



A Traditional American Education

## MINUTES

### BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

December 15th, 2022, at 6:30 Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89166264422?pwd=eTc5UEhkQ29CVVBQy9rMXV3RkRxQT09>

Meeting ID: 891 6626 4422

#### 1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM.

#### 2.0 Roll Call and establishment of a quorum

Board meeting for the LTA Board of Directors was called to order at 6:34 PM by President Ms. Michelle Morin. The following board members logged onto Zoom.com: Mr. Michael Johnson, Mr. Bill Garrett, Mrs. Jeanie Stutts-Blucher and Mr. Peterson. Quest: Ms. Amber DiCarli, Esq.

#### 3.0 Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance

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

#### 4.0 School Mission & Vision

Ms. Morin opened the meeting by reading both the Liberty Tree Mission and the school's vision.

#### 5.0 Approval of Agenda

Ms. Morin made a motion to approve tonight's agenda, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0.

#### 6.0 Public Comment

Mr. Garrett read Public Comment procedures related to Zoom, with emphasis on how to be identified when to speak by using the "reaction" button. Each participant will have up to 3 minutes to speak. Before speaking it was requested that each person identify themselves by their full name and affiliation with LTA.

Mr. J (parent) – Thanks the Board for detailed emails over the last three months. Has concerns about the number of complaints, security at the school and upcoming inspection. Welcomes security at LTA.

Ms. Kristin (parent) – Question to the Board, is it true parents do not get to vote for who is on the LTA Board? Ms. Morin decided to reply, response as follows. LTA Board of Directors are a Self-Perpetuating Board, potential applicants are vetted by the existing Board members, and they vote who is selected to be on the Board.

Mr. Benjamin Althouse (parent) – made a recommendation to add additional information about Board members on the LTA website, to include but not limited to a BIO, picture of Board members with their names, and contact information.

## **7.0 Previous Meeting Minutes**

November Meeting Minutes presented to Board members for review, October minutes are still in draft mode. Ms. Morin made a comment about the financial report in the November minutes, report displays 25%; however, we are at 21%, recommend the numbers are clarified in the November minutes or discussed in this meeting. Recommended financial comments are carried out in this meeting under Financial Report. Ms. Morin made a motion to accept the November minutes as presented and to add additional comments under Financial report regarding the 25% and 21% meanings, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0.

## **8.0 Principal Report**

Mrs. Stahnke stated that last week LTA was involved in lower and higher-level grades testing. Athletic Director broke his ankle while playing ball with the students. The Boys Varsity Basketball team won big – beat Banning Lewis Academy. Played the number one rated team and lost in the last minute of play.

## **9.0 Hiring**

The Facility Manager is moving on, need to find a replacement. LTA security person also resigned. Ms. Morin requested that Mrs. Stahnke find a service to find a replacement temporarily, then await the Board's decision on how to proceed forward with security staffing. If there is a company that can be recommended to Mrs. Stahnke, she would be grateful to hear about them. Open teacher positions are posted on Indeed as well as in the HR section of the school's website. Mrs. Stahnke has performed numerous interviews to date, more to come.

## **10.0 Renewal Update**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed the Board one document was missing from the package for District 49 review. There was a disagreement with the District; however, Mr. Franko cleared the issue up, and the document will be sent to the District. PPR rates are going up, estimated by \$105 per pupil, LTA will need to re-do the budget to reflect the change.

## **11.0 Staff Christmas**

Staff decided to opt for a grab and go lunch box and received \$250 bonus checks as a small appreciation for staying focused and maintaining positive behaviors during this half of the school year.

## **12.0 Financial Reports**

Mrs. Stahnke briefed the Board on the Balance Sheets, Liabilities/Assets and Income Statements. LTA did not qualify to receive READ funding, LTA is researching fund number 3594 – helps kids, K-3 grade levels, who need help with reading. LTA has 174 days of reserve funding; this is phenomenal news. LTA requires \$184 K per day to pay for its bills. Mr. Garrett asked the question of what the average of funding days is required, answer is 30-60 days. Future budget concerns – field trips, art classes and higher pay. Ms. Morin identified that year to date budget shows 29%, We should be 33% or less, last month – Nov – shows 21%,

we should be 25% or less, both numbers are a good place to be in. Lastly, staff and teachers need help with hiring assistants. Going rate for assistants are rising, Dist. states they are seeing more candidates with stronger credentials. Ms. Morin made a motion to accept the Financial Report as briefed, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0.

### **13.0 Vote to Accept Financial Reports**

Ms. Morin made a motion to accept the Financial Report as briefed, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0.

### **14.0 Discuss Future Board Composition**

Ms. Morin and Ms. DiCarli spoke on how Boards are filled - self-perpetuating, versa by vote. LTA was formed and coupled with Hillsdale Barney Charter School (BCS). Our nation was not created by popular vote. If we open Board members to popular vote, it will be based on emotions and or current feelings. The Board is required to perform its duties based on its mission and vision, not on popular demand. Ms. DiCarli mentioned that there has been no other Charter school requesting changes in how Board members are filled – self-perpetuation. Boards lose consistency when dealing with parents, who can be emotional. Change in the school Board structure would cause unstableness and not productive in moving forward. Ms. Morin mentioned that the Board is moving froward with adding two additional positions – representing staff and students. Both positions are non-voting and are slated to be advisory; however, would bring added real-time feedback. Mrs. Stahnke mentioned that she has been involved with self-perpetuating Boards – very stable – and involved with voting Boards – very dysfunctional. It was recommended that the added advisory positions be incrementally added to the Board. Ms. DiCarli mentioned the current By-Laws states the Board can have up to seven members, she will investigate to ensure no changes to the existing By-Laws are needed.

### **15.0 Executive Session – Specialized details of security arrangements pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(d), and conferences with LTA’s attorney to receive legal advice related to multiple employee matters, policies, and charter conference renewal pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b).**

Ms. Amber DiCarli, Esq, co-worker of Mr. Dustin Sparks, Esq., entered the Board into Executive Session at 8:33 PM. Ms. Amber DiCarli, Esq, exited the Board from Executive Session at 10:39 PM.

### **16.0 Return From Executive Session**

Board exited Executive Session at 10:39 PM.

### **17.0 Action Items From Executive Session**

Ms. Morin provided action items from the Executive Session: Ms. DiCarli will provide language for motions that will be released to the public. Ms. DiCarli made a motion to draft findings that will be released to the public, so moved by Ms. Morin, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0. Ms. Morin made a motion for the Board to hold a Special Session on the 19<sup>th</sup> of Dec, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0. Ms. DiCarli made a motion to provide preliminary findings of the Independent Investigation, so moved by Mrs. Stutts Bulcher, seconded by Mr. Garrett, motion carried, vote 5-0.

## **18.0 Update of the Status of the Investigation**

Ms. DiCarli informed the Board that the Independent Investigator has closed his investigation.

## **19.0 Founding Fathers Quote**

Ms. Morin quotes Benjamin Franklin: on Sept 18<sup>th</sup>, 1787, after the constitution is drafted for ratification, Benjamin Franklin is stopped on the street by Mrs. Powel, she asks – well doctor what have we got a republic or a monarchy? A “republic” replied the Doctor, “if you can keep it”. Ms. Morin continues with students need to know what self-governance means, they need to stay informed, become critical thinkers, don’t be a follower when it comes to your hard fort freedoms. There is a huge push to call America a democracy, it is not, it is a Republic. A Republic protects the minority. Democracy dies a violent death. Our country is under attack, our very freedoms being dismantled. Ignorance rules the day, when US citizens don’t understand our Electoral College, and would gladly give it up. Comment from a LTA parent: about 20% decides what the other 80% does – democracy would never give it a second thought, a Republic would. Mrs. Stutts Bulcher – religious rights are under attack; it doesn’t matter what religion. Our freedom of religion is paramount. Mrs. Stahnke – statesmanship, we need leaders vice politicians, we cannot afford government dependence. Mr. Johnson – it is the individual who is responsible for our governance, not our politicians, we can ill afford to put our faith in man. Ms. Morin – mobocracy is democracy.

## **19.0 Other Business**

None reported.

## **20.0 Adjournment**

Ms. Morin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Stutts Blucher, motion carried, vote 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 PM.

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Michael Johnson, Secretary LTA