



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

Meeting Thursday, September 28th, 2023

4125 N. 14th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85014

----- MINUTES -----

Board Members Present:

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

Board Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Diana Diaz-Harrison, Founder and Executive Director
Clark Crace, AZACS President
Annie Loftis, Executive Assistant
Claudina Douglas, ADI
Hannah Moody, ADI

General Matters:

A quorum was determined to be present on the virtual zoom link. Keisha called the meeting to order at approximately 5:03 pm. Keisha called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ron made a 1st, Paul made a 2nd, all board members present were in favor and the agenda was approved.

Public Comment:

Keisha 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:

Keisha asked if board members had reviewed the minutes from the August 31st, 2023 meeting and if there were any questions. Board members indicated they had reviewed the minutes and there were no questions or comments. Kesiha called a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ron made a 1st, Paul made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Financials:

Balance Sheet:

Keisha then moved to the financial section of the agenda. She turned the meeting over to Diana and Paul. Paul stated that AZACS had a cash balance of \$4.2 million. Days Cash on Hand (DCOH) had increased by \$200,000 in the last two months, which was important to note to be in compliance with our covenant requirements. Paul also noted that AZACS has \$38 million in total assets including all real estate.

Profit and Loss Statement:

Paul added that total expenses at AZACS were approximately \$3.6 million and net income was approximately \$858,724 for July and August. Paul noted that the 12 Month Cash Flow was pending updates.

After the presentation Keisha asked for a motion to approve the Balance Sheet. Ron made a 1st, Ross made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the Balance Sheet was approved.

Keisha then asked for a motion to approve the Profit and Loss statement. Matt made a 1st, Amir made a 2nd. All board members were in favor and the Profit and Loss statement was approved.

Account Movement to PNC Bank:

Keisha then moved to the next agenda item regarding moving two accounts to PNC bank. Keisha turned the meeting over to Diana, who shared that Chase Bank has provided very poor service over the years. She added that AZACS would like to move two holding accounts from Chase to PNC bank. She shared that AZACS would eventually like to move the operating account but will need to do so in phases and strategically. Diana proposed moving the holding accounts, which were holding ERC funds and another account holding donations, mostly for the 10 Year Gala. Diana also shared that an AZACS parent, Lourdes Sierra, has been supportive of the school and has shared the that PNC bank can offer. Clark added that PNC Bank has historically offered to host financial wellness training for our staff. Kerrie added that PNC Bank is a big sponsor in the autism community. Ron asked about the funds in the two accounts that

would be moved. Diana stated that currently, the holding account at Chase has \$199,000 from an ERC credit.

After a short discussion Keisha asked for a motion to approve moving the two holding accounts from Chase to PNC bank. Paul made a 1st, Ron made a 2nd. All board members were in favor of moving the two holding accounts from Chase to PNC Bank.

AZACS Mission Statement:

Keisha then turned the meeting over to Diana who shared that AZACS' mission statement originally stated Arizona Autism Charter School in the singular. But since AZACS' growth we have grown into a multi-site network and now we use the name of the network in the plural, "Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc." Diana also added that she would like to replace the word "disorder" in the mission statement with "neurodiversity", to align with more positive and empowering language being used in the autism community. Diana and the AZACS team were proposing to change the mission statement from:

The mission of the Arizona Autism Charter School is to educate students with autism and related disorders using evidence-based strategies grounded in the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). This educational model will be delivered by highly trained teachers and staff. Our goal is to make this high quality, specialized education accessible to students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in the Phoenix Metropolitan area and beyond.

To this updated Mission Statement:

The mission of the Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc. is to educate students with autism and other neurodiversities using evidence-based strategies grounded in the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). This educational model will be delivered by highly trained teachers and staff. Our goal is to make this high quality, specialized education accessible to students with autism in the Phoenix Metropolitan area and beyond.

Board members commented that language update in the mission statement was more positive and appropriate. Keisha called for a motion to approve the updated AZACS mission statement. Matt made a 1st, Kerrie made a 2nd. All board members were in favor of changing the AZACS mission statement.

Updates:

Upcoming Dance Performance at CSGF CEO Retreat:

Keisha then turned the meeting over to Diana who shared that on October 9 the Charter School Growth Fund is hosting a CEO retreat where AZACS has been invited to perform. The dance performance team will perform a Latin dance for this important national event.

Parent Directory:

Keisha then turned the meeting over to Diana and Annie for an update. Annie shared that a mass email has been sent out to all families so they may choose to opt in to a grade or class-wide parent directory. Annie added that this directory is to help facilitate friendships, play dates, coffee for parents and is not to be used for solicitation purposes. Submission to be

included in the parent directory will be at the end of the day on October 9. Then a large parent directory will be sent to classrooms or by grade for high school.

Lourdes Sierra, Gala Committee Chair:

Keisha then turned the meeting over to Diana who shared that an AZACS parent, Lourdes Sierra, has gone through her ethics committee and is officially the AZACS 10 Years of Impact Gala Committee Chair. This role will help create ideas and resources for the gala as well as fundraising opportunities.

YES Day for Autism Event Information:

Keisha then turned the meeting over to Diana and Annie. Annie shared that Yes Day is approaching on Sunday, October 29. This is a large family festival hosted by the Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC) to help families access resources for their children on the spectrum. This is also a fundraiser and half of the money raised for this event goes directly back to each of our campuses. Information will be sent over to the board for more information on how to participate or donate.

Adjournment:

Since there were no additional items on the agenda and no other questions or comments, Keisha called for a motion to adjourn. Paul made a 1st, Kerrie made a 2nd. All board members were in favor of adjourning at 5:46 PM.