



Meeting of the Board of Directors of ARIZONA AUTISM CHARTER SCHOOLS, INC.

Meeting Thursday, July 27th, 2023

4125 N. 14th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85014

----- MINUTES -----

Board Members Present:

Ron Harrison, via virtual link
Paul Pucino, via virtual link
Amir Nizam, via virtual link
Kerrie Mallory-Thompson, via virtual link
Matthew Simon, via virtual link
Ross Meyer, via virtual link

Board Members Absent:

Keisha McKinnor

Others Present:

Diana Diaz-Harrison, Founder and Executive Director
Clark Crace, Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives
Myla Goyne, West Valley Campus Director
Lisa Long, Chief of Staff
Annie Loftis, Executive Assistant

General Matters:

A quorum was determined to be present on the virtual zoom link. Ron called the meeting to order at approximately 5:02 pm. Ron called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Matt made a 1st, Paul made a 2nd, all board members present were in favor and the agenda was approved.

Public Comment:

Ron asked if there were any members of the public on the zoom virtual link or in person for comment. There were no members of the public in attendance.

Minutes:

Ron asked if board members had reviewed the minutes from the July 10th, 2023 meeting. Board members indicated they had reviewed the minutes and had no questions. Ron called for a motion to approve the July 10th, 2023 minutes. Paul made a 1st, Kerrie made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the minutes were approved.

23-24 Curriculum Tables and Pathways to Graduation

Ron moved to the 23-24 Curriculum Tables and turned the meeting over to Diana. Diana introduced Clark Grace, President of AZACS and Myla Goyne, West Valley Campus Director who will transition to Chief Academic Officer later this school year. Clark explained that there were no changes to the adopted curriculum from last school year in the areas of ELA, math, social studies and science and that the adopted curriculum was continuing to serve the students at AZACS well. Clark shared that an exciting addition to the curriculum was the addition of the WozED STEAM curriculum and that AZACS had been deemed a WozEd Pathway School due to its adoption of this innovative STEAM curriculum at every grade level at every campus.

After the discussion, Ron called a motion to approve the 23-24 Curriculum Tables for the in-person campuses as presented. Kerrie made a 1st, Amir made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Clark then explained the 23-24 Pathways to Graduation for the in person campuses. He explained that 4 credits are required in English and math. Three credits are required in social studies and lab sciences. One credit is required for life skills, 6 credits are required for electives that would include robotics, coding, drama and many other options. One credit is required for fine arts and 1 credit is required for CTE courses.

Clark then explained the Pathways to Graduation plan for students in the Functional Academic Program. Clark explained that the same number of credits were required in the same subject areas, but the curriculum was developmentally appropriate for functional students. Clark added that students in the Functional Academic Program may be allowed to be enrolled in High School longer than four years and may be in school until age 22. This means that students may have extended time to achieve the needed credits for graduation.

After a short discussion Ron called for a motion to approve the 23-24 Pathways to Graduation documents for the in-person schools as presented. Kerrie made a 1st, Paul made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

1430 E. Indian School Rd.

1430 Charter Schools Development Corporation Lease to AZACS

Ron then moved to the CSDC lease to AZACS. Ron turns the meeting over to Diana and Paul who shared they had reviewed each document in detail in finance committee with the school's advisors.

Diana reminded the board of the agreement between AZACS and CSDC allowing CSDC to purchase and renovate the building on behalf of AZACS, which required AZACS to enter into a lease with CSDC. Paul explained that the lease to AZACS had a term of up to 15 years but the intent was for AZACS to refinance the CSDC loan with bond financing in approximately three years. The closing date was set for August 21. Kerrie asked if there were existing tenants and Diana said there were existing tenants but that CSDC would be leasing the entire building to AZACS with a master lease. This was a favorable to AZACS as the payments from the subtenants would offset the lease payment to CSDC.

Paul pointed out the pricing for the lease at 23,000 per month and explained that the lease cost had been accounted for in the FY24 budgets and the subsequent buy out had been accounted for in long term projections.

After the discussion, Ron called a motion to approve the 1430 E. Indian School Rd. CSDC lease to AZACS. Kerrie made a 1st, Matt made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Charter Schools Growth Fund Loan

Ron then moved to the Charter Growth Fund loan associated with the 1430 E. Indian School project.

Ron turned it over to Paul who explained this document had been reviewed closely in finance committee. Paul explained that the loan agreement is for one million dollars. The low interest financing would be used to offset costs of the 1430 project. Diana added that Charter Growth Fund required acceptance of the loan and funds from the AZACS board.

After the discussion, Ron called a motion to approve the Charter Schools Growth Fund loan associated with the 1430 development project. Kerrie made a 1st, Ross made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Promissory Note between AZACS and CSDC-LLC

Ron then asked Paul to explain the Promissory Note between AZACS and the CSDC-LLC. Paul shared that a promissory note was needed between AZACS and CSDC to move the funds received from the Charter Schools Growth Fund loan to the CSDC-LLC 1430 project. Paul assured board members this document had also been reviewed in finance committee and by the school's attorney and that we are about three weeks to closing.

After the discussion, Ron called a motion to approve the promissory note between AZACS and the CSDC-LLC. Kerrie made a 1st, Amir made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Tucson Upper Campus Loan

Ron then moved to the Tucson Upper Campus Loan and the commitment letter from CSDC and turned it over to Paul.

Paul explained that CSDC was committing to provide a \$3 million loan to acquire the Tucson Campus at 1300 S. Belvedere Ave. Paul shared that the term of the loan was 25 years with an interest rate of 6.5%, but the intention with this loan was to refinance in approximately three years through bond financing. Paul shared that the loan payments associated with this loan had been factored into the FY24 budget and longer term projections. He also shared the documents had been vetted in finance committee and by the school's attorney. Ron shared that he had visited the campus and was impressed with the school building and the long term opportunities on the additional land.

After the discussion, Ron called for a motion to approve the CSDC Loan for the purchase of the Tucson Campus at 1300 S. Belvedere Ave. Kerrie made a 1st, Paul made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the motion passed.

Comments:

Since there were no other action items on the agenda Ron asks if there are any comments. Diana shared that Meet the Teacher night had gone well at all the campuses and that back to school activities were successful.

Adjournment:

Since there were no further items on the agenda, Ron called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:36pm. Paul made a 1st, Ross seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.