

French and Montessori Education, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting, January 20th, 2007
Minutes

The meeting was called by Board Chairperson, Carlos Zervigon, and was publicized by posted notice at the school, notice on the school website, notice in the rare bird, and notice on the rare bird list service.

Board members present: Janice Dupuy (Principal), Carlos Zervigon (Chairperson), Edwin Shorty (Vice Chairperson), Laura Watts (Treasurer), James Reiss (Secretary), Teddi Locke, Allen Miller, Ken Ducote, Gary Allen Wood, , and Wynne Seeman.

Board member Cornelius Tilton joined the meeting at 10:40am.

Board members excused: Pierre Lebovics

The meeting was called to order at 10:09am.

I. Introduction and Welcome of new Members

The Board members and the administration was introduced to all by Carlos

II. Election of Board Officers

Carlos addressed the need for the board to elect officers for 2007.

Motion: Carlos moved to elect James Reiss as secretary for 2007. Edwin seconded the motion.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

Motion: Carlos moved to elect Edwin Shorty as Vice Chair person for 2007. Laura seconded the motion.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

Motion: Carlos moved to elect Laura Watts as Treasurer for 2007. Teddi Locke seconded the motion.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

Motion: Laura motioned to elect Carlos Zervigon as Chairman of the Board for 2007. Edwin seconded the motion.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

FAME Board Officers for 2007 are:

Chairman:	Carlos Zervigon
Vice Chair:	Edwin Shorty
Treasurer:	Laura Watts
Secretary:	James Reiss

III. Approval of December 2006 minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of December 16th 2006.

Motion: Laura moved to accept the minutes from December 16th 2006. Edwin seconded the motion.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

IV. Auditor's report

John and Bryan of LaPorte, Sehrig, Romig & Hand presented the Auditor's report covering the period from Jan. 3, 2006 through June 30, 2006. FAME Inc. was given a clean audit. There were three recommendations that have been followed. The first is separation of duties by the financial manager. FAME followed this recommendation by hiring a clerk to assist the administration. The second was rectifying the lack of signed contracts by FAME employees. This recommendation was followed by having all employees sign contracts for 2007.

The third recommendation was to improve security of financial documentation. This was followed by separating the financial office from the main secretary office and adding a lock to the financial office door.

Cornelius joined the meeting as the auditors were presenting their report.

Motion: Ken motioned to accept Auditor's report. Cornelius seconded the motion, and added that the administration should be commended by the Board for a clean audit.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

Laura asked for further discussion on the changes outlined above that were results of the recommendations made in the Auditor's report.

Carlos suggested that we move on to the Administration report, in which the changes are outlined in further detail. Laura agreed and Board moved on to hearing Administration report.

V. Administration Report

Administration report began at 10:42am with discussion of changes made to comply with recommendations made by Auditor's report.

Lynette discussed the Separation of duties by the financial manager. Alisa discussed Employment Contracts.

Broadway Campus Update

Janice Dupuy discussed new student pick up procedures that are now in place at the Broadway Campus. Additional staff has been added to morning duty. One teacher will be stationed outside on Hurst and Garfield Streets. This person will assist students as they exit vehicles. Students will continue lining up in their usual place. These new procedures should improve safety and traffic flow.

Janice also discussed her attendance at the recent Uptown Triangle Neighborhood Association meeting that was held at Audubon Charter School. The school will partner with the association in the new traffic procedures outlined above. The association will include the school in the neighborhood patrols, and are interested in putting up one way signs on Garfield and Hurst for drop off and pick up times. The association is willing to write a joint letter to Councilwoman Shelly Midura to get this accomplished. The administration will also ask the city to remove the bus parking signs from Broadway Ave, as the school does not provide yellow bus service. The association also discussed getting faculty members' neighborhood parking stickers to prevent their vehicles from being ticketed during the day.

Carrollton Campus Update

Dawn Collins discussed a recent meeting with the 8th grade parents and students. The meeting was well attended. Plans for the remainder of the year were discussed, including LEAP testing, field trips and graduation. Mr. Johnson, the school social worker, gave a presentation on raising adolescents. The Carrollton campus has a new mobility room and a new science lab.

French Program Update

Madame Kellerman discussed the French program. She stated that the school is adding a 6th grade next year. She has contacted the necessary officials and is meeting with the current 5th grade parents to inform them. Mr. Sgambato will be at the school on Feb 7th for a meeting to address pedagogical issues. Carlos and Alisa both discussed the status of CODOFIL monies (money received from the French government via the state Department of Education to teach French in public schools which is paid by number of teachers). Alisa mentioned the Tulane Foundation conducting financial analysis to figure out the best way to move forward.

Ken Ducote reminded the Board and Administration that mileages dedicated to NOPS expire next year.

Carlos reiterated that two issues that are of a great deal of importance to the school this year are funding for the French program from the State of Louisiana, and expansion of the pre-K program.

Montessori Program Update

Ellen updated status of Montessori program. Next year the program will begin to transition some classes to the traditional there grade groupings. Training & certification for teachers continues to be ongoing. Ellen is trying to get Montessori training for teachers here this summer to mitigate the need to travel. Parent attendance at Parent-teacher meetings continues to increase.

Janice and Dawn will be returning to Houston on Feb 14th through the 17th to continue their Montessori Administrator's training. Beth Rosch and Winifred Johnson are also in training.

The American Montessori Society conference is in March. Janice, Ellen, Dawn and one teacher will attend. Beth Rosch was selected in a random drawing of teachers who participated in training this past year.

Technology Update

Alisa gave the technology update. E-rate wiring has been completed at Broadway and all classroom computers have been checked to ensure that they are working. The building is now wireless accessible. It is on a secure network so that only school laptops are currently able to access the system. All laptops must be sent to the district so that they will work wirelessly. The Carrolton Campus will be completed by Feb 1st, 2007. The school is waiting on the Cat 5 cables to arrive so that the computer lab at the Broadway campus can be set up for use.

Alisa stated that the Accelerated Reader & Accelerated Math programs have been ordered for the entire school. It will be accessible in all classrooms. The school is in the process of set-up, and anticipates completion by Feb 1st.

The teachers are currently completing their training for Integrate Pro, which will allow them to enter grades, projects, homework and schoolwork for parents to access via the internet. NOPS has yet to advise Audubon Charter of the actual implementation date. The school has ordered the new phone broadcast system called *ConnectED*. The school is coordinating with NOPS to import the necessary data from SASI. The program should be active by mid-February.

Facilities Update

Alisa then discussed the current status of facilities at the school. It will cost ~\$20,000 to repair the elevator. It currently remains undefined as to whether the repair is a maintenance cost (school's responsibility) or if it is a capital cost (NOPS responsibility). While discussion with NOPS continues as to what constitutes capital or maintenance costs, the school is paying for the new elevator computer panel that has just arrived.

The school is currently in discussions with Sodexho about renewal of their contract. They will accept a four year contract, despite the fact that they normally work off a 5 year contract.

Business Operations Update

Alisa stated that the School leadership Institute, headed by Brian Riedlinger, and the Baptist Community Ministries held a meeting with local area Charter Schools recently. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss forming a type of consortium between charter schools to raise funds. All that is needed to participate in any consortium that is formed is a letter signed by the Board Chair and the principal stating our willingness to participate. Important to note is that participation does not hinder us from writing our own grants. Any funds that Audubon secures on its own will not have to be shared.

Alisa also discussed SLIs desire to put together packages of services that they can offer to Charter schools including legal, public relations, IT, financial, and human resources. The BCM has offered to underwrite the cost of these services for the first year.

Alisa had her first meeting with Tulane University to discuss partnering on Montessori training and certification for new teachers. Tulane will also look at the possibility of having a student tutoring program and allowing Tulane students to volunteer at Audubon Charter.

Motion: at 11:20am Cornelius moved for the Board Chairman to be able to sign a letter authorizing Audubon Charter to join a consortium led by SLI and BCM to raise funds for New Orleans area Charter Schools. Ken seconded the motion.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

VI. Budget Committee Report

Laura Watts summarized the School's current financial position as outlined in the recent Budget Committee report. The committee will begin work on next year's budget in March 2007. The MUNIS system is not working and therefore, has not been implemented. We are adding a feature to our current system (Manatee) to export reports to Excel, and have all finances set up using the LAUGH codes that are required by the State of Louisiana.

Alisa informed the Board that a letter has been sent to NOPS informing them that Audubon Charter will not be using MUNIS, but instead will be conforming our Manatee system to use the state required LAUGH codes.

VII. Presentation of Montessori information

Teddi presented the Montessori report and began by discussing how the school goes about meeting the standards set by the American Montessori Society.

Alisa asked Teddi why we do not use the American Montessori Institute instead of AMS as our accrediting authority. Teddi explained to the Board that getting AMI accredited as a public school is difficult, due to the fact that AMI requires all teachers be AMI trained and follow the more traditional Montessori guidelines set by AMI “to the letter”.

VIII. Discussion of Committees

Carlos discussed the need to appoint new committee chairs and members for 2007. After board discussion, the following committees were formed:

Budget Committee: Chaired by Laura with James Co-Chair.

Facilities and Planning Committee: Chaired by Ken with Cornelius and Alisa members.

Principal Evaluation Committee: Chaired by Teddi, Wynn Co-Chair, Gary and Allen members.

Montessori Curriculum Committee: Chaired by Wynn, Teddi, Edwin and Gary members.

Legal Committee: Chaired by Allen, Edwin as Co-Chair.

Board Governance Committee: Chaired by Carlos, Ken and Cornelius members.

Recognizing that it is not an efficient use of the administrations time to attend all committee meetings, it was decided that the committee chairs will keep the administration and the board informed as to when a meeting will take place and what will be discussed. This way the administration can determine which members of the Audubon staff and faculty should be included at any given meeting.

Carlos proposed that we take an informal approach to committee structure, i.e. that any board member should feel free to attend and participate in any committee meeting.

Motion: Edwin moved to adjourn the meeting. Ken seconded.

Motion passed, unanimously: The voting members of the Board unanimously passed the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at noon with the next meeting scheduled for March 17th, 2007.