

# Truxton Academy Charter School

## Regular Board Meeting

**April 10, 2023**

Notice was provided on our website, [www.truxtonacademy.org](http://www.truxtonacademy.org) on Monday, April 3, 2023.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by President Stuart Young at 7:02pm.

**Quorum as 6 trustees out of 9 total number of trustees was present as follows:**

**Members Present:** Stuart Young, Korinne L'Hommedieu, Tom Brown, Cindy Denkenberger, and Krysta Austen.

**Members Absent:** Beth Klein, Dave Amberg, and Sarah Stevens.

**Others present:** Patty Dawson, Kerryanne Schenck, and Jamie Smart.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Community Comments**

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting March 13, 2023 were sent out to all members for review. Hearing no corrections or objections, President Young accepted the minutes as presented.

**School Report**

Jamie Smart reported on the Rural Life Lab program. She has 30 mins per week with each class and some time integrated into the classroom. They started the year with harvesting the garden and eventually "putting it to bed" for winter. They also harvested oats and learned hand thrashing. They spent time in the kitchen working on knife skills and fractions, cutting apples and eventually making applesauce. They spent time spinning wool and had a visitor who brought different wheels and fiber samples. Students also did some backyard birding using Cornell ornithology guide. Maple season unit is just ending, classes monitored sap volume independently. We are now back into garden season and are learning rules of the garden and rules of the tools. Dairy month is coming, and kiddos are looking forward to egg incubating, learning about pollinators and bee keeping. These units will be overlapping with science units in the classroom.

Tom asked about pheasants and if they would be back again. Jamie reported that the farm we have been working with was dealing with avian flu which has provided new challenges. Time will tell.

Stuart asked about the birding and how the kids liked it. Jamie added that they are doing "bird of the week" to continue and to segway back into the classroom.

Korinne asked about student favorites. Jamie reported that spinning of the wool, applesauce and pumpkins seemed to engage everyone!

Cindy asked how she is recording and documenting. She has been taking notes and working with those to develop future plans.

Tom asked about the High Tunnel grant, Jamie will touch base with Kathie Arnold to check on progress.

Krysta asked about needed supplies for the garden. Jamie shared that some items would be needed – a load of topsoil would be very welcome. Krysta will work with Jamie on a wish list to share.

Kerryanne reported that we have had 1 suspension since last meeting. The musical planning has begun, rehearsals will start soon. The program will take place June 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Leadership**

Teacher asked about long term status of the school, wanting to know how they can help improve.

## **Board Committee Reports**

Treasurer's Report attached. Korinne reported that our bank balance remains healthy still. P&L shows for start of year is favorable to budget balance, end of year negative, but we will end in the black. Grant funds have proven to be difficult to follow as they are received electronically without notation for what they are for. Projected 23-24 budget shows enrollment of 83 returning students and currently tracking 31 new applications totaling 114 students. Desired enrollment per proposal would be 140 students. IF at desired enrollment, tuition rev would be \$1.7M. Current projection falls at \$1.4M (based on NYS budget – not yet passed – we were not on the "list" showing less funding). Committee will fine tune over the next month, and should bring to next meeting for vote.

### *Finance Committee*

Report attached. Committee presented three quotes for charter renewal assistance; Bill Clark \$23,250, Jill Shaheen, Empire Charters \$20-30,000, and Leslie Talbot, Talbot Consulting \$33,750.

Motion by Korinne L'Hommidieu, seconded by Matt McIntyre to hire Bill Clark to assist with documentation and interview prep for the recharter process. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Tom reported that we received a very generous donation of \$8,000 from Elaine and Dave Sturges to put towards continued Landscaping upgrades with Countree Landscaping, quote was received for \$1,695.60 and the remaining balance to be used to support Conscious Discipline.

Motion by Cindy Denkenberger, seconded by Krysta Austen, to accept funds and the suggested use of funds, and authorizing the agreement obtained by the Sturges with Countree Landscaping. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

### *Personnel Committee*

No report attached. New hires need review and approval. We will hold to end of meeting for executive session.

### *Facilities Committee*

No report submitted. Tom reported that the barn submission needed updated info, which is still in process. Matt suggested we start planning for sealing/stripping parking lot. He would guess approximate cost of \$8500 if we planned for this summer.

### *Curriculum Committee*

Report attached. Tom Brown, acting as interim chair, mentioned that last meeting was promising. The committee is focusing on getting an effective Math curriculum and planning for the most effective way to implement it. Next meeting should be able to bring forth recommendations.

### *Marketing Committee*

Report attached. Matt reported on Town Hall, which was positive overall, with good discussion. Rebranding has been discussed – modernizing logo, etc., but that would be a long-term project. Fundraising events were discussed to support necessary match if facilities grant was awarded. Gala, barn dance, something like that, to generate funds, and add community interest. Matt is working on intended markets for highly targeted marketing. Click funnels vs. Hub spot – will have more information at next meeting. Cindy asked about Dairy Parade – Matt mentioned we are working on collaborating with PTO/volunteer network more for those type of events. Tom asked about targeting older grades for recruitment. Matt said that is part of the market research he is doing. He wants to show what a charter school really is to folks who still aren't aware.

## **Special Committee Reports**

### *Nutrition Committee*

No Report. Kerryanne reported on NSLP visit and eval. Some deficiencies in our program were outlined and timeline for corrections was given.

### *Professional Advisory Committee*

No report submitted.

### *Transportation Committee*

No report submitted. DMV had pushed back inspection. It has been submitted and we are waiting on the new sticker.

### *Educational Excellence Committee (Fundraising Committee)*

No report submitted.

*Rural Life Lab Committee (formerly Agriculture Committee)*  
No report submitted.

Stuart moved to approve reports as given. With no objections, reports are approved.

**Old Business**

Motion by Matt McIntyre, second by Krysta Austen, to enter Executive session at 8:04pm. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Motion by Tom Brown, second by Cindy Denkenberger, to exit Executive session at 8:26pm. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried

Motion by Tom Brown, second by Krysta Austen to approve hiring Michelle Gerace for F/T 5th Grade classroom teacher starting April 10, 2023, Julia Sweeney for F/T 6th grade classroom starting August 2023, and Patty Dawson for F/T School Office Administrator starting May 8, 2023. Discussion, Tom Brown thanked the Personnel Committee for their hard work vetting multiple candidates and finding the best fit for our school. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

**New Business**

Stuart Young reported that he received a resignation letter from Board Member Beth Klein, effective 3/22/23 due to continued medical issues.

Stuart also reported receiving a resignation letter from Board Member Dave Amberg, effective 3/24/23 due to his feeling unable to contribute appropriate time and support to be an effective member.

The nominating committee will meet soon to discuss a campaign targeting parent representatives and individuals with a background in higher education.

Cindy Denkenberger asked about Head of School evaluation. The committee is working on a simpler format that can be managed more effectively. SUNY CSI templates are being reviewed and will be shared soon in order to keep with our evaluation schedule.

**School/Community Items**

|        |    |                             |            |           |         |
|--------|----|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| Apr    | 17 | Educational                 | Excellence | Committee | Meeting |
| Apr 19 |    | Personnel Committee Meeting |            |           |         |
| Apr 19 |    | Marketing Committee Meeting |            |           |         |

**Adjournment**

President Stuart Young adjourned the meeting at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Patty Dawson, Recording Secretary

