

Forest Charter School

Monthly Charter Council Meeting Minutes—April 12, 2011

Tuesday, April 12, 2011
4:30 p.m. Closed Session
5:30 p.m. Regular Session
224 Church Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Council Members:

Pam Barram, Chair/Parent Representative
Kelly Chandler, Parent Representative
Sunshine Heaps, Parent Representative
Larry Homan, Community Representative
Melody Wilson, Vice-Chair/ Parent Representative
Janice Eggers, ES Representative
Linda Smith, ES Representative
Emma Robards, Student Representative
Nancy Nobles, Secretary

Minutes

Present: Pam Barram, Larry Homan, Kelly Chandler, Linda Smith, Emma Robards, Sunny Heaps, Janice Eggers, Peter Sagebiel, Debbie Carter, Paul Simoes, BJ Hatcher and Nancy Nobles.

Absent: Melody Wilson

1. Call to Order: 4:37

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Closed Session:

- Larry Homan made the motion to approve the modified passing score for student #53135. Janice Eggers seconded.

All Aye: Larry Homan, Janice Eggers, Linda Smith, Sunny Heaps and Pam Barram.

Kelly Chandler arrived at 4:45.

- Discussion was held with the Council on real estate negotiations and options. No action necessary.

Peter was excused from the closed session.

- The Council's evaluation of FCS Executive Director Peter Sagebiel was conducted.

5. Action: Approval of Minutes of March 15, 2011 (Strategic Plan Meeting)

Kelly Chandler made the motion to accept the Minutes from the March meeting. Janice Eggers seconded.

Ayes: Six Nays: None Abstain: One

6. Action: Approval of Minutes of March 15, 2011

Janice noted that in the Minutes it was stated she was had attended via conference call while, in fact, she was present at the March meeting.

Larry made the motion to accept the Minutes from the March meeting with changes. Linda Smith seconded.

Ayes: Six Nays: None Abstain: One

7. Action: Adoption of the Agenda

Emma Robards made the motion to adopt the Agenda. Kelly Chandler seconded.

Ayes: Six Nays: None Abstain: One

8. Discussion: Other

Nothing to report.

9. Information: 2011-12 Charter Council Elections—Pam Barram

Pam reviewed for the Council the election process, member terms and asked the Council members about their plans to return for the upcoming 2011-12 school year.

Parent representatives Melody Wilson, Sunny Heaps and Kelly Chandler will not be returning. Student representative Emma Robards is graduating and will not be returning. Chair Pam Barram and ES representative Linda Smith both have one more year of their term and will be returning. ES representative Janice Eggers has offered to continue if no one else is interested in the position, although her term is over.

The election will be held in May and ballot boxes will be placed at the main office and at all learning centers. The Council elections have been promoted in the newsletter and through ESs.

10. Information: Budget Update—Debbie Carter

- Debbie shared with the Council the letter received from Superintendent Holly Hermansen regarding the Second Interim County Review. The letter summarized the findings from the site review and pointed out key components to look at in the preparation for the 2011-12 school year, urging that we continue to use “caution and conservatism” because of the challenges in school finance. Peter added that Asst. Superintendent Donna Fitting had been very complimentary in regards Debbie’s work on the 2nd Interim Report.
- Debbie reviewed an updated Cash Flow report, explaining that the report reflects actual numbers through March, with projections for April, May and June. Debbie told the Council it is “amazing” what the ESs have done with curriculum savings and that thanks to money NOT spent with instructional budgets and the money received from TTUSD the “numbers look good.” FCS will continue to project conservatively because of the current economic uncertainties.
- Debbie informed the Council that the application for a deferral waiver for \$50,000 has been submitted.
- Debbie gave the Council an update on the State Budget explaining that the possibility of a June special election is off the table but that Governor Brown will probably take this issue to the voters in November. At this time, the budget cuts are not as severe to the K-12 system and the Governor seems to want to protect this situation as the schools have already been hit hard. Debbie plans to bring two budget models to the May meeting for the Council’s review. The County is waiting for a May revise to develop their budget assumptions for the 2011/12 school year.

11. Discussion/Action: FCS Application for Incorporation as a 501c3—Debbie Carter

Debbie and Peter have been researching this possibility for FCS and discussed with the Council the pros and cons of incorporation as a 501c3. On the positive side: the school would stand alone legally, Council members would be provided an extra layer of legal protection, the school could apply for loans, better rates on insurance. The down side would include corporate rules and regulations and the corporation would have to file taxes. Peter added that incorporating is the easier part of the process while setting up the 501c3 is time consuming. He said that incorporating will add ‘structure around what we are already doing.’

Debbie reported that overall the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and that many charters within the co-op and around the state are already incorporated.

Larry made a motion to approve FCS’s application for a 501c3. Janice Eggers seconded.

Ayes: All Nays: None Abstain: None

12. Information/Action: 2011-12 Draft School Calendar—Peter Sagebiel

Peter told the Council that he had just received the draft 2011-12 calendar from NUJSD. FCS will match closely with the NU vacation dates. It has been presented at the monthly staff meeting and is ready to be put in place so that the school can move forward with scheduling for next.

Kelly Chandler moved to approve the calendar as presented. Larry Homan seconded.

Ayes: All Nays: None Abstain: None

13. Information/Action: FCS Charter Renewal—Peter Sagebiel

- Peter updated the Council on the renewal process. He explained that the Charter Renewal is not due until June 30, 2012 but that the goal is to have it submitted to NCSoS by October or November of 2011. Peter added that he is lucky to have such a good team around him to help with this process and that it is going well. Peter will ask the 2011-2012 Council members for a volunteer to be on the renewal Committee.
- Peter explained that it had been recommended that he ask the Council to approve him as the authorized lead petitioner for the 2012 Charter Renewal with the NCSoS.

Larry Homan made a motion to approve Peter as the authorized lead petitioner for the Charter Renewal. Linda Smith seconded.

Ayes: All Nays: None Abstain: None

14. Information: Student Achievement – BJ Hatcher

- BJ presented information on the March 10th grade CAHSEE testing. He said that three seniors who still need to pass. Additionally there is a graduate who needs to pass the CAHSEE. FCS is looking at new approaches for the CAHSEE intervention including video tutorials and practice tests.
- BJ told the Council that the STAR testing process was going well. He had received the tests two weeks in advance which has given him more time to prepare the tests than last year when he only had three days. Early test takers have shown that the tests seem to be shorter than they have been in the past. BJ reminded the Council that teaching to test is not the focus but that putting effort towards test taking is important.

15. Information /Action: County MOU and Business Services Agreement—Debbie Carter

Debbie presented to the Council the finalized Business Services agreement and the MOU with the County. The Council reviewed the draft document in June of 2010. Debbie explained that the only changes made are to the liability insurance amounts which have gone down from 100 million to 3 million.

Kelly Chandler made a motion to approve the MOU and business services agreement. Emma Robards seconded.

Ayes: All Nays: None Abstain: None

16. Information: WASC Accrediting: Paul Simoes

Paul presented an update on the WASC process and said that it is “rolling along in earnest.” The seven criterion groups continue to move ahead with the self study portion. Paul, Peter and BJ are working on student performance data. Sections of the WASC report will be brought to the Council in the fall for review. FCS parents and students will also be asked for input.

17. Information/Action: Instructional Budget Restructure—Debbie Carter, Peter Sagebiel

Debbie and Peter presented to the Council a proposal of a revised instructional budget structure. The new structure will have three separate paths: homeschool, block class, and co-op. Students will opt into or choose a budget support structure based on the educational program they participate in. Peter and Debbie believe that this new instructional budget structure will allow the school to provide more educational options for students, remain within the guidelines of the ACLU lawsuit and possibly save the school money which will help offset the ongoing budget cuts.

No Action was required.

Larry Homan was excused from the meeting at 6:45

18. Information/Action: Consent Agenda – Debbie Carter

Debbie asked the Council to approve the Consent Agenda.

Janice Eggers made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Sunny Heaps seconded.

Ayes: All Nays: None Abstain: None

19. Discussion: FCS Education Foundation Report – Melody Wilson

In Melody's absence, Peter reported on the Foundation's fall fund drive. The Foundation is looking at the option of allowing families to donate to specific learning centers or co-ops. The Foundation is planning on sending a letter to FCS families celebrating what has been accomplished this year and offering a thank you for support. The letter may be brought to the Council for review.

20. Information: Director's Update – Peter Sagebiel

- **2010-11 Enrollments:** Enrollment continues to go well and is at approximately 680 students; the school has experienced less mobility this year.
- **Website:** FCS is planning to launch the website at the beginning of May; many staff members are putting in time and content to help us meet this deadline.
- **Graduation:** The theme has been decided—"Sailing On"; BJ is looking for singers for the pre-ceremony portion of the evening.
- **Prom:** The prom will be held the evening of May 14th on the Tahoe Gal; ticket sales are slow but that is the trend each year; a minimum of 30 tickets need to be sold for the event to happen.
- **Pennies for Peace Event:** The fundraising event that was hosted by FCS staff and students was a success. Peter offered kudos to ESs Eleni Rice, Jen Homan and Valerie Stuart for their

organization of this event. Many FCS students donated artwork for the event. People in attendance at the evening were energized.

- **Other:** Peter reported that he recently attended an event with the League of Women Voters with Superintendent Holly Hermansen; Peter said it was a good opportunity to explain the Charter model to members of the community.

Peter also discussed with the Council the API and said that while FCS takes this score seriously we will not “teach to test.”

23. Discussion: Future Agenda Items

- Approval of Assurances (SELPA)

24. Information: Reminder of Future Meeting

- May 16 at 5:00 (Foresthill); June 14

It was noted that the next meeting will be held in Foresthill and possibly should start earlier than the 5:30 due to the closed session. Kelly said that she would check to see if the facility is available. Kelly will get directions to the Council.

Debbie alerted the Council that there is the possibility that a special budget meeting may need to be held at the end of May. She will keep the Council posted.

25. Action: Adjourn at 7:20 PM

Linda Smith made the motion to adjourn. Sunny Heaps seconded.

Ayes: All

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Nobles, Secretary

Date

Charter Council Approved:

Pam Barram, Chair

Date

Melody Wilson, Vice-Chair

Date