

Woods Charter School  
School Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 7, 2009 at 7:00 pm

Minutes compiled by: Gene Galin.

Meeting conducted by Deedee Nachman. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Voting Board members present: Nachman, Perschy, Galin, Madison, Leinbach, Van Hoy, Smith

Non-voting Board members present: Trocki - Faculty Representative, Rentz - School Principal

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm in The Glade of WCS.

### **The Pledge of Allegiance**

**Public Comment:** no one signed up for public comment.

### **Chairman's Report:**

1. Board training : The Board met with Jean Krufft from the Charter School Division of DPI for board training. The particular areas of discussion were managing the board meeting minutes, public comment, Board composition, and policy development. A summary of her observations and recommendations is attached.
2. Capital Expenditure Accounting Update: Last month a capital expenditures report was prepared to show how this money was spent. There is another report today that reflects changes from last month to this month in capital expenditures. This information is available for inspection by the public. Rentz and Acadia continue to explore the best way to map our cash flow and capital expenditures. Woods is working on providing more internal tracking of our finances independent of Acadia. Mr. Rentz is working towards striking a balance between being efficient and being redundant.
3. Public Comment following the Chairman's Update (the floor was opened up to public comment at that request of the Chairman):
  - a. Joe Frances asked about how the board would be elected if not by the parents. Many boards of this nature are self-perpetuating. Board members would appoint new members to take their place as they rotate off. The Woods Foundation board is self-perpetuating.
  - b. Ms. Scholle mentioned that the history of the school is that it is a parent-run school. The issue is that parents believe that they are voting for a board that represents them. What benefit would be derived from a self-perpetuating board? Ms. Krufft noted that in a self-perpetuating board, the organization can ensure that they are getting the types of skills and talents they need on the board regardless of public support or name recognition present in many board elections (ie: legal, financial, educational, etc.). Woods may want to be more conscientious in future elections about pointing out that here are the needs that we have since certain members are rotating off the board. The Board may consider providing a slate of candidates they believe should be elected to ensure all the bases are covered in terms of skills needed.
  - c. Mr. Daw would support the idea of adding a community leader or a local educator to be on the board. This would require a bylaw change since the bylaws currently require that school board members can only be parents.

## Consent agenda:

### 1. Minutes

- a. August Minutes: The Board discussed the August minutes and whether they struck a sufficient balance between providing information on the business of the board and being too lengthy and providing more information than is necessary or wise. Galin outlined his process and his understanding of the requirements of North Carolina Open Meeting Law. Madison raised concerns that some of the language of the August minutes was imprecise and subject to incorrect interpretation. Nachman proposed that there be a balance in the minutes between the minimum requirements and a transcript.

***Galín moved the approval of the August minutes as drafted. There was no second; the motion died.***

- b. September Minutes:

***Madison moved to approve the September minutes as presented. VanHoy seconded the motion. The motion to pass September minutes passed with two abstentions.***

### 2. Principal's Report

- a. Clarification was sought over the admissions of multiples (e.g., twins, triplets): multiples apply as if they were one child. Faculty children and siblings take priority over other children who are applying for admission..
- b. Clarification was sought over racial identification on the application and its use, if any, in the admissions process. Application information was not used in selection at all and a response is not required; it is collected for demographic purposes only.

***Madison moved to approve the Principal's report and the elevator contract. Ms. Perschy seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.***

## Reports:

1. Student Update: None offered.

2. Pre-Meeting Casual Discussion Report: Pershy noted that there was a premeeting session , but there was no discussion related to the business of the school.

3. Faculty Report: Trocki let the board know that the student rep will probably come out of the student rep pool. Trocki expected to see a student at the next school board meeting.

- a. Elementary is having a visit from the fire department to discuss fire safety and a visit from Chatham County Transit to teach students about bus safety. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades will be going to Carolina theater to see a theatrical show that teaches about the human body on October 27. Family night on October 15. Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade will have fall festival event on October 30. Upper grades will have a written assignment to go along with that event.

- b. Middle School, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers hosted a "Back to School" night with parents. 8<sup>th</sup> graders had a Shakespeare workshop. 7<sup>th</sup> graders are going on a two-day retreat to a 4H center in Reidsville, NC to work on team building, communications and responsibility. 1<sup>st</sup> middle school band and chorus performance on the October 15 in conjunction with Book Fair Family night.

- c. High School, went from one 12<sup>th</sup> grade advisory section two years ago up to three 12<sup>th</sup> grade advisory section this year. Denise O'Gorman has been a big support for the college advising process. A group of juniors visited UNC for a college tour. Faculty evaluation

meetings were held with peer evaluators and evaluation supervisors. High school student council elections just took place. A date has not been scheduled for the senior/freshman retreat.

d. Generally, there is a faculty consensus that larger class sizes are taking a toll, particularly in language arts and history. Teachers are feeling the burden of extra grading and more students than previous years. In science there are some very large sections, in particular in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level. The numbers are in the low 20s, which is high for Woods.

4. Treasurer's Report: Madison reviewed the financials and advised that everything is on target and we are working within our reserve levels. The transportation "fair share" should show up as a revenue item. The state allotments are paid in July, November and March. State fund numbers are reflected in the budget and are based on a count of 502 students. County monies usually come later than state monies. County allotments can change if Woods students go back to their county schools. Foundation monies will eventually catch up by the end of the fiscal year. When the Foundation is paying for items for the school it is paid via grants.
5. WCS Foundation report: Carmen Laetham reported that the Foundation has received \$444,419 in total donations. Open pledges to date total \$51,404. Last month the foundation awarded grants of \$44,848 for stage curtains, science materials, document camera projector, etc. These were the first grants made this year. Balance forward of \$131,282 of which \$19,551 are designated funds, leaving an anticipated amount of \$119,731 at the end of October.
6. Facilities: Leinbach reported that we are getting four benches out front and two more for the back.
7. Policy: Van Hoy advised that the athletic handbook will be revisited after faculty input. He will also prepare a policy regarding public comment for review next month. Additional discussion around the procedure for making policy and administrative procedures followed. Rentz recommended making a board policy followed up by administrative procedures. Approach would be that the board ratifies the policies. The student handbook could contain both the policy and the procedures. The faculty and administration comes up with the procedures. The board would approve broad vision policies but implementation would be delegated to the administration.  
***Action Item (10/7/09-1): Van Hoy to draft policy regarding public comment for the November board meeting.***  
***Action Item (10/7/09-2): Rentz to talk to faculty about the athletic policy and changes to student handbook. Rentz to meet with Van Hoy and make proposal to Board after January 1 for the athletic policy and the student handbook.***

### **Other business**

Galin mentioned that he had contacted NC DOT about a road sign on 15-501 for Woods Charter School. Rentz needs to send formal request in writing to NCDOT. Galin will provide the contact name and address.

***Action Item (10/7/09-3): Galin to provide info to Rentz. Rentz to send formal request to NCDOT.***

**Closed session:** No closed session this evening.

**Adjournment:**

*Leinbach made a motion to adjourn. Perschy seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

## Summary of Discussion with Jean Kruft, DPI as presented at the October Board Meeting

1. With respect to board meeting minutes, Ms. Kruft outlined the legal requirements as well as a “best practice” approach. In her opinion, the minutes should reflect the business conducted (motions made and approved) including discussion germane to the topic subject to the vote. Within that framework, Ms. Kruft recommended a “less is more” approach. If the desire is to provide a full transcript of the meeting, there is no prohibition from recording the meeting and making the recordings available to the public.
2. With respect to submission of written materials during public comment, Ms. Kruft advised that these submissions should not be included in the board minutes but other mechanisms for retaining these submissions for institutional history may be employed. In response, Mr. Rentz has prepared a Public Comment Submission notebook for receiving the written comments of the public during the board meetings. The Board also decided to create a standard for comment (whether verbal or written) to ensure that the comment comports to standards of civil conduct as well as legality. Mr. Van Hoy will work to create a policy for the Board’s review and approval.
3. With respect to policy development Ms. Kruft outlined that the practices and procedures live in the realm of the administration, while policies belong to the realm of the school board. Oftentimes there is overlap and gray area between these two areas. There are a number of revisions needed to the student handbook and as we tackle these changes we should bear in mind that the implementation of board approved policies is done at an administration level not at a Board level. The policies should be vague enough to allow administration to form sufficient implementation practices that can respond to different and changing needs but the policies should be clear enough to make parents and community aware of what the expectations are.
4. Ms. Kruft also pointed out that Woods is a unique community in its organization and structure: it is highly unusual to have a member-run corporation for a school in which the school board is elected by the entire parent population. Ms. Kruft noted that the recommendation of the Attorney General today would be not to set up the school board that way but rather as a self-perpetuating Board. Ms. Kruft also recommended that Woods should consider changing the fact that our board is made up entirely of parents. Typically, the boards are 50 percent parents and the other 50 percent are educators, community leaders, etc. The DPI rep did mention that the current Woods school board setup does seem to work well for Woods.
5. Employee list should be published every year and made part of the public record. New hires have been made public in the principal’s list but an employee list has not been published annually.