



**Assabet Valley Collaborative Board of Directors Meeting**  
April 30, 2021

Virtually via teleconference  
**Minutes**

**Present:** Michael Bergeron, Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Casey Handfield (9:09), Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, and Jeffrey Zanghi (9:07).

**Also Present:** Cathy Cummins, Nicki Goncalves, Suzanne Pomerleau, Meghan Gerardi and Julie Wamburu.

**Absent:** Amber Bock, Brooke Clenchy, Ernie Houle, and Gregory Myers.

**CALL TO ORDER**

After a Roll Call (Michael Bergeron, Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer) the meeting was called to order at 9:03.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Joseph Sawyer motioned to approve the minutes of March 26, 2021. Michael Bergeron seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected: Michael Bergeron, Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes of March 26, 2021.

Introductions of everyone present were made.

**Nicki Goncalves, TMS Business Management Consultant**

Nicki addressed members with an FY 21 Budget Update. She apologized for not sharing with members sooner but she had a lot of notes and had a lot to review and was still going through a cleanup process. She plans to share with members sooner for the next meeting. The FTE sheets need to be reviewed which is important for a revenue projection. She is also reviewing aging receivables.

Nicki explained MOEC had asked Collaboratives for expenses incurred during COVID for PPE's, Technology, Staff, etc. Smaller grants will be available to help offset expenses that occurred. AVC submitted over \$100,000 in expenses during this time period.

She plans to continue to scrutinize the FY21 budget as she continues to correct errors in coding, and omissions in expenses and revenue lines across cost centers. Some of the projections will change before the next meeting as revenues are collected and expenses are finalized. For example, REACH has a 13K increase than what was originally projected. She stated that Transportation will see a major decrease in revenue projections, approximately 1.5 million through April, as many students were not attending classes every day. At the same time, AVC has encumbered an additional 1.6 million for transportation expenses which will likely decrease significantly as invoices come in for the final months of the school year. She is working with Ina Williams and Cathy Cummins to closely review these final months of transportation. OSA revenue projections are slightly increased compared to what was initially projected. Evolution has one of the largest anticipated decreases, but the down payment for Lord Rd. is one of the main drivers for this deficit. Nicki will have a more accurate update at the May meeting.

Nicki updated members on the status of the FY22 Budget. AVC is looking to increase staff pay as there were no increases last year. She is also looking at the expenses for the Lord Rd. renovations and will have a better

idea at the May meeting. If expenses appear to be in a better position then she will look to increase OPEB for next year. Cathy shared with members how Nicki has been doing a phenomenal job scrutinizing numbers and cleaning up the budget so that AVC will not have to give money back to the districts this year. She added the down payment for the new Evolution site is a 1 year phenomenon. Evolution also has a lot of referrals for next year and expects enrollment to go up. Considering the down payment and the giving back of 200K to the districts, we will likely need to utilize reserve funds at the year end but AVC will still have a healthy reserve leading into next year.

There is a Finance SubCommittee meeting scheduled for May 12th. Mike Bergeron asked to see a staff list and the General Ledger. Nicki will respond to the request for the May meeting.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

AVC's DESE mid-cycle exit interview went very well with no findings! We received a lot of positive feedback from our 2 DESE liaisons. They commented on how dedicated our staff are for students and families. It was a very positive experience.

Cathy shared with members that AVC's return to full in-person learning took place this past Wednesday. All AVC programs had been in-person 4 days per week since February, so the transition to the 5th in-person day was smooth. The major shift will be the loss of weekly agency-wide collaboration time for those positions not directly involved fully in remote services on Wednesdays.

Cathy updated members on the status of leadership positions - Nursing, Satellite Programs, Consultation Services, OSA Principal, and Facilities Director.

The nurse leadership vacancy has not been posted yet; in collaborating directly with nurses this year, a collective decision was made to delay a decision on that position and instead the funding for that position this year was utilized to hire an additional full-time float nurse and to provide increased stipend opportunities for nurses who have stepped up to lead various leadership activities - including Pooled Testing, substitute coverage, policy/guidance development, medication and epi-pen delegation, health data reporting, and liaising with DPH and various networks. A full-time float nurse has been hired and will be joining AVC soon. The nursing team has advocated for a nurse leader role for next year - potentially as a part-time or consultant/coaching role.

Three additional leadership positions will become vacant at the end of this school year as Director of Satellite Programs, Karen Laskey, Director of Consultation Service, Nancy Ahrabi-Nejad, and OSA Principal, Shannon VanderSwaagh, will be leaving their positions at AVC effective June 30. Karen Laskey will be returning in a teaching role for a few months at the beginning of the school year till her long-planned retirement date in November 2021. Various teams across AVC are beginning the work of identifying leadership needs which will lead to the creation of job descriptions, advertisements, and hiring teams for leadership positions to be posted. Cathy will have an update at the next meeting.

Cathy informed the Board that the Hiring Team for Facilities Director had chosen Aldo Tortorelli for the new Director of Facilities position at AVC. She is very excited to welcome Aldo to our community at AVC. She walked through the document that AVC is currently using for the hiring process. The process AVC used to hire the Director of Educational Technology back in November was expanded and refined for this hiring team's process - effectively building capacity for more AVC team members to engage in future recruitment endeavors. AVC received 150 resumes for the Director of Facilities, which Kiesha Lamb and Jennifer Medina reviewed and narrowed down to 18 candidates to bring in for first round interviews. Cathy, Julie Wamburu and Suzanne Pomerleau conducted 1st round interviews over 3 days with 14 candidates who accepted the interview offer, and then they recommended 4 candidates for a 2nd round process which included videos, coffee hours, demos and Q & A. Two finalists were selected by the committee and a robust reference checks process was completed

by Cathy, Julie and Suzanne - which led to the committee's selection of Aldo Tortorelli to join our team. Julie Wamburu, Meghan Gerardi and Suzanne Pomerleau shared reflections of the process. Julie Wamburu shared she was honored to be part of the committee and learned so much from the process. She shared that her learning about AVC's priorities of shared leadership and equity were strengthened by participating in the first round process and listening for candidate's compatibility with our vision of equity and shared leadership. She also noted that she will be working closely with Aldo at OSA for many of the building needs and being part of the process will assist her in supporting Aldo's transition and success. Meghan Gerardi echoed similar sentiments of being part of the process and added that having OSA custodian, Gabriel, as a member of the team was instrumental to a successful process. Suzanne Pomerleau noted that she had been involved in 2nd round process of the Technology hiring team which assisted her in confidence to take a leadership role in the Facilities hiring team. She shared that both processes have deepened her learning related to equity and AVC's efforts towards shared leadership - particularly listening for candidates' responses and how they would add to our AVC's vision. She added that being part of the reference-checking process helped the team better know the candidates and make the best decision for AVC. She noted it was an overall great experience.

Mike Bergeron departed at 9:43 am.

Joseph Sawyer motioned to appoint Aldo Tortorelli as the Director of Facilities. Gregory Martineau seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected: Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Casey Handfield, Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, Jeffrey Zanghi voted (7-0) to appoint Aldo Tortorelli as the Director of Facilities.

Cathy went on to discuss the Evolution relocation to Lord Rd. from Shrewsbury High School. At the last meeting TMS Consultant, Allan Himmelberger, had presented some barriers and obstacles. He had recommended AVC contract with Kaestle-Boos to design the project; a representative from that firm had presented a proposal to AVC that included a code consultation as a precursor to the design process - in effect resulting in a 10-week process prior to putting the project out to bid for general construction. Because of concerns about timeline and lack of other proposals to consider, Cathy paused work with TMS for facilities consultation due to lack of actionable and thorough deliverables after several months had already lapsed. She had hoped that when AVC's new Facilities Director started that the project would be underway and ready to transition to his oversight; instead, Cathy will be reaching out to other collaboratives, AVC's attorney, and a consulting architect to get some information together to support Aldo's leadership of this project as one of his first priorities. Because the renovation of Evolution's space continues to be delayed, there will be a need for contingency plans. She thanked leaders in Shrewsbury and Northborough-Southborough for being willing to provide some spaces for some of our Evolution students if needed. A vacant doctor's office on the second floor may be an option for temporary space - and a team will be looking at the space later this afternoon. A most likely option will be for Evolution to move into AVC's first floor headquarters - using conference rooms until the 2nd floor renovation can be completed. For this last option to be viable there is a need to renovate at least one bathroom on the first floor to be wheelchair accessible. Cathy has contracted with an architect to advise on the most efficient and timely solution for wheelchair accessibility on the first floor. If Evolution moves into the first floor temporarily, it will limit AVC's ability to offer PD and facilities rentals for the first few months - however it is likely the most effective solution. She will have an update at the next meeting.

#### **Extension of W.B. Mason Paper Contract for FY22**

Joseph Sawyer motioned to extend the WB Mason Paper Contract for FY22. Casey Handfield seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected: Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Casey Handfield, Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, Jeffrey Zanghi voted (7-0) to extend the WB Mason paper contract for FY22.

#### **Payment of FY20 Invoices**

Glenn Davis (architecture services for lift project) - \$ 5110.00

Boroughs YMCA (membership May 1, 2020 - April 30, 2021) - \$ 1368.00

Research for Better Teaching (ATSR class) - \$ 2805.00

Gregory Martineau motioned to pay the 3 FY20 Invoices: Glenn Davis, Boroughs YMCA and Research for Better Teaching. Jeff Zanghi seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected: Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Casey Handfield, Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, Jeffrey Zanghi voted (7-0) to pay the 3 FY20 invoices.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Casey Handfield motioned to adjourn. Jeffrey Zanghi seconded the motion. A roll call vote was collected: Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Casey Handfield, Gregory Martineau, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, Jeffrey Zanghi voted (7-0) to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Pomerleau  
Administrative Assistant