

**John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**

Date: October 22, 2020

Time: 11:30 AM

Place: Zoom Video

Members Present: Harvey Newman, Douglas Knight, Richard Levine, Ron Tabano, Dana Jackson, Lawrence Ng, Sy Fliegel

Members Absent: none

Call to Order: Mr. Newman called the meeting to order at 11:30 AM on October 22, 2020

The minutes summarizing the September 17, 2020 board meeting were reviewed. Mr. Newman asks for a motion to accept the September 17, 2020 minutes.

Motion: Ms. Jackson made the motion to accept the September 17, 2020 minutes.

Second: Ron Tabano seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous.

Report of the CEO

Mr. Tabano reported that enrollment is approximately 320 and still growing a bit, but not much further growth is anticipated. This will be a difficult year, maybe better prospects in Spring if the effects of Covid quiet down. Mr. Tabano believes that the type of student JVL normally gets may be using pandemic as an excuse to just drop out at home- to use it as an excuse not to do anything. Other factors are some students are uncomfortable using Zoom, competition with other schools for students is steep, though JVL competes well. Regular DOE NYC schools also experiencing decreased enrollment.

Regarding technology – Mr. Tabano commended the staff on distribution of tablets and believes all student are equipped. There remains a supply if necessary. There is a tutorial available to instruct students on use of Zoom. Tablets used by students last year, that did not function properly, have been returned and we are seeking repair which would afford an even further supply. The thought is that student apathy and student choice are major contributing factors to lack of attendance, and not due to a lack of attention by staff to the students, lack of equipment, Wi-Fi, etc.

Mr. Tabano reports that other obstacles he sees affecting attendance: student are working, students giving childcare, etc. More students are employed/ working now than ever before. They need the money for their families and a good percentage are obligated to necessities side from school. Teachers doing best to remain in contact, encourage, and give flexibility to do work after normal hours.

UFT gave permission for teachers to work from home. Most JVL Manhattan teachers are teaching remotely from home. Most Bronx teachers are teaching remotely, but many are doing so from the Bronx school premises. Teachers are working hard regardless, providing services, 2 teachers in most classrooms, and even school nurse is supporting with mental health.

Mr. Tabano reviewed what the JVL plan is concerning mix of remote and in person learning. It has not changed, and moving to a hybrid of bringing students in physically might commence the week of 11/16 provided:

- we are equipped to give health screening form to students (same form that we give to staff) which is necessary for access to the building. This compliance can be done by phone. Staff will show students how to do this. We will provide paper copy option as necessary. The planned first wave will have emphasis on bringing in new students who have not seen the campus (approximately 20 new students). The intention is to do so in shifts of max 10 per day (length being ½ day session) in Manhattan and Bronx respectively.
- Will focus on struggling students who may benefit most by in person instruction. Will contact parents first to discuss coming in. Notwithstanding, there are likely to be students who will simply opt to not come in.

Mr. Newman stated resolution to approve plan –

Motion: Mr. Ng made the motion to approve the plan.

Second: Ms. Jackson seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Tabano explained that DOE has a screening and random testing policy and procedure. But they do not include Charters with the supplies and resources to perform these services. JVL must, and will, do this ourselves and be in compliance.

JVL secured a STOP GRANT, which is a Federal grant with a 3 year term and total budget of nearly \$600,000 over the 3 years. We are part of a consortium with Renaissance and New

Dawn. The second part of grant will enable us to purchase walkie talkie for classrooms which were needed, at no cost to JVL. Grant administered by 2 part-time individuals who will be brought in on a part-time basis. Not a lot of hours. Maybe retired police officer candidates, paying \$10 K for one position and \$19 K for another.

Charter renewal date was pushed to January 2021, gives us additional time. The process will be entirely virtual. Board meeting is scheduled for 8 PM on June 11. Hearing date is also virtual at 6 PM on June 11. It is open to the public. We will make sure parents are aware and attend. School visit will be virtual interviews with administration and virtual joining zoom classes. That planned for June 11 and 12, 2021. Mr. Newman asked for e-invite to be distributed so we as board members can "save the date".

Darrell Hayes is a new candidate to become a board member. He is an admitted practicing attorney with good related activities and past experience for our purposes. All board members have reviewed Mr. Hayes' resume and application. We then voted for approval of Mr. Hayes by the current Board members, which approval will also be pending the requisite approval by the state of NY. The hope is to have this accomplished by the November meeting so he can participate.

Mr. Newman asked for motion to approve Mr. Hayes joining subject to NY State approval.

Motion: Mr. Levine made the motion to approve Mr. Hayes joining the Board subject to NY State approval.

Second: Mr. Knight seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous.

Luba Koziolkowsky has resigned from the board and we voted and accepted her resignation. The Board thanks Luba for all of her service as a teacher and a board member of the organization.

Report of Cecilia Sakosky/CFO

Audit for fiscal year June 30, 2020 is complete. The audit committee met with David Aschenfarb in advance as a preliminary progress discussion/report, which was found to be in good order. Mr. Newman commended and thanked Ms. Sakosky for good work to keep our finances and reporting in good order.

Mr. Newman asked for a motion to approve the final audit for year-end June 2020.

Motion: Mr. Fliegel made the motion to approve the final audit for year-end June 2020.
Seconded: Mr. Ng seconded the motion.
Vote: Unanimous.

Increase in net fund balance of \$475,000. Our position for first three months of this year are as expected. Enrollment is down, but so are expenses. Projections through June 30, 2021 may see a deficit of \$1.7 million. We believe we can cover this financially with our reserves of \$4.1 million cash for up to 2 years if Covid persists. The application for addition of 8th grade should bring 75 to 100 students and increase income. We also believe that post Covid – students will want to come back to structure. Mr. Newman asked if there might be further initiatives to alter what we are doing to preserve funds. Ms. Sakosky said that only initiative would be furloughing of staff if we do not get the enrollment up, but we should not act on this now in advance of renewal process. Mr. Tabano says we are probably in a stronger financial position than any of the other charter schools and he does not foresee this as major issue, but rather to use this as support to request for approval of addition of 8th grade. Ms. Sakosky suggests that the rent we must pay for our leased facilities is the major stress that we cannot avoid.

The new website to go active 11/3/2020. It is much improved.

Ms. Sakosky shared due diligence done to investigate value of PEO – Professional Employer Organization – which could help us control benefits expenses. It was determined upon the further investigation that moving to PEO would not be beneficial to JVL because PEO makes money based upon the number of employees in the school, regardless of whether those individuals are enrolled in our medical benefits. We would pay \$1,000- \$1,500 per individual that would not affect any saving on the medical benefits because half of our staff obtains medical insurance through the union, not JVL. This diligence was purposeful nonetheless and the board decided to not pursue this further.

Mr. Knight recommended to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Mr. Newman makes a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Second: Mr. Fliegel seconded the motion.
Vote: Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned 12:15 pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2021 at 10 AM.