



“To provide every child a classical and academically rigorous education while instilling a commitment to civic virtue and moral character”

*Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Savannah Classical Academy, Inc.
July 13, 2017*

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Savannah Classical Academy, Inc. was held at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, July 13, 2017, at Savannah Classical Academy, 705 East Anderson Street, on notice duly given.

The board directors present were:

Ormonde Lewis
Falen Cox
Dr. Jacobium Holliman
Terri O’Neil
Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith
Ryan Dew
Coren Ross
Benjamin Couch Payne, School Director

Absent, with notice:

Dr. Donna Isaac
Scott McGhie

It was determined there was a quorum for the transaction of business.

Ormonde Lewis, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

Dr. Jacobium Holliman moved to accept the consent agenda, Terri O’Neil seconded; all board members present agreed. Terri O’Neil moved to accept the minutes from the June 16th Regular Meeting as amended to include the discussion of future Nominating Committees involving members outside of the Board. Falen Cox seconded; all board members present agreed.

Ormonde Lewis extended a welcome to Coren Ross and Ryan Dew as new members joining the SCA Board of Directors. Mr. Lewis acknowledge the resignations of Andy Blair and Martha Nesbit.

Ormonde Lewis circulated nomination forms to all members present to cast their votes via secret ballot for the election of new Executive Officers. These forms were completed by all members and then passed to Mr. Lewis for a count. He then announced, by unanimous vote, that Falen Cox will be the new Chair, Dr. Jacobium Holliman new Vice-Chair, Ryan Dew new Secretary, and Scott McGhie will be the new Treasurer for the Savannah Classical Academy Board of Directors. Ormonde Lewis then gave a thanks to all members for their service and handed over the meeting to Falen Cox to preside.

Falen Cox stated that the Board had received a recommendation for Mr. Roger Moss, present today, to join the Board of Directors. At 5:48 p.m. Falen Cox moved to go into closed session pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b) (2) to discuss Mr. Moss's nomination as well as other Board vacancies. At 6:15p.m. Coren Ross moved to return to open session, Ryan Dew seconded; all board members present agreed.

Falen Cox announced that the Board will notify Mr. Roger Moss in writing as to their decision. Mr. Moss then spoke as to his history and connection with SCA. Falen Cox asked Mr. Moss if there would be a conflict of interest with his current employer if he were to join the Board of Directors. He confirmed that there would be no conflict. Mr. Roger Moss then thanked the Board and

*****All reports discussed in the minutes are kept on file and are available for review.*****

left for the evening. Coren Ross moved to approve Roger Moss as a member of the Savannah Classical Academy Board of Directors, Terri O'Neil seconded; all board members present agreed.

Benjamin Payne circulated copies of the Director's Report to be reviewed and discussed. The first item discussed was the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction position. Mr. Payne announced that Dr. Good will be involved in helping to find a new DCI. Filling this role was put on the back burner during Charter Renewal as Dr. Good's and Mr. Payne's resources were dedicated to that effort. Benjamin Payne said that Dr. Good had provided pointers at the last meeting as to the process and direction of how best to find a candidate for the position. She will also be present at candidate interviews and is currently helping with recruiting. Mr. Payne stated that realistically it may take until September to find a new full-time DCI. Since this is a likely case, Dr. Good has recommended Chang, Harris, and Shaheed to consult as SCA's DCI in the interim and to prepare the position for the full-time DCI to step into. Benjamin Payne acknowledged the need for an experienced, highly qualified DCI, familiar with the Georgia standards due to this year's curriculum realignment and goal to improve state test scores. Falen Cox asked how many candidates have currently applied for the position, and out of that number, how many are qualified. Benjamin Payne replied about four or five; however, he added that Dr. Good recommended there should be sixty to eighty applicants in order to gain a qualified pool. Falen Cox asked if the position was posted. Mr. Payne confirmed. Ms. Cox then asked if there was a contingency plan in place if we do not have a qualified applicant by September, and if that is the case, would we continue using the consultants. Mr. Payne was uncertain, but confident that with Dr. Good's help, resources, and experience they will be able to fill the position by September. Coren Ross inquired on the need or goal for a pool of sixty to eighty applicants, and asked about the potential of not getting those numbers. Benjamin Payne stated that if a great candidate surfaces before we reach a pool of sixty or so, we would certainly hire them. Coren Ross then asked if an applicant from the private sector would be open for consideration. Mr. Payne said no, not really, unless they are familiar with the Georgia standards because private sector DCI's typically have a different set of expertise. Coren Ross asked if the job description could be made available to the Board. Mr. Payne confirmed that he will circulate the description. Falen Cox asked if a deadline could be given prior to September, so there would be time to formulate a plan B just in case. Mr. Payne reaffirmed his confidence in Dr. Good's success for filling the position. Ms. Cox then requested an update from Mr. Payne on their progress by August 14th, in order for there to be time to put a contingency plan in place, if needed.

Benjamin Payne then discussed filling the High School Counselor position. Mr. Payne recommended Brooke Relihan as the new guidance counselor who would be responsible for ensuring that students' have meet all academic requirements for graduation and consulting with them on college applications. He said that she has come highly recommended. Dr. Jacobium Holliman asked if the Board had reviewed her resume. Falen Cox also inquired on the interest in the position. Benjamin Payne responded to Ms. Cox's inquiry and stated that there was a fair amount of interest received; however, the qualifications of those respondents was another story. Many of the candidates who showed interest were not qualified for a high school position. Mr. Payne then confirmed that he would circulate Brooke Relihan's resume to the Board.

The next item reviewed was the Business Manager's position. Benjamin Payne stated that currently there are ten to twelve applicants for the position; however, only two of those applicants are interested in the role at its current budgeted salary. Mr. Payne said that he did interview one of those two candidates yesterday, and Scott McGhie will be interviewing with them shortly as well. Mr. Payne did say that the interview went well and the candidate seemed promising; however, it was too soon to provide an official recommendation. Terri O'Neil asked if this person would also be involved in helping with campaigns. Benjamin Payne confirmed that this would not be a part of the Business Manager's role. Mr. Payne stated that he did hope to have a name to recommend to the Board this upcoming week.

Benjamin Payne provided a status update on the Charter Renewal. He announced that on June 20th the State sent out a memo regarding an update in the regulations and process of renewal submissions. Mr. Payne confirmed the memo advised that the State is to receive the same copy of documentation submitted locally. He confirmed that all four Charter Schools did submit those forms to the Georgia DOE. Falen Cox asked how that memo was sent and to whom it should be sent. Benjamin Payne confirmed he received it. Ms. Cox recommended that keeping an eye on official updates and changes to the rules and regulations for renewal could be a responsibility that the Academic Accountability board can take on. Falen Cox then asked for an update on the August 23rd meeting. Benjamin Payne stated that the meeting starts at 1:00 p.m. and that all Charter Schools will be attending at that time. Mr. Payne also stated that he was told the agenda for that meeting would be sent to him shortly. Falen Cox requested for the agenda to be circulated to the Board once received and that it would be helpful to have this information prior to the Board's retreat in order to best prepare for interview questions. Benjamin Payne acknowledged that starting July 17th through July 21st the Charter School Commission will be hearing petitions and that these hearings are all open to the public. Mr. Payne said that Dr. Good will be sitting on that board on July 19th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. He recommended that SCA Board members attend that session in order to hear deliberations as it may prove helpful to see how the process works first hand. Benjamin Payne discussed the August 23rd workshop, stating that SCA is allowed to send seven people, and he recommends that we fill all seven spots. Mr. Payne also passed along Dr. Good's thoughts regarding the outcome of SCA's renewal petition, stating she believes a likely outcome is a one year renewal or a contingent renewal in March pending test scores, if the proposed plan is followed. Benjamin Payne also confirmed that the petition to the State needs to be submitted right after the September vote; however, he believes we will have time to get changes in and submitted before that deadline.

Benjamin Payne gave an update on the progress of the third floor. He said that with the exception of completion of cabinetry in the two labs, which will be done in September, four out of the ten rooms will be furnished, completed, and ready for use at the start of term. Mr. Payne acknowledged that the kitchen will be totally outfitted except for the equipment. He stated that everything else is on track. Mr. Payne asked the Board if anyone knew of a good artificial turf contractor because currently the playground is a dirt field and he suggested it would be beneficial to the students and maintenance of the school to fill in the dirt field. Coren Ross offered to look into contacting a contractor. Benjamin Payne also posed if anyone had access to two basketball hoops as the school is looking to add that equipment to the playground area as well.

Benjamin Payne reported on the vacancies and the additions to the faculty and staff for the 2017-2018 school year. He noted that just recently he received notice from Ms. Futrell, a third-grade teacher, that she will not be returning. Mr. Payne commented that he has about sixty-five resumes from a previous posting for a K-5 position he can start sorting through and he will start to recruit for the position, looking for new applicants. Mr. Payne noted that a few other staff members were let go due to not having positions budgeted for them this year. He also reported outstanding vacancies in both the Elementary and Upper School Art department, as neither teacher will be returning. Mr. Payne said that he is currently looking to fill these gaps in staffing, noting an important qualification is great rapport with the kids and excellent classroom management skills. Coren Ross asked if the Art positions were full-time. Mr. Payne responded that the Upper School position could be an hour and a half daily commitment. Mr. Payne also brought up an Upper School math opening. He stated he has a highly qualified candidate, who would be a tremendous addition to the school, in mind. Although this person is currently at another Chatham County School, the candidate has been interviewed, and Mr. Payne said he will forward his resume to the Board. Lastly, Mr. Payne stated there is a First Grade Paraprofessional position to be filled as well.

Benjamin Payne provided an update on enrollment data, stating as of Tuesday, there are only a few openings across all grades with 1,019 applicants; however, Mr. Payne pointed out that the Tenth Grade registry has been exhausted. He said the next steps would be to open up seats on a first come first serve basis, which will be advertised for. Mr. Payne commented on the loss of several students due to bad press and athletic offerings. Benjamin Payne posed a potential concern to the Board of not being able to get the 540 student capacity filled due to the situation with the Tenth Grade registry. He offered an alternative of enrolling more Freshman if the Tenth Grade spots could not be filled. Coren Ross asked how that would impact the student-teacher ratio. Terri O'Neill asked about what other impacts this would entail. Dr. Jacobium Holliman added that through scheduling we should be able to arrange for all services to be met. Benjamin Payne confirmed that we should not have to hire anyone else, and that teachers would just need to take on additional sections. Terri O'Neil asked if this would cause additional costs to be incurred. Mr. Payne stated that this option would open us up to earning additional money by having all 540 spots filled. Dr. Jacobium Holliman asked if we are drawing more interest in Ninth Grade than Tenth. Mr. Payne confirmed that this is the case. Mr. Payne brought up the Charter, noting that it states SCA holds fifty students per grade level, with no more than twenty-five students in each class. Coren Ross asked what was needed from the Board. Mr. Payne said he would need approval of the recommendation. Coren Ross moved to accept Benjamin Payne's recommendation for the Ninth and Tenth Grade enrollment. Ryan Dew seconded; all board members present agreed.

Benjamin Payne continued with the Director's Report, turning to those items outlined in his document circulated at the meeting. He started by saying that the past year had been one of the most challenging years since the beginning. Unfortunately, he believes the upcoming year will be even more difficult, posing more challenges, due to the Charter Renewal and his time dedication. Despite this, Mr. Payne did offer that it is going to be an exciting time to look forward to. Mr. Payne spoke to the teachers' request to gain more of a presence on the Board and plans to have someone from the SCA staff reach out to all Board members to schedule a time to come in, visit, and perhaps shadow a teacher or two. Mr. Payne acknowledged that the 2017-2018 SCCPSS School Calendar is up and available; as is the SCA list of events and important dates for the year. Dr. Jacobium Holliman asked if he could transfer the calendars to his Google calendar. Mr. Payne confirmed that he should be able to do so. Benjamin Payne continued with his report, stating that this past year we did not have a Speech Language Pathologist ("SLP") at SCA for at least 12 weeks. In the upcoming year, he expects upwards of eighteen students needing this service. SLP is a service typically provided through the district; however, they are arguing they do not have to provide this service to charter schools. Mr. Payne, along with leaders from other charter schools in the area, confirmed that the district is responsible for providing SLP service via funding; however, SCA will not get enough funds from the district needed to provide adequate services. There is a proposal for those charter schools effected to contract SLP services through Cobb Pediatric, sharing a traveling specialists, as well as the costs. Mr. Payne shared this proposal but, expressed that it is too early for a vote at this time. Falen Cox requested for communication on this proposal as well as the contacts be sent to the Board so they may be prepared when it comes time to vote. Mr. Payne agreed. Regarding Substitute Services, Mr. Payne explained that this past year we had two in-house subs on staff. This worked fairly well; however, it did cause some stress on those days when more than two people were absent. He stated that this year SCA will be moving back to using the districts substitute service (Source 4 Teachers). He justified this proposal by stating, if we had spent money on this service last year to cover absences, it would have come to about the same amount spent to cover the salaries of our two in-house subs. Falen Cox asked for this discussion to be included in the agenda at the next meeting so it may be put to a vote before moving forward.

Dr. Jacobium Holliman moved to go into closed session at 7:42 p.m. pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b) (2) to discuss personnel matters, Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith seconded; all board members present agreed. Mr. Payne was invited to stay during the closed session. At 7:46 p.m. Terri O'Neil moved to return to open session, Ryan Dew seconded; all board members present agreed. Falen Cox made a motion for the recommendation, as discussed in the closed session, regarding the personnel matter. Dr. Jacobium

Holliman moved to pursue the recommendation regarding the personnel matter discussed, Ryan Dew seconded; all board members present agreed.

Returning to the Director's Report, Benjamin Payne discussed a proposal for an alternative retirement package for the faculty and staff. Mr. Payne asked if the Board would need to approve this alternate offering. Coren Ross asked if there are other schools taking advantage of the option discussed. Mr. Payne said that at other schools the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (SCA's current retirement option) is typically the only available offering for contributions. Falen Cox asked how this other option came about. Mr. Payne explained that it came up through the Georgia Charter School Association and our current benefits partner. He added, that it would be an additional benefit for teachers working at SCA. Falen Cox and Coren Ross requested for additional information regarding the plan to be circulated to the Board for review, as well as other possible alternatives. Mr. Payne agreed. Moving to discussions around curriculum realignment, Mr. Payne asked the Board to review the documents sent out as they will be presented to SCA parents this week. Mr. Payne alerted the Board regarding CCRPI scores; due to graduation rates being a significant factor, SCA's scores will take a hit at the high school level. Ormonde Lewis asked about how many kids from the Scott building were still at SCA. Mr. Payne said that roughly two hundred of the original three hundred and twenty students are still enrolled. Mr. Payne then discussed the three primary initiatives that would be focused on for the year. These were identified as: Curriculum Realignment, Rigor & Remediation, and Communication. Mr. Payne announced that in order to further contribute to student leadership, an Honor Council will be included among the current student-leader groups at SCA. Finally, Mr. Payne offered that moving forward the Director's Report will also include reports from the Director of Operations and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. He also stated that Ivelisse Narvaez Diaz, the Director of Operations, will be attending the Board of Directors meetings moving forward to give her report on matters.

Out of the Director's Report, five action items were identified and discussed. Among these included approval to move forward with high school accreditation. Falen Cox asked for more information as to how to make this happen. Benjamin Payne pointed out there are links available outlining the process. Falen Cox asked who would be working on this. Mr. Payne confirmed that Ivelisse Narvaez Diaz will be responsible for this action item. Falen Cox then requested for Ms. Diaz to present at the next board meeting her actions thus far and what is still left to be done to complete this item.

Falen Cox asked for an update on Move on When Ready. Benjamin Payne said that our students are still eligible for this program; however, due to staff changes (specifically our main contact), the arrangement is still in progress, but should be available for students in the Spring. Falen Cox brought grant opportunities up for discussion. She posed that it should be something to be reviewed with the Development Committee. Mr. Payne noted six grants outlined in his Director's Report and suggested that we should get everyone of those grants if we follow through. Terri O'Neil asked if the Board had received access to all the official documents needed. Mr. Payne confirmed that he believed that was the case. He then offered that the Hodge Foundation grant had already been submitted. Falen Cox said the Development Committee would be following up with Mr. Payne regarding the proposed grants. Terri O'Neil offered to build a grant tracker for support.

Ryan Dew spoke regarding the School Director's Contract stating that he had a few recommendations to put forward. He said he will review the Contract and put the item in the agenda for the next meeting.

Under unfinished business, the Board retreat was discussed. Falen Cox noted that Dr. Good will help to facilitate. She also noted that Mr. Reed Dulaney is helping to coordinate through funding and arranging the facilities.

Under new business, Falen Cox stated that the Board needed to discuss engaging the consulting DCI firm. Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith asked if this is in the budget. Falen Cox confirmed that the money has been gifted. Coren Ross moved for the engagement of the consulting firm for the DCI. Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith seconded; all board members present agreed. Amendments to the By-Laws was next on the agenda. Falen Cox passed out documentation noting the current language and outlining the amended for review. The Board decided to take action on this item at this time. Coren Ross moved to amend article v.6 in the By-Laws from its current language to Action by Trustees Without a Meeting. Ryan Dew seconded; all board members present agreed. Lastly, the August 23rd workshop with the Board of Education was discussed. It was noted that this should be on every board members calendar, and Mr. Payne will provide more information once available.

Falen Cox opened up the discussion for any other business. Terri O'Neil announced that Dr. and Mrs. Kevin Dickinson donated a new baby grand piano to SCA. She added that she contributed \$100 to the \$400 delivery fee that was involved and then challenged other board members to help contribute. Several board members agreed, and Mr. Payne noted that the money should go to Savannah Classical Academy.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:21 p.m. by Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith, Coren Ross seconded; all board members present agreed. A regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 27, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at Savannah Classical Academy, 704 East Anderson Street.

Respectfully submitted,

(signed copy on file)

Christina Orlandi under supervision of Ryan Dew, Secretary