



Assabet Valley Collaborative Board of Directors Meeting

January 26, 2018

MINUTES

Roll Call/Call to Order

The Assabet Valley Collaborative Board of Directors met on January 26, 2018 at Assabet Valley Collaborative, 28 Lord Road, Marlborough, MA 01752. Robert Gerardi, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

Present: Joseph Sawyer, Chair (9:31am), Robert Gerardi, Vice-Chair, Amber Bock, Brooke Clenchy, Jay Cummings (9:06 am), Maureen Greulich, Christine Johnson, Marco Rodrigues and Jeff Zanghi. **Also Present:** Cathy Cummins, Anne Mahan, Suzanne Pomerleau **Absent:** Ernest Houle, Gregory Myers and Maryellen Brunelle, (non-voting).

Minutes of December 15, 2017

Amber Bock motioned to approve the minutes of December 15, 2017. Christine Johnson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the minutes of December 15, 2017.

Executive Directors Report

Dr. Cummins provided an update on highlights of AVC programs and services. Shannon VanderSwaagh, Director of Therapeutic Programs, will be featured in an upcoming issue of the Community Advocate. Two Evolution students talked to special education leaders at a recent Operating Committee meeting about their experiences and successes at AVC; one student has started paid employment at a business located next door to Evolution and another student will start paid employment and a program at QCC. Both described how Evolution had helped them achieved these goals. AVC HR/Finance Coordinator, Jenn Medina, joined with Evolution staff and students to design and launch a new student-run "Coffee Cart" for Lord Road office park neighbors - starting with an upcoming Open House which will serve to introduce the Coffee Cart and to outreach to businesses at Lord Road about the benefits of partnering with AVC for job training experiences for students. REACH referrals have been increasing and OSA's theater program will expand to include an evening student performance this year. FSP's social workers obtained approval for AVC to offer CEUs for counselors and will be launching a professional development series for counselors that will now include valuable CEUs for MSW and LICSW counselors.

Dr. Cummins also provided updates about professional development and consultation services. She reported that AVC has been responding to several requests for in-district professional development, program evaluations, and requests for facilitation of strategic planning. AVC's new space has been in demand for hosting regional meetings and additional rentals from state agencies and other collaboratives due to its location and room size; 51 events have been held at AVC through hosting or rentals so far this year. AVC had hoped to use the space to offer more professional development, but cuts to districts' PD budgets have been an obstacle to filling seats for PD. She reported that AVC's

newly hired SEI instructor, Therese Carr, has now been trained to deliver the teacher and administrator SEI courses; a teacher course will be offered Wednesday nights at AVC in the spring. She provided an update on the topics and activities of the various job-alike groups that meet monthly through AVC; highlighting the model Instructional Technology Specialists have been using to have tech “challenges” (Goose Chase, Google Keep, Voxer, etc) at the start of each meeting and requesting superintendent assistance in helping these team members obtain the release time needed to attend these meetings.

Dr. Cummins described personnel actions that had taken place in the last two months - including the resignation of AVC’s nursing coordinator and the need to hire staff to cover leaves of absences, increased enrollment, and resignations. She reported that AVC will plan to include the nursing coordinator vacancy in the process of strategic planning and to prioritize adding nursing substitute coverage for the short-term, while giving more time for thoughtful planning when considering how to address the unexpected nursing coordinator vacancy.

Dr. Cummins provided an update and recommendation from AVC’s personnel committee in response to the review of AVC’s Retiree Health Benefits policy. AVC’s Personnel Committee reviewed several hypothetical scenarios about potential costs to AVC if a retiree accessed the benefit for 30 years after 10 years continuous service at AVC with the current 50/50 employer/employee split and if the same employee accessed the benefit for 32 years after 8 years of continuous service at a reduced benefit of 45/55 or 40/60 split (employee pays higher percentage for the benefit duration). Upon review and thoughtful discussion, AVC’s Personnel Committee recommend that AVC’s retiree health benefit policy be changed to keep the current benefit (50/50 employer/employee cost share) for those who retire after 10 years of continuous service at AVC while providing a path for employees to access a lower benefit (40/60 employer/employee cost share) for AVC employees retiring after 8 years of continuous service IF the cost of making this change is evaluated to be neutral or a reduction in AVC’s post employment benefit liability. Anne Mahan, Director of Finance and Operations, will request an actuarial study of this change which will be reported to AVC’s finance subcommittee for review and to AVC’s policy subcommittee for a final recommendation on the policy.

Dr. Cummins concluded her report with a review of AVC’s strategic planning activities and next steps. She shared an outline of new or stabilized services stakeholders envisioned in AVC’s future and engaged the Board in a discussion of the resources and infrastructure needed to execute that vision. She highlighted some barriers to growth that included a mismatch between the “membership map” and the map of “paying customers” which includes a reliance on non-member customers. AVC’s current funding model relies entirely on fees for services provided - transportation, tuitions, and hourly rates for contracted services; she noted that in some cases increases in fees have not kept pace with increases in expenses - for example, Orchard Street Academy and SOAR Assessment Center now include two school psychologists who provide an array of evaluations that were never included in the assessment packages or re-evaluation processes when the foundations for tuitions were set years ago. She also noted that for the school-based programs, in particular, more than 50% of the students are being funded by non member districts at 12%-15% higher rates than members who pay a one-time annual membership fee of \$7500. If a member district sends one student to AVC, the tuition discount offsets the cost of membership. She also noted that the annual membership fees do not come close to covering the costs associated with operating the collaborative’s administration which includes a variety of activities that do not yield “revenue” - such as leadership of job-alikes, cooperative purchasing, statewide and national networking, representation of AVC on task forces and commissions, and various projects. She challenged the board to consider that the future vision AVC stakeholders have for the next generation of the collaborative is not supported by the current funding structure and mechanism. Next steps in the strategic design process will

include “customer persona development,” business model canvases, and goals/action plans for the Board to review and for the finance subcommittee to include in the FY19 budget development process.

Assistant Executive Director of Finance and Operations

Ms. Mahan shared the FY18 year to date budget report. At the last meeting the forecasted surplus was \$68K, and is estimated to increase to \$102,749. This is due in part to an increase in transportation volume and unexpected enrollment in Satellite Programs mid year (REACH ½ and Evolution-Marlborough). We anticipate finishing the year with a positive variance.

Ms. Mahan reviewed the FY19 budget timeline and shared highlights of the various programs. She has been meeting with directors to identify their needs for next year along with anticipated enrollments. We are reaching out to Special Ed Directors to identify needs for next year, and gathering data for salary increases for FY19.

Amber Bock departed at 10:43 am.

Action Items

a) Vote to Approve Personnel Decisions

Amber Bock motioned to accept the Personnel Decisions. Christine Johnson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (9-0) to accept Personnel Decisions.

b) Vote to approve rate for Therese Carr - SEI instructor; \$68.03/hour + \$5,575/Full Teacher Course; \$2,000/Administrator Course

Maureen Greulich motioned to approve rate for Therese Carr - SEI instructor; \$68.03/hour + \$5,575/Full Teacher Course; \$2,000/Administrator Course. Jay Cummings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (8-0) to approve the rate for Therese Carr - SEI instructor; \$68.03/hour + \$5,575/Full Teacher Course; \$2,000/Administrator Course.

c) Vote to discontinue Memorandum of Agreement with ACCEPT Collaborative for reciprocal rates for PD and SOAR for FY18.

Jay Cummings motioned to discontinue Memorandum of Agreement with ACCEPT Collaborative for reciprocal rates for PD and SOAR for FY18. Christine Johnson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (7-0) to discontinue Memorandum of Agreement with ACCEPT Collaborative for reciprocal rates for PD and SOAR for FY18.

d) Vote to approve the payment of FY17 Expenses to Verizon in the amount of \$148.00.

Christine Johnson motioned to approve the payment of FY17 Expenses to Verizon in the amount of \$148.00. Brooke Clenchy seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (8-0) to approve the payment of FY17 Expenses to Verizon in the amount of \$148.00.

Adjournment

Christine Johnson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 am. Brooke Clenchy seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (8-0) to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:46 am.

Respectfully submitted,

**Suzanne Pomerleau,
Administrative Assistant**