



**Assabet Valley Collaborative Board of Directors Meeting**  
November 19, 2021

**VIRTUALLY**  
**Draft Minutes**

**Present:** Michael Bergeron, Amber Bock, Jay Cummings, Kirk Downing (9:38), Brian Haas, Ernie Houle (9:40), Gregory Myers, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, and Jeffrey Zanghi (9:36).

**Also Present:** Cathy Cummins, Nicki Goncalves, Suzanne Pomerleau, Aldo Tortorelli, Ina Williams

**Absent:** Gregory Martineau and Casey Handfield.

**CALLED TO ORDER**

Amber Bock, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mike Bergeron motioned to approve the minutes of October 29, 2021. Jay Cummings seconded the motion. The Board voted (6-0-1) Brian Haas abstained, to approve the minutes of October 29, 2021.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Cathy acknowledged that this month's Board meeting is more like an update meeting. This month's Shared Leadership and AVC Educational Equity update will be provided by Aldo Tortorelli. He will speak to members on the HVAC and mold remediation at OSA as well as give an update on the renovation status for the 2nd floor Lord Rd. suites.

Cathy provided members with links for their School Committee updates. Although the Board usually receives an October update, Cathy wanted to provide an update on the Transportation Contract, a link for this is shared if School Committee members are interested. She also shared a link with highlights and priorities for FY22. She advised members they can make a copy and submit as is or they may place it in their own document. Amber Bock thanked Cathy for these updates and will share with her School Committee at their next meeting.

Cathy informed members that at Shrewsbury's School Committee meeting held this past week, they publicly announced that they will be opening their own 18-22 year old program. It will start with students that will graduate in 2022. She expressed her gratitude to Joe Sawyer and Meg Bartlett giving her a heads up prior to the public meeting. Joe Sawyer appreciated Cathy mentioning it to the Board, and wanted to add that the district had been pleased with Evolution and that this decision was not a reflection of any concerns about the program.

Cathy provided program updates; across AVC (consistent with schools everywhere) staffing shortages related to unfilled positions and COVID-related absences continue to present challenges. AVC has managed shortages by sharing staff across departments/locations and through contracting with external agencies for temporary staffing. Originally temporary contracts through various agencies were in place through November; they have been extended through March. With the news about SPS starting their own transition program in 2022, AVC will be monitoring potential impacts on enrollment to consider if all current vacancies should be filled long-term or if some adjustments in deploying existing personnel may be needed. She also noted that OSA continues to have significant facilities needs. Cathy noted that FSP and Consultation Services caseloads are full and that she has received requests for services from districts (BCBA, OT, PT, SLP, etc) for services that

AVC does not currently have the capacity to address. AVC has not yet resumed providing in-person PD due to space limitations while we await the 2nd floor renovation completion; however, AVC has some capacity for district-based or virtual PD in Cultural Proficiency/Educational Equity.

Cathy updated the Board on the status of the Van Pool contract. She thanked Jenn Medina and Ina Williams for the volume of work and expertise they contributed to finalize FY21 reconciliation. Van Pool will refund AVC \$167.5K to rectify FY21 billing disputes and an additional \$185K to rectify FY21 contract disputes. This final FY21 reconciliation has been shared with AVC's auditor to include in the final FY21 Audit report. With FY21 reconciliation finalized, AVC and Van Pool have now reached agreement on a contract renewal. Van Pool agreed to terms the AVC Board had authorized Cathy to negotiate/execute at the last Board meeting. Cathy shared a link to the fully executed 3-year agreement and noted that she had also shared this with Business Managers at their meeting this week. Cathy highlighted the final language agreed upon related to penalties to Van Pool for lack of improvement in ongoing areas of concern - including billing accuracy, background checks, communication, and driver/monitor performance. She noted that per the new contract, monthly meetings will be scheduled between AVC and Van Pool. Mike Bergeron stated that he was happy to see we have a normalized, predictable cost for the next couple of years, so districts can accurately predict.

### **FINANCE/ACCOUNTING and HIRING UPDATE**

Cathy provided an update on the hiring process for the open Accounting/Finance Manager position. She noted that first round interviews are still underway with two additional interviews this afternoon. The second round site visit will be December 1st which is an early release day. Cathy is looking for AVC district engagement from superintendents and/or business managers who she will invite to join the site visit and/or to provide feedback on application materials or the 2nd round questions/demo assignment for finalists. Cathy hopes to have a candidate to recommend to the Board for appointment at the next meeting.

### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Nicki Goncalves informed members that the FY21 audit has wrapped up, and will be presented at the next Board meeting with additional changes. The Audit Update memo submitted to the Board in September has been updated to reflect the terms of the FY21 reconciliation with Van Pool. Nicki reported AVC was also awarded \$96K in FY21 ESSER funds for COVID related expenses - thanks to advocacy from MOEC.

Nicki presented the FY22 Budget Update. She noted that AVC's contracts agencies for temporary staff have been more costly than our budget for those positions. She also reported that AVC recently learned of eligibility for 437 Grant funds - she is in the process of applying for \$230K.

Nicki shared that the Evolution renovation cost estimates are high which Aldo will update shortly. She also stressed that at the December 17th meeting, it is imperative to have a quorum as the FY21 audit will need to be approved.

Nicki shared FY22 budget report which included an income statement, warrant report, aging invoice report, revenue report, and expense report. She noted that AVC's budget structure still does not adequately display some AVC-wide expenses - like facilities and technology which are split up among the various cost centers. She is reviewing PO's with Ina to ensure expenses are accurately recorded. Some improvements to the chart of accounts should allow for an improved and more transparent budget process. As of 11/17 AVC took in revenue for about 1.6 million dollars. She continues to update FY 22 budget. In next month's meeting, Nicki will include enrollment projections. The invoice aging report by account is changed to by customer/district, which is still outstanding. Boston Public Schools owes a considerable amount of money to us. Mike asked if we encumber salaries, and Nicki said salaries are encumbered for the year. Amber likes the new outlook for the aging, as it is easier to find what districts owe. Nicki is also working to begin the FY23 budget process so the new finance manager can be set up for success

## **FACILITIES UPDATE**

Aldo Tortorelli addressed members on the status of the HVAC repair and mold remediation at OSA. The HVAC has been repaired and Aldo reached out to a couple of companies and received quotes for the mold remediation. He filed a claim with the insurance company for the damage to the vandalized HVAC unit and for the mold remediation. Partial reimbursement was received. Workers were able to contain the mold and block off the affected area in the basement/kitchen. He will file another claim for the mold. The two projects were working parallel, HVAC and the area for mold was secured and isolated. The mold remediation is complete and tested and OSA is able to use the area again.

The Evolution renovation for the upstairs project at Lord Rd is ongoing as Aldo has been meeting with Architect Glenn Davis who has been going over specs for mechanical, electrical and plumbing. Mike asked what is the timeline after the specs/drafts are finished. Aldo shared that realistically we are looking at fall of next year or later. It will take a couple of months to complete. Aldo would like to finish the project as soon as possible.

Greg Myers expressed his gratitude to AVC for the painstaking work with securing a contract with VanPool as it has been ongoing and a lot of pain. It has not been easy and he greatly appreciates the work involved. It took much longer than hoped but is a more solid contract.

Kirk Downing left the meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mike Bergeron motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jay Cummings seconded the motion. After a roll call (Michael Bergeron, Amber Bock, Jay Cummings, Brian Haas, Ernie Houle, Gregory Myers, Marco Rodrigues, Joseph Sawyer, and Jeffrey Zanghi), the Board voted (9-0) to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Pomerleau  
Administrative Assistant