LION LEADERS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHARTER SCHOOL

September Board Meeting
September 18th, 2023, at 6:00 PM

Meeting to be held at 830 Hunts Point Avenue, Bronx, NY 10474

715 Village Lane, Orient, NY 11957
670 West End Avenue, New York, NY 10025

https://lioncharterschool-org.zoom.us/my/mccrillis

Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule - 2023-24 School Year

July 24th	August 28th	September 18th	October 23rd
November 20th	December 18th	January 22nd	February 26th
March 25th	April 15th	May 20th	June 24th

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- **Vote on August Board Meeting Minutes and By-Laws rebranding (5 minutes)**
- **Discussion of and vote on new board member Daniel Marcus (10 minutes)**
- **Discussion of Supporting Organization and Endowment, led by Herb Fixler (10 minutes)**
- **Executive Director's Report (20 mins)**
- **Finance Report (15mins)**
- **Development and Marketing Report (10mins)**
- **Committee Meeting Reports (10mins)**
- **Other Business (10 mins)**
- **Public comments**
- **Adjournment**

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Board Members Present: Herb Fixler Tony Stoupas Ruth Jarmul Nicholas Ober Susan Engel Susan Fine **Board members not in attendance:** Deborah Dumont Herb Kaplan	**Others in Attendance:** Celia Sosa, Executive Director Sherrie Henry, COO Keveney McCrillis, Executive Assistant to the Senior Leadership Team Dan Marcus - Member of the public **Board members in attendance as members of the public:** Tom Sturtevant David Schatksy

Tony Stoupas, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. There was a quorum. The board took a moment of silence for board member Herb Kaplan, who passed away this week. Several members shared their positive memories of Herb Kaplan. Ruth Jarmul said some words about him and mentioned his passion for creating a leadership council. Susan Fine commented about his passion for recording the history of the school and documenting its successes. Tony suggested that Herb Fixler, Celia, and himself meet to discuss a way to honor him. Tony Stoupas then called for a motion to approve the August minutes, which were distributed before the meeting. Herb Fixler seconded the motion. The August minutes were approved unanimously.

Tony Stoupas asked Dan Marcus to leave the room, and then the board members participated in a discussion about his nomination to the board. Herb Fixler, as chair of the nominating committee, reviewed his resume and the information shared during the nominating committee meeting at which he was interviewed. It was mentioned that Dan had attended several fundraisers, toured the school, and attended board meetings as a member of the public previously. Tony motioned to accept the nomination of Dan Marcus to LION's board of trustees. Susan Fine seconded it. He was unanimously nominated as a new board member. Dan Marcus rejoined the meeting at 6:30 PM. Ruth Jarmul mentioned another potential board candidate was touring the school on Thursday.

Tony then turned it over to Herb Fixler to lead a discussion about starting an endowment and/or a Friends of LION supporting organization. Herb opened the discussion to see if there were any questions. A board member asked why we would choose to make a supporting organization when we have control over our own finances now. Herb Fixler answered those questions specifically. There was a question about how much room we have in our loan covenant currently and if the supporting organization could gift the school the amount of the loan covenant if the school didn't have it. There was a suggestion that we get more information and share it at the next board meeting. There was continued discussion about donors and if they would feel more comfortable donating to a supporting organization. There was a question about the cost of this, LION's auditors

estimated that it would be less than $10,000, not including tax filings, investments costs, and administrative or soft costs. There was a question about board members on a supporting organization's board because only 40% of the members from LION's board can be on the supporting organization's board. Would this require LION to raise additional money? Celia Sosa said it would behoove us to disaggregate our data around giving to see if money given is traditionally earmarked for a specific reason. She committed to getting that data for the board. Celia also questioned if we should refine our budgeting process alongside this discussion or before it. Sherrie Henry, COO, discussed that the most important factor to this is the amount of money that we would possibly be able to raise for an endowment or by a supporting organization. Herb Fixler suggested that we also get an opinion from counsel and then table it, pending the outcomes of the endowment discussion. Tony has committed to having the discussion about the endowment this week. Tom Sturtevant offered to meet with other charter schools that have supporting organizations to find out the benefits. There was a suggestion about looking at how much we would need to buy the HS building as well. Susan offered to assist with looking into this.

Tony motioned to approve the rebranded bylaws, indicating there were no substantive changes made, only formatting and name changes. Susan Engel seconded the motion, and the board unanimously approved the bylaws

Celia Sosa, Executive Director, then led a discussion of her report, which was shared before the meeting. She discussed the extension SUNY gave all schools for their APPR reports. She said LION would be able to send a report about this next month with the board materials and meeting. Celia then announced the new senior-level members of LION staff - a Director of Finance and a Director of Human Resources. Celia discussed the retention of our faculty. A board member asked how we compared to other charter schools, and Celia committed to getting the board that data. Celia then led a discussion about the facility concerns that continue to happen at 730 Bryant Avenue, including a recent burst pipe. Celia mentioned she is in communication with the DOE about these concerns and space planning. There was a question about if Celia was able to connect with Erin Cochran, Celia instead connected with the Bronx Space Planner.

Sherrie Henry, COO, led a discussion of LION's financial report, which was shared before the meeting. She stated that there will be changes on the horizon, which are highlighted in the report. Specifically, in October, Celia and Sherrie will be looking at our staffing model for future planning and budgeting. Sherrie also spoke about how she is evaluating LION's financial tools and systems, which right now aren't the most effective. Sherrie hopes to eventually reach a point where LION can have an integrated ERP system. She indicated this was most important to maintain data integrity. Sherrie then gave a high-level review of the things she noticed in LION's fiscal year 2023 and how she is planning to mitigate any budgeting issues. Sherrie then set forth goals for fiscal year 2024. She then discussed where we were against the budget for the months of July and August. Sherrie stated that LION was nearing the close of the auditing period and listed the dates for the finance committee and board.

Ruth Jarmul, chair of the Development Committee, led a discussion about the development report,

which was shared before the meeting because Maya Severns, Director of Development and Marketing, is out on maternity leave. Fundraising goals and events have been adjusted to account for her absence. Susan Engel mentioned that she would like to host a dinner for the associate board to discuss fundraising.

Tony Stoupas asked if there were any committee updates. The first facilities meeting will be next week. Susan Fine, chair of that committee, stated that she is confident that the Herb Fixler Family Engagement Center will be built by the summer of 2024. She is also planning to present a schedule for the renovations to 730 Bryant Avenue. Celia shared that the 730 Bryant building was selected as a site for the DOE's Cafeteria Enhancement Experience (CEE) Initiative. The installation takes two days, so once all building principals agree on designs, there will be a new cafeteria. There were no other committee updates.

Tony Stoupas opened the meeting for public comment. There were none.

Tony Stoupas motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 PM. The motion was seconded by Nick Ober and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned.

Notes prepared by Keveney McCrillis.