

William A. Lawson Institute for Peace and Prosperity

August 27, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Hether Benjamin Brown
Dr. Toya Roberts Conston
Terence Frederick
Dr. Richard Griffin
Billie Jo Johnson
Dr. Christine LeVeaux Haley
Mary Ramos

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Catherine Mosbacher
Regina Rogers
Ambassador Arthur Schechter
Gerald Womack

Cheryl Lawson, Executive Director
Dr. Marthea Raney, Principal
Annette Simmons, Business Manager
Karen Lee, Fund Development Consultant
Jones Mays, IT Consultant

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by Mary Ramos at 9:45 a.m.

2. Establishment of Quorum. The quorum was established at 9:45 a.m.

4. Public Comment. There were no public comments.

5. Approval of Minutes from July 30, 2016. Hether Benjamin Brown moved the approval of minutes from July 30, 2016. Dr. Richard Griffin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by H. Brown, T. Conston, T. Frederick, R. Griffin, BJ Johnson, C. Haley and M. Ramos.

6. Governance and Nominating Committee Report. The report was made by Cheryl Lawson regarding the updated Board of Directors Expectations and Board of Directors Member Overview/Application. Dr. Richard Griffin moved the approval of the documents. Dr. Toya Conston seconded the motion. The motion was approved by H. Brown, T. Conston, T. Frederick, R. Griffin, BJ Johnson, C. Haley and M. Ramos.

The Superintendent Review will be discussed during the Executive Session at the end of this meeting.

7. Finance and Audit Committee Report. The financial reports for July, 2016 were presented by Annette Simmons. Billie Jo Johnson expressed her concern that the Academy's brand new teachers who were not employed by another school last year will not receive their first paycheck until the end of September, 2016. Discussion included comments that charter schools are known to provide identical first-year payment schedules.

Fiscal Year 2017 budget (September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017) was reviewed. Dr. Richard Griffin recommended that the budget include funding for research on how to teach children better. Cheryl Lawson indicated that the Finance Committee had reviewed the budget in the months of July and August. Billie Jo Johnson recommended approval of the FY17 budget. Terry Frederick seconded the motion. The motion was approved by H. Brown, T. Conston, T. Frederick, R. Griffin, BJ Johnson, C. Haley and M. Ramos

8. Recruiting Committee. Tara Crumb reported on the Recruiting campaign for FY17 enrollment. Nearly 500 families were contacted and 192 students were enrolled, with 170 attending in the first week of the new school year. Cheryl Lawson recognized the great work done by Tarla Crumb,

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Title I Parent Engagement Representative, to support our first-week enrollment of nearly 250 students.

9. Facility Report. An informational report was provided including the expense of the construction project to date. The Lawson Academy will have a Spark Park, the first charter school to receive such an award. The cost will be \$10,000 raised by the agency/students to support the investment of \$150,000 from the City of Houston Spark Park program. Cheryl presented an agreement with Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Construction consultant for \$200/hour oversight of our project. Hether Benjamin Brown moved approval of the TASB Consulting contract. Dr. Richard Griffin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by H. Brown, T. Conston, T. Frederick, R. Griffin, BJ Johnson, C. Haley and M. Ramos.

10. Academy Report. TEA letter indicating no outstanding issues with our FY15 Audit. Billie Jo Johnson moved to approve the Resolution to Change Address to 5052 Scott Street. Christine LeVeaux-Haley seconded the motion. The motion was approved by H. Brown, T. Conston, T. Frederick, R. Griffin, BJ Johnson, C. Haley and M. Ramos.

Principal Marthea Raney presented the State of the Schools Report with first-day enrollment (243), first week enrollment (253), instructional staff (11 new teachers, 4 returning teachers), school schedule (8:00 to 5:00 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and 8:00 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Fridays), community partnerships and At-Risk Student Data Reviews for FY15 and FY16. Discussion around whether we have a strong Parent Group in the Academy. Dr. Raney indicated that our PTO has been effective in prior years.

Cheryl Lawson reported that the Academy was identified as an Improvement Required campus for FY17. That will require that we contract with a Professional Service Provider at a cost of \$25,000 to \$30,000 during the year. The resume of Dr. Delice Loyde was provided and the role of this professional was discussed. Billie Jo Johnson moved approval of the contract with Dr. Loyde and the consulting firm. Dr. Richard Griffin seconded the motion. The motion was approved by H. Brown, T. Conston, T. Frederick, R. Griffin, BJ Johnson, C. Haley and M. Ramos.

11. Executive Director's Report. The Academy is now in 13 pipelines for funding using the New Markets Tax Credits. We expect the federal dollars in October and WALIPP will be able to receive funding toward our construction project. Our October 1 Gala at the UH Hilton Hotel, the annual fund raiser, is well on its way. All members of the Board are invited to support the event by purchasing their seats/table. Nearly everyone has completed the annual training requirement, and we expect to be compliant by 8/31/16. Frost Bank is hosting a special reception for Board, Advisory Committee and key staff on November 16 at the Midtown Arts & Theater Center (3400 Main Street, Houston 77002) at 5:30 p.m.

12. Executive Session. The Board opened an executive session at 11:30 a.m. as authorized by Section 551.001 et seq§ of the Texas Government Code (the Opens Meetings Act) to take place for the purpose of real property discussion as permitted by Sections 551.071-551.84, inclusive, of the Open Meetings Act. The Board ended the executive session at 12:08 p.m.

13. Adjournment.