



NEO Board Minutes for February 27, 2020

Present: Debbie Birch, Paul Schreiner, Mark Lutze, Isaac Carr, Kimmie LaBarge, and Alicia Rios.

Also Present: Rebecca Reiner and Jennifer Jennings.

Absent: Marie Robinson

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM.

New board candidate, Doug Lang, was not present due to moving. Rebecca commented that she was hoping to bring present three board candidates for consideration over the next six months and requested Board assistance with Board recruitment.

The January 23, 2020 Board Meeting minutes were reviewed; Mark Lutze motioned to accept minutes as written; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Director's Report: Alicia had questions about the Graduation Report that were clarified by Rebecca. Rebecca confirmed that the 2nd membership count on February 3rd for New Vistas High School was 222, up from September's 217 count.

Financial Report: Jennifer reported on the positive trends in the Business Office compared to last year (all bills are paid, and reports submitted on time and NEO's deferred payments to Ball State will be paid in full by the end of February. NEO's contract with Community In Schools is for a full-time onsite coordinator and is at a considerable savings compared to a full-time NEO employee for whom we would have to pay benefits. Alicia moved to accept the Financials as presented; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The Board engaged in a brief review and discussion of High School Graduation Pathways. In the past, the state made 40 credits and passage of a graduation exam the criteria for graduation. This is changing. Now there are requirements of graduation: 1. Credit Requirements, 2. Demonstration of Employability Skills, and 3. Post-Secondary Readiness.

Rebecca gave the Board information comparing NEO's New Vistas High School graduation rate to nine other comparable schools; New Vistas rate was higher than all but two of them.

The board received the Annual Review of Internal Control and Procedure Policy. Mark motioned to approve the Policy; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Rental Space: the Camelot Nature Academy, a day care center, desires to rent the space vacated by the Medical Career Academy. The board was in favor of this and of considering the possibility of NEO adopting the Camelot Nature Academy as a part of NEO's mission (which means sharing 501c3 status). The Board agreed to move forward with renting but deferring adoption of anything else for now.

Interconnectivity Agreement with NIPSCO: Isaac reported on his review of this agreement and approved it pending Isaac's closer reading.

The company desiring renting frontage on Route 6 for displaying storage sheds has withdrawn their request due to city resistance.

Strategic Plan Update: Rebecca reported on plans for NEO to separate from the Center for Workforce Innovations (CWI) for the 2020-2024 Adult Basic Education grant. This will provide NEO with the administrative fees that are absorbed by CWI and gives NEO the autonomy to pursue partnerships directly with others including Lake Station Schools, the Porter County Jail, and others. Rebecca asked the Board to approve NEO for writing and submitting this grant proposal. Isaac made the motion to do so; the motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Rebecca asked Paul to review bid(s) for a new fire hydrant on the NW corner of the NEO property. Apparently, this is a private hydrant and must be serviced by NEO. The one current quote is for \$12,980.

Debbie has served three terms on the board and will be leaving in June, at least as president. No present board members expressed a desire to take the role. Debbie commented that the role involved – beyond leading board meetings – being the school at least weekly, sharing those observations with the board and having frequent contact with Rebecca.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 AM.

Respectfully Submitted by Paul Schreiner

Date