

Exploris Middle School
Meeting of the **Board** of Directors
December 13, 2011
4:00 P.M.
Exploris Middle School, Raleigh, NC

Attending:

Board Members Present:

Liz Baird, chair
Karen Barlow
Kathleen Evans
Tammi Garceran
Sean Gargan
Kendall Hageman
Susan Johnston
Barry Koster, recording
Tracy Linton
Dave Currens

EMS Staff Present:

Kevin Piacenza
Leah Perry

PTO rep. present:

Nicole Feeny

Board Members Absent:

Matt Friedrich
Tim Martin
Fiona O'Sullivan
Laura Newman
Jenne Mondry

Liz called the meeting to order at 4:04.

The **2011 Nov 15 minutes** were approved (with a couple of last names added).

Kevin -- director's report

The **open house** earlier in the day (Dec 13) was very well attended. 120-140 mostly parents of prospective students toured the school, populated three group presentations from Kevin. Two more of these events are coming in the spring (Tuesday 2012 Jan 10, Wednesday 2012 Jan 18).

Waiver for 185 days (down to the erstwhile 180, for the 12-13 school year). With only 4 schools having met this year's November deadline to file, the DOE tabled action on it, and so there is a good chance we can still get it through. Kevin plans to go ahead and file, and in the process solidify some activity the staff can take (without students) to enhance student performance. Or, the state may rescind the increase, since none of the state schools have the funds to run the extra 5 days. Or, we could have 5 more days of school.

Kevin apparently played in a couple of student bands at some event. Do we have to add that to his job description? Yikes. Alums and prospects have been / are being advised of Kevin's pending retirement. He reports getting good wishes.

Sean -- on committees

In general discussion, the Board decided to have **committee reports in writing** ahead of Board meetings, so that we can focus on hot issues at the Board meeting (rather than orally having to go through everything). The new website coming in January (?) should give us a place to post such notes (perhaps with some mechanism to accommodate two views, 1. actions

of a single meeting and 2. sequential histories of ongoing issues -- or maybe Google-docs can do that with group-source tools). Meanwhile, Sean will forward committee reports via email. Sean will distribute a template (goals, projects, issues(?)) to the chairs to help standardize our presentation.

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The **video project** has gone well. The Board decided to give Nick an REI gift card worth \$200 or so from Discretionary Funds or perhaps from some gold and silver fund raiser thing Leah was dealing with (if you have more precious metal bring it by Friday).

By the way, we now have a brochure with talking points for Exploris.

Ed com -- Barry has accepted the position as **chair of the Education Committee**. I'll call a meeting to review our goals (apparently recent and tentative) and go from there.

Kathleen and Susan -- facilities committee

The committee met Dec 1 with some staff. Summary: short term needs = **storage space**, long term needs = **bigger building**. At the next meeting (Thu Dec 15 3:15-4:15 at the school), students from NC State's College of Design will present 7 architectural models of possible new buildings.

Kathleen has been the lead in starting to think about a **Capital Campaign** process. They met with John Bennet Dec 12. His company does fundraising for the museum; he knows how to do these things. We need a committee, and we need a feasibility study to determine what amount if any should be the target from our known donor base: parents, alums, corporations. Do this **BEFORE** we go public, really start actually raising money. John recommends a 3rd party for this study, although this does not mean we should surrender our own judgment on the matter. Do we need a new director with fund-raising experience?

With the idea of fund raising in the air, several items came up. It's important that we don't dive into these things before we get some clear direction from the feasibility study.

- Shannon has apparently worked on Raleigh Charter Capital Campaign, so we have some people around who know this.
- Some guy in Durham is using historic tax credits to fund his schools. The Emma Watson school has reportedly gotten \$1M this way. Could we get an old building? Of course, restoration can be the wrong direction from Green. Progress-Forward grants may be more our style.
- The Johnny Folsom 4 (2 of the 4 are our parents) responded favorably to the idea of doing a benefit concert.

Karen - Financial Development

We got the **iPad grant from Biogen-Idec** for \$2500 (not sure how many iPads that is). The 8th graders are excited about using them.

We have connections (Karen B's husband's advisor, also Karen Rectanus know somebody there) to an **NCSU** entity which got a 3 year **grant for \$1M** for to develop a **game** to encourage middle schools students to do more **STEM** (science, technology, engineering and math). They are looking for a game to make students think more quantitatively. Eric Weavy was here Dec 12 to discuss. They will be looking for focus groups, hopefully hiring us / our students, to come up with a game to make students think more quantitatively.

Fiona and Laura at Duke want to work on business plans for the **Special Sauce Workshop** (better names are welcome, but soon). Karen has been looking for funding. Tom Mix - maybe. Triangle Community Foundaiton - maybe. Proceed with applying for *this* summer, even if we have to try to defer if the rest is not ready.

Search com -- Liz

Liz is collecting names for the search committee (to replace Kevin). She has 3 teachers, wants Karen and Sean to join? Sure. Carl Rectanus also wants on. John Bennet's company also does searches. Use them? No decision. Kevin will give Liz his job description soon.

Each of us should **send Liz 5 words** this week that we think should apply to the new director. Next meeting the Board will review the 5 words, job description and solidify the direction for our ads. Note: Kevin has presided over a lot of changes; we don't need someone to re-do what has already been done; we need someone for what we are now about to do.

RE timeline: It might be good to get the new person in time for a little overlap with Kevin, which is to say we do not have a lot of time, so Liz should get the committee moving before the next Board meeting (even without clear direction?). There may be some internal candidates, and such a person could be installed faster, but we can't count on that.

Adjournment circa 5:15.