



## **CHARTER COUNCIL MINUTES**

### **Meeting of December 7, 2011 3:30pm YRCS – Conference Room**

Yuba River Charter School is a community focused on the development of our children. The primary responsibility for the governance of the affairs of the school falls upon the Charter Council, composed of teachers, staff, parents and community member(s). Regular meetings of the Charter Council are held the first Wednesday of each month. The Charter Council invites input from all constituencies of the school. For more information regarding the functioning of the Charter Council, see the Charter Council By Laws and applicable policies.

#### **1. Call to Order – 3:35 pm**

CC Present: Carrie Reuther (CR), Leila Barber (LB), Dan Martinez (DM), Kathy Eldredge (KE), Torrie Mudd (TM), Mariana Nielsen (MN), Robert Wallis (RW)

Absent: None

Guests:

Caleb Buckley (CB), Director

Susan Egan (SE), Business Manager

#### **2. Public Comment - None**

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the council on non-agendized items. Note the council cannot discuss or take action on non-agendized items at this meeting, but such items may be agendized for a later council meeting for discussion and/or action. Agendized items may either be addressed at this time or when the items come up for discussion and/or action. All comments are to be pertinent to the business of the board as determined by the chair. Furthermore, comments which reflect adversely upon personal character or motives are out of order as are those which reflect racial, religious, economic or political views. Such statements are grounds for summary termination of the privilege of address.

#### **3. Consent Agenda Action Items – None**

#### **4. Discussion Items**

##### **a. Summary of Board seminar – Mariana/Susan**

MN presented summary of items from the 2011 Fall Leadership Update Conference presented by Charter Schools Development Center. Discussion focused on items that require more attention from CC in the future such as details regarding charter renewal responsibilities and oversight responsibilities, as well as how best to comply with open meetings and conflicts of interest laws.

It is recommended to put together a brief training for incoming CC members to ease their learning curve.



**b. First reading of new Disenrollment Policy**

Generally agreed to with some discussion around the necessity for a new student to attend their first scheduled day of enrollment. Recommended to add a little leeway here including assuring that families are notified in writing about which day will be considered their first day and that their enrollment will be confirmed once they attend that first day with exceptions only if they follow the attendance policy regarding excused absences.

**c. First reading of Volunteer Policy**

Generally agreed to with a lot of discussion around the increased need for fingerprinting requirements for most volunteers on campus. This will require education and a lot of communication with school families. YRCS would like to begin enforcing a fingerprinting policy for anyone volunteering to participate on fieldtrips and for anyone that has "routine access" to students, such as routine, scheduled class time. Potential ways to ease the cost burden for some families were discussed such as requesting PC to provide a scholarship fund for a few needy families a year.

**5. Discussion/Action Items**

**a. Shall the council approve minutes for 11-2-11 and amended minutes for 9-7-11 to include participants?** LB 1st, KE 2nd - Passed unanimously

**b. Shall the council approve the YRSC Strategic Plan?** DM 1st, MN 2nd - Passed unanimously

To much fanfare and celebration, the first YRCS Strategic Plan was approved. This document is intended to be a living document that will be used to guide progress towards the school's long term goals. Towards that end, upcoming items due for completion will be periodically reviewed at routine CC meetings and the overall Strategic Plan will be reevaluated at each annual CC retreat. The plan was approved with the following changes from the draft:

- Changed item 1.a.3 regarding teachers' salary to a comparison to Nevada County Elementary School teachers
- Changed item 4.b.4 regarding "recognizing volunteers item" to be due Spring 2012

**c. Shall the council approve the playground improvement plan? (2nd reading)** TM 1st, LB 2nd - Passed unanimously

MN presented results of playground committee's work, including a schematic and list of desired enhancements. Committee requests ~\$2,000 to initiate this work. This amount would cover the painting of asphalt games and building one covered deck and one cedar bridge. If price reductions can be made on these items (e.g. donated materials) extra funds will be used to further other playground projects. CB to request additional funding from PC/Finance Committee. DM volunteered to trim the tree that is currently blocking the tether ball court.



**d. Shall the council authorize the business manager to negotiate a new lease on the Old Dairy property?** RW 1st, TM 2nd - Passed unanimously

SE to negotiate the lease with the current tenants at the same rent. Building committee says that tenants are unlikely to affect construction for the next 12 months and tenants have been very good and good ambassadors with neighbors during construction planning project.

**e. Shall the council approve changes to the Office Manager's job description, increase to 40 hours?** LB 1st, TM 2nd - Passed unanimously

Hours will now include Thursday afternoons. Expanded duties mostly around charter renewal document, increased county paperwork, and booking the auditorium.

**f. Shall the council approve the following contracts?** CR 1st, KE 2nd - Passed unanimously

Contracts for items for which budget has already been approved.

- i. Tony Klick (substitute)
- ii. Patricia Montijo (curriculum development)
- iii. Thea Bieling (curriculum development)
- iv. Elise Hierman (curriculum development)
- v. Raelynn Noel (curriculum development)
- vi. Celeste Cox (substitute)

**g. Shall the council approve filing a small claims against Bitney Springs LLC?**

RW 1st, CR 2nd - Passed unanimously

YRCS is filing a counter suit against Bitney Springs LLC, our former landlord . Both suits relate to the flooding of the preschool at the old site which rendered the space unusable for the second half of the school year and caused water damage that needed to be repaired. The cost of the maintenance and the rent paid for unusable space are the topics of the suits. Each suit is for approximately \$3,000. SE will represent YRCS in these matters.

## 6. Reports

**a. Director – Caleb Buckley – to include updates on Bldg. project, enrollment, and teacher's evaluation**

- Showed agenda/minutes from building committee meetings and offered to share with any interested parties.
- Progress is being made on the complicated real estate negotiations to purchase the 3 acres adjacent to the Rough and Ready school site.
- Contracts discussed at last CC meeting are waiting for property to go into escrow before being initiated.
- We almost lost the school's well respected psychologist, but are fortunate that he so loves working in our county that he is making plans to retain his current position with us and other schools in our district.



- Discussed preschool teacher status and plans in progress to continue to find adequate substitute coverage while she is out on medical leave. Final re-licensing process for the preschool facility is stalled due to this leave, but could be reinitiated with an accredited substitute. Potential substitutes, including Ana Rainville, have been identified. Visitor mornings continue to include many preschool families recommended by current families.
- Discussed the changing state rules regarding age readiness for Kindergarten. The age at which kindergarten students will be accepted for school is getting later and later, but schools must provide a "transitional kindergarten" to those students who would have been eligible to enroll according to rules for the prior year. Since we already have a 2 year kindergarten, we already have a "transitional kindergarten" that enables accepting children as required. This new law will change at what age the state will pay to receive students and some language surrounding our enrollment and lottery policies.
- Discussed and decided to begin presenting a few teacher evaluations at each future CC meeting.

**b. Business Manager – Susan Egan**

Most updates provided in agendized items above. Informed CC of a couple of potential upcoming items that could affect YRCS budget:

- An unemployment claim has been filed against YRCS for a departing employee. YRCS pays a portion of the claim which could run to several thousand dollars.
- A worker's comp claim has been filed for an activity that took place after hours away from the school campus. SE will represent YRCS in this matter.

**c. Parent Council - Caleb Buckley**

- Planning for Winter Assembly, including annual pass the basket for families in need
- Discussed playground improvements
- PC is currently overbudget on annual expenditures, but has a large cash reserve to cover it.
- Discussing sports needs and long term plan to handle these requests.
- Discussion surrounding the use of the auditorium for sports practice continues. CB is willing to hear proposals. PC seems willing to use some of its funds to provide the needed improvements to the room such as light fixture covers. We would need to obtain approval from the county for sports uses of this room. CC asks that Administration contact the Nevada County School District to see if they would be willing to consider such improvements and uses before time and money are expended.

**d. Ed Foundation – Robert Wallis**

- Moondance was successful with almost as much money raised as last year.



- Looking to host a monthly concert series in the auditorium as an outreach program, including performances by our teachers, students, and parents, as well as other local artists. The first one is scheduled for January.

**e. Faculty – Leila Barber**

- Parent conferences occurred in November
- George Hoeffeker was here and performed 4 or 5 teacher evaluations as well as a parent ed presentation.
- Eugene Schwartz also evaluated teachers, gave 2 parent ed presentations, and provided some mentoring for teachers.
- Preparing for Winter Assembly.

**f. CC Chair – Torrie Mudd – to include update on Survey follow up and Director’s evaluation process**

- Survey processing is progressing. Comments were distributed to individuals. A summary of general comments will be provided in the next newsletter.
- Director’s evaluation will be performed in March with the same subcommittee directing as last year: TM, RW and LB.
- An omission was noted in Director’s Job Description in that it does not specifically call for oversight of formal Complaints/Disagreements.

**7. Closed Session – None**

**8. Next Meeting Agenda Items**

**a. January Meeting**

- Charter Renewal
- Review due items from Strategic Plan
- Approve Playground Improvement Plan Funding
- Approve minutes: CC Special Meeting 12/1/2011, 12/7/2011 Meeting
- Enrollment Policy, specifically as relates to Little Creek preference in lottery system and wording regarding Transitional Kindergartens.
- Second reading Volunteer Policy
- Second reading Disenrollment Policy
- Teacher Evaluations

**b. February Meeting**

- Faculty report re enhanced fingerprinting policy
- PC report re ability to fund a scholarship program to assist with fingerprinting fees.
- Third reading Volunteer Policy
- Third reading Disenrollment Policy
- Teacher Evaluations



**c. Future Meetings**

- Modify Director's Job Description to include oversight of formal Complaints/Disagreements

**d. Action Items**

- TM and MN to begin developing a training sheet on which to record items to explain to future incoming CC members. To include: CC annual agenda items and general oversight requirements. Open meetings (Brown Act) rules and reasons. Conflict of Interest laws.
- LB to present new Volunteer policy at Faculty Meeting for comments, especially regarding how to best encourage and enforce a stricter fingerprinting policy.
- CB to present new Volunteer policy, especially fingerprinting requirements, to PC to solicit feedback and to discuss possibility of PC providing some sort of a scholarship fund for families that can't afford the fingerprinting fees.
- MN to discuss new volunteer and fingerprinting policies in the CC newsletter summary.
- TM to add Strategic Plan review to annual retreat agenda and quarterly review of progress towards goals to routine CC meeting agendas.
- MN to add request for videographer for parent ed evenings to CC newsletter summary.
- DM to trim the tree near the tether ball court.
- CB to request additional funding for playground enhancements from PC/Finance Committee.
- MN to update parents in newsletter re playground enhancement activities asking for donations and volunteers.
- CB to ask county if they would agree to YRCS adding improvements to auditorium to enable use of the room for sports such as basketball and volleyball.
- TM to determine which survey comments merit agenda items for discussion at future CC meetings.

**9. Call to Adjourn – 6:25 pm**

Respectfully Yours,

Mariana Nielsen  
Charter Council Secretary