



Assabet Valley Collaborative Board of Directors Meeting
January 22, 2021 -- 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Virtually via teleconference

MINUTES

Present: Amber Bock, Marco Rodrigues, Jay Cummings, Greg Martineau, Brian Haas, Joseph Sawyer, Michael Bergeron, Ernie Houle. **Also Present:** Cathy Cummins.

Not Present: Jeff Zanghi, Brooke Clenchy, Casey Handfield, Gregory Myers

CALL TO ORDER

After a Roll Call (Amber Bock, Marco Rodrigues, Jay Cummings, Greg Martineau, Brian Haas, Joseph Sawyer, Michael Bergeron, Ernie Houle) the meeting was called to order by Chair Jay Cummings at 9:06 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Amber Bock motioned to approve the minutes of December 18, 2020. Michael Bergeron seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected: Ernie Houle, Marco Rodrigues, Michael Bergeron, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Joseph Sawyer, Amber Bock, and Jay Cummings voted unanimously (8-0) to approve the minutes of December 18, 2020.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cathy Cummins started her report with sad news - REACH 2 student from Northborough - Carliycia Figueroa - died unexpectedly on Thursday 1/21/2021. She asked Board members to keep the student's family and all of the REACH 2 community in their thoughts. Board members expressed their condolences and support for the REACH 2 community.

Cathy asked the Board to approve revisions to Non-Discrimination Policy AC and to approve a new Sexual Harrassment/Title IX Policy ACA (waiving a first reading). She noted that Policy ACA addressed Title IX changes and that Policy AC was revised to remove Title IX language from the previously adopted policy. Marco Rodrigues stated that MASC has not yet published recommended Title IX policy. Michael Bergeron noted the likelihood that additional policy changes will be required in the near future if Title IX is amended again with the change from the Trump to the Biden administration. Joseph Sawyer asked that Dr. Cummins ensure that future revisions also include legal counsel on the need to include more specific language around the age of and definitions of "consent."

Ernie Houle motioned to approve the revisions to AVC's Non-Discrimination Policy AC. Amber Bock seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected; Ernie Houle, Marco Rodrigues, Michael Bergeron, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Joseph Sawyer, Amber Bock, and Jay Cummins voted unanimously (8-0) to approve revisions to AVC's Non-Discrimination Policy AC.

Ernie Houle motioned to waive a first reading and approve AVC's Sexual Harassment/Title IX Policy ACA, to be revised following any future changes needed per regulation or legal guidance. Micahel Bergeron seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected; Ernie Houle, Marco Rodrigues, Michael Bergeron, Brian Haas,

Gregory Martineau, Joseph Sawyer, Amber Bock, and Jay Cummins voted unanimously (8-0) to waive a first reading and approve AVC's Sexual Harassment/Title IX Policy ACA, to be revised following any future changes needed per regulation or legal guidance.

Michael Bergeron motioned to accept two individual donations to FSP of \$1,000 in gift cards to be used to support families in AVCs wraparound program. Joseph Sayer seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected; Ernie Houle, Marco Rodrigues, Michael Bergeron, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Joseph Sawyer, Amber Bock, and Jay Cummins voted unanimously (8-0) to accept two individual donations to FSP of \$1,000 in gift cards to be used to support families in AVCs wraparound program.

Cathy provided an update on filling leadership positions at AVC. Cyrus Alexander joined the team as AVC's new Director of Educational Technology on January 4, 2021. She noted that AVC has contracted with a mentor and that he has been connected to MOEC's technology leaders as well.

AVC received over 50 applications for Finance Director; a team of three screened applications, interviewed seven candidates, and recommended two candidates for a second round virtual site visit the week of 1/19-1/22. The hiring team will debrief after the site visits to make a recommendation for next steps. In the meantime, AVC has contracted with TMS for project management of a renovation project, FY21 Budget review/reporting, and the development of FY22 budget. She will provide additional updates via email and at the February Board meeting. She noted that the Facilities Director posting has yielded over 150 applications so far. The team has not yet conducted first round interviews as they had decided to address the Finance Director vacancy first which would influence how the team would fill the Facilities Director position due to the interconnectedness of the roles. Joseph Sawyer asked how the recent EdTech hiring process had influenced the process for the Finance Director search; he noted that the team members who joined last month's board meeting had spoken highly of the process. Dr. Cummins noted that many of the templates and processes the team codesigned for the EdTech position had been replicated efficiently with a new team that included some repeat team members as well as new team members which is building more capacity and buy-in across AVC and beyond the traditional "leadership team."

Dr. Cummins updated the Board on her collaboration with AVC's nursing team in preparation for the upcoming vacancy created by the resignation of Kate Maher, Director of Nursing (effective 1/22/2021). She stated Ms. Maher had provided a robust and thorough "transition" document that had been used with the nursing team to begin planning for addressing nurse leadership priorities. The team has decided not to post for a Director of Nursing at this time, but to instead create a new position of "Float Nurse" to bring a full-time nurse onto the team to address coverage needs. The new Float Nurse would rotate to cover nurses if absent and also to cover their nursing duties to free them up to address a variety of new leadership responsibilities that will be shared at this time across the nursing team in response to Ms. Maher's resignation. Dr. Cummins will work with the nursing team to codesign and develop a plan for distributing various responsibilities and determining additional compensation through stipends. In addition, nurses have already been performing additional responsibilities after hours - contract tracing and on-call coverage. AVC will pay nurses retroactively for their after-hours time. She inquired if this additional compensation required Board of Directors approval; Board members present noted that these decisions could be made at the administrative level without a Board vote as long as AVC has practices/protocols in place for providing stipends to staff. Dr. Cummins will provide an update at a subsequent meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S EVALUATION

Chair Jay Cummings presented the Evaluation he had compiled for Cathy Cummins. Chair Cummings stated that he and Vice Chair Amber Bock had been provided with a self-assessment by Cathy, open-response surveys

from and/or conversations with over a dozen AVC colleagues, and input from the other members of the AVC Board of Directors. .

Chair Cummings noted that Cathy had requested a new evaluation process that represented AVC's initial steps toward a shared leadership model. To this end, Cathy invited colleagues representing varied roles, departments, and programs across AVC to review her self assessment and to provide feedback. Chair Cummings presented a Venn Diagram that showed overlapping circles with the words "COVID" "Equity" and "Leadership Model." He stated that each of those circles represented a complex leadership challenge - but taking them up together had required vulnerability and courage.

Chair Cummings noted that Cathy had made some progress on some of her goal areas of 1. Visibility, 2. Professional Development, 3. Infrastructure/Workload and 4. Stakeholder engagement. The area of least progress was visibility - as per Cathy's self reflection and the staff feedback forms.

In Standard 1, strengths were listed as commitment, passion, vision of collaboration, diversity, equity and continual learning. Standard 1 areas for improvement including re-focusing the vision of the collaborative to address the quality of the "smaller picture."

In Standard 2, strengths were listed as responsiveness to needs and inclusion of staff in the new hiring process. Areas of development included fiscal/operational needs of AVC, assessment and clarification of roles, and sharing materials with the Board earlier.

In Standard 3, strengths were listed as positive relationships and family supports. Areas of improvement included increasing family/community activities and sharing examples with the Board.

In Standard 4, strengths were listed as willingness to take on adaptive changes and a model for staff. Areas of improvement included balancing changes in terms of pace and priorities and more frequent updates on the new model to the Board.

Chair Cummings noted that the feedback from a few AVC team members included some very strongly worded concerns about the direction of the collaborative and Cathy's leadership. He noted that this was common and expected in an evaluation process that includes the opportunity for anonymous community feedback. Chair Cummings directed Board members to review the full evaluation report - which summarized in more detail the strengths, areas of improvement and the rationale for the overall rating of "proficient."

Chair Cummings invited discussion from board members. Ernie Houle noted that some of the written feedback submitted by one or two AVC staff members indicated that there was strong disagreement with the vision and direction of the collaborative and complaints about Cathy's leadership focus. Marco Rodrigues stated that AVC's focus on equity had been important to work needed by his district and that AVC had been an important partner in that work. Michael Bergeron noted that the Board of Directors had approved and continues to support Cathy's vision for AVC and the move toward a shared leadership model. He noted that big organizational shifts often result in team members "choosing out." He stated that it would be important for Cathy to address the feedback provided in the evaluation process to prioritize the tangible performance improvements needed and that it will be important for the Board to continue to demonstrate it's support of the vision toward shared leadership and equity. He noted that if there are leadership team members who do not buy into the vision or Cathy's leadership focus of equity - they should choose to leave AVC rather than to stand in opposition to a vision that the Board has voted to support. Vice Chair Bock stated that AVC is trying to do something visionary, innovative, equitable and challenging and that the Board needs to be prepared to support the success of that vision by holding Cathy and the team accountable for buy-in, implementation and follow through. Joseph Sawyer noted that he had been on the Board with Cathy for nearly all of her 14 years as Executive Director and has found her to be a vulnerable and reflective leader who is committed to continuous improvement and learning for herself and AVC. He noted that the Board will be better able to support the

vision with more frequent and concrete updates about the process toward shared leadership and measures of its effectiveness.

Joseph Sawyer motioned to accept the 2020 Evaluation of Executive Director Cathy Cummins as presented by Chair Jay Cummings. Michael Bergeron seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected; Ernie Houle, Marco Rodrigues, Michael Bergeron, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Joseph Sawyer, Amber Bock, and Jay Cummings voted unanimously (8-0) to accept the 2020 Evaluation of Executive Director Cathy Cummins as presented by Chair Jay Cummings.

ADJOURNMENT

Ernie Houle motioned to adjourn. Amber Bock seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected; Ernie Houle, Marco Rodrigues, Michael Bergeron, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Joseph Sawyer, Amber Bock, and Jay Cummings voted unanimously (8-0) to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Cummins
Executive Director