reps on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Feb, more information will be made available after the meeting. Mr. Markel briefed the Board that he is meeting with the CHSAA clock committee on Tuesday to determine what the next steps are. LTA is one of four schools applying, and they have concerns about all four schools with different reasons. CHSAA will delay their decisions until Nov, versa April timeframe. Mr. Markel believes he has the committee's support, and that Tuesday's meeting is to go over the requirements and prove that LTA is positioned to join CHSAA, LTA must provide procedures in writing. LTA has volleyball – little bumpers - and cross country starting up. Looking at adding more electives to high schoolers since some are leaving for schools that offer more – “bells and whistles” – opportunities. Mrs. Stahnke mentioned that tests will be given to students to see if growth was made during the previous year. Tests will happen three times a year – during the fall, in January and in May. Test results will help determine if students are achieving fast enough, and identify what areas the student is having problems in. These markers will assist the teachers in making corrections early, instead of dealing with the challenges at the end of the year.

Mrs. Rogers briefed the Board on LTA's planned trip for next year. Trip is scheduled for eleven days, one day of traveling to and from. Working with Explorer Magic tour group, which deals with many schools. Tours start in Boston, travel down to Washington D.C., then to Jamestown and Williamsburg. Twenty-seven students have signed up. December timeframe LTA will be given a solid itinerary to work off. Price is \$ 3,600 per student, does include all three meals per day, If adults want to go, be chaperones, the price

is \$4,400, increased prices is due to lodging costs – you can place more students in one room that you normally would for adults. Mr. Geitner asked how many chaperones should be attending the trip. Answer: for every ten students you need two adults. Teachers attending the trip will focus on chaperoning, versus the parents, the belief is if a parent is paying \$4,400, they shouldn't have to focus on watching the kid's full time. LTA will not absorb any costs. Mr. Garrett asked if there was some kind of permission slip, conduct, behavior stipulations contract. Mrs. Rogers is working on this, with plans of having it available by this school year. Mrs. Rogers also recommended that there would be some kind of appeals committee that would be responsible to review and comment on any concerns related to the conduct and behavior of a student.

## **10.0 Financial Report**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed the Board on the Financial statements that were mailed early to the Board members for review. Financial reports are as current as the end of December 2022. Budget to actuals should be about 50% as well as expenditures. Some test fees must be paid upfront, hence the higher percentage rates. Mr. Geitner recommends a 5-minute break to give Mrs. Stahnke time to send the PDF file to Mr. Garrett. Board members returned after a 5-minute break. Mr. Garrett asked if there were plans for the ESSER funds. Answer: spent money on disinfectants, and other items related to safety. Staff member who was monitoring spending became ill; however, there are plans to spend down the remaining funds and will look deeper into it in March timeline. LTA did not apply for ESSER III funds, it was too restrictive. Mil Levi Funds (MLO) was explained, funds are not received until spring timeframe. Increase for Per-Pupil-Revenue (PPR), amount given at the beginning of the fiscal year went up, in addition we had more students than we estimated on count day. Revised numbers from the district is \$ 379K, extra money will come in over the next six months. Impact Aid, we don't know if we received it. Currently, LTA is well under budget and our spending rate is on target. Board members did not have any additional questions to Mrs. Stahnke.

### **10.a. Hiring**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed the Board that she hired a new Dean of Students, Mr. Hankins. There was information received that there was a possibility of vaping problems in the school. Initial investigation revealed no findings; however, the Dean and Assistant Dean are aware and will stay on top of the situation. New Elementary P.E. teacher, previous P.E. left LTA for the Air Force. New P.E. teacher has a bachelor's degree in Exercise Science and was a Physical Therapist. Interviews with potential new attendance clerk, we have one that we have an offer out to. We also have three interviews scheduled for Assistant Principal, currently Mr. Markel is working in this capacity and doing a great job. We also have two applicants for the elementary music teacher position. Mrs. Stahnke is also starting to work on next year's special-ed team, since special-ed comes back to the schools and no longer handled by the district. As for the English teacher position, the previous teacher left with two days' notice, and the substitutes have not worked out. LTA teachers meet and develop a way to spread the teaching load amongst the existing teachers. Mrs. Stahnke would like to discuss with the Board the topic of Stipends. Mr. Garrett asked what the current open positions were. Answer: Elementary Music teacher, Asst. Principal for upstairs, Principal Admin, help in attendance, and a Teacher's Assistant. Mr. Geitner asked the question of since the school is taken on the responsibility of SPED, the Board should be adding this topic to the April or May agenda. Answer, Mrs. Stahnke will provide some data on a way forward to try and mitigate a new paradigm in the March timeframe.

### **10.b. Stipends**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed the Board that a stipend was given to a special-ed teacher, and an additional amount was granted due to the special-ed teacher required additional funds, the Board was briefed on this situation. In addition, the teachers who have taken on additional duties to help with the absence of an English teacher should

be given a stipend. Mrs. Tavenier was in the position of Dean of Students for 3.5 months on her own, upstairs and downstairs, recommend that she receives some compensation.

## **11.0 Board Discussions**

### **11.a Board candidate recommendations from the nomination committee**

Mr. Garrett briefed the Board on the nomination process for the pending open seat. Nominations included Mrs. Jennifer Helland, Stephanie Spomer, Tracy Bennett, and Jacquelyn Heslep. Each candidate brings strong skills sets that are in line with the LTA mission and would represent the school well. The committee recommended that the Board accept the nomination of Mrs. Jennifer Helland. Mrs. Helland spoke to the Board on her background, to include her previous position on the LTA Board. Mr. Geitner seconded the nomination of Mrs. Helland.

### **11.b Status of Charter Renewal**

Mr. Geitner briefs the Board that we are putting together our red lines as well as the District is. Red lines are planned to be back in the hands of the District so that a decision can be made in the March timeline.

### **11.c. Status of amended and restated by laws adopted January 7, 2023, Parent elected Board positions**

January amended By-Laws was brought up, as well as the Parent elected Board positions. The red-lined By-laws to include the aforementioned statement was provided to the District; however, no notification from the District has been received at this time.

### **11.d Hillsdale College**

Mr. Geitner has had several conversations with Hillsdale representatives, they provided their best practices, and an outline for Principal search, conversation are ongoing. LTA is currently not a membered school with Hillsdale; however, we do follow their curriculum. Mr. Geitner asked the question of the Board if the Board should have a more formal relationship, versa, just following the curriculum. All Board members responded with positive thoughts of moving forward with a formal relationship with Hillsdale.

### **11.e Board Training**

Mr. Geitner brought up that the Board had training scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>. However, with changes to Board members, it was suggested that we wait until the new Board members are on staff before the training is presented.

### **11.f Student fees policy and fee schedule**

Mr. Geitner speaks to the discussion he had with Mrs. Cross. Concern brought up was the verbal motion for textbooks, non-consumables, left in the school items. Concern was when the Board made that motion did we interfere with that program. It was not the intent of the verbal agreement; it was towards textbooks that are non-consumables. Mr. Geitner mentioned that the Board will re-address this and make it clear during the next Board Meeting. Yearbook costs (\$39) was also mentioned, it was suggested that we identify these costs to the Parent Handbook versa, a policy change.

### **11.g Board Procedural Manual**

Mr. Geitner discusses the Procedural Manual, and a formal organization chart. Also, Board needs to do better when publishing the Board Meeting Agenda, we should strive to post 72 hours before the meeting date. Turn-around time after the meeting is over, to post it in a week timeline, looking for alternate process, and if so, outline it in the Procedural Manual. Board members provided their insights on posting timelines.

### **11.h Bank account signers**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed that all checks require two signatures, currently LTA has only two signers in the building. LTA needs four people to be able to sign checks, if gives us more flexibility and improves on the turn-around times. Banks are looking for fidelity in signers, remove legacy names and add new names.

### **11.i Process, job description, and timeline for hiring long-term LTA Principal**

Mr. Geitner had discussions with our attorney Mr. Sparks on this subject. Initial thoughts are we do this in-house, in that we form a Principal Hiring sub-committee, made up of two Board members. Subcommittee would develop the job description, establish processes, postings, interview process, etc. Recommend that we move the March Board Meeting to the 30<sup>th</sup>, gives us two extra weeks to post the position, and work out the processes. Board members provided their feedback, consensus was moving the next Board meeting to the 30<sup>th</sup>, and that we will develop a Principal Hiring Sub-Committee.

### **12.0 Action items:**

#### **12.a. Vote to accept financial report**

Mr. Garrett made a motion to approve the Financial Report, seconded by Mr. Peterson. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

#### **12.b Vote to approve stipends for staff.**

Mr. Geitner requested that the Board tables the stipend vote after Executive Session, with no exceptions, vote is tabled.

#### **12.c Vote to approve IT proposal.**

Mr. Geitner made a motion to adopt Charter Tech Services proposal as our IT service provider, seconded by Mr. Garrett. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

#### **12.d Vote on approval of past meeting minutes**

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of January, seconded by Mr. Garrett. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

#### **12.e Vote on appointing a new board member to fill Mr. Bill Garrett's position.**

Mr. Garrett made a motion to nominate Mrs. Jennifer Helland as a replacement for Mr. Garrett, seconded by Mr. Geitner. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0. Mr. Geitner and rest of the Board members praised Mr. Garrett's professionalism, tenacity, dedication and supporting LTA's mission, thank you Bill!

#### **12.f Vote on Resolution No. 2023-02-16-A Regarding Bank account Signers**

Mr. Geitner reads the Resolution 2023-02-16-A Bank Account Signers, Mr. Johnson made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-02-16-A Bank Account Signers, seconded by Mr. Peterson. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

#### **12.g Vote on Resolution No. 2023-02-16-B Regarding process, job description, and timeline for hiring long-term LTA Principal**

Mr. Geitner reads Resolution 2023-02-16-B, Regarding process, job description, and timeline for hiring long-term LTA Principal. Mr. Geitner and Mrs. Helland will be primary committee members, and Mr. Johnson as an alternate. Mr. Johnson made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-02-16-B, seconded by Mr. Peterson. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

### **13.0 Executive Session pursuant:**

Mr. Geitner made a motion to move the Board to Executive Session at 9:10 PM and reconvene in Executive Zoom Session at 9:20 PM

Mr. Dustin Sparks, LTA Attorney, opens Executive Session at 9: 23 PM, 16 February 2023, Board members and guest in attendance are Mr. Geitner, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Garrett, Mr. Peterson, and Mrs. Linda Stahnke.

- a. C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(b) conference with the attorney for public entity, specifically receiving legal advice related to charter renewal, Hillsdale College, and LTA policies.
- b. C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(c) matter required to be kept confidential by federal or state law or rules and regulations, specifically discussion of LTA student discipline.
- c. C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(e) developing strategy for negotiations, instructing negotiators, and determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, specifically charter renewal and agreement with Hillsdale College.
- d. C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(f) personnel matters, specifically discussion with Interim Principal Mrs. Linda Stahnke and applicants for open positions.
- e. C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(d) specialized details of security arrangements, specifically periodic review of LTA's security plan.

Mr. Geitner makes a motion to move the Board out of Executive Session at 11:12 PM, seconded by Mr. Johnson.

#### **14.0 Action items following Executive Session**

Mr. Geitner made a motion to adopt proposal by Mrs. Linda Stahnke, received earlier in an email, regarding Stipends to be considered, seconded by Mr. Garrett. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Peterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

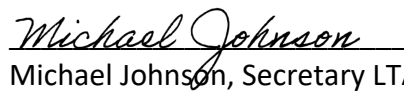
Mr. Geitner made a motion to stand up a Security sub-committee to include Mr. Johnson and Mr. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Garrett. Roll call: Mr. Garrett – aye; Mr. Johnson – aye; Mr. Paterson – aye; Mr. Geitner – aye, motion carried, vote 4-0.

#### **15.0 Announcements**

Mr. Geitner reminded everyone that LTA will be closed on Friday due to frozen pipes. Mrs. Linda Stahnke reminded everyone that LTA will be open after Presidents Day – Tuesday the 21<sup>st</sup>.

#### **16.0 Adjournment**

Mr. Geitner recommended that the Board Meeting be adjourned, so moved by Mr. Garrett, seconded by Mr. Peterson at 11:16 PM

  
Michael Johnson, Secretary LTA