

# Charter Institute at Erskine Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2021 | time 11:00 a.m. | Meeting location Via Zoom conference call

**Chair** Dr. Rob Gustafson

**Members in Attendance**

Stu Rodman  
Rev. Tony Foster  
Dr. Tom Hellams  
Martin O'Connor  
Gordon Query  
Mrs. Beth Gustafson (11:25 AM)

**Attendees from Charter Institute at Erskine**

Cameron Runyan (Superintendent/CEO)  
Vamshi Rudrapati (Director)  
Sarah Timmons

Other attendees from the Charter Institute at Erskine included: Mr. John Li, Ms. Haley Perez, Mrs. Christy Junkins, Mrs. Paula Gray, Mrs. Ciera Bing, Ms. Emma Shealy, Ms. Sarah Shealy, Mr. Robbie Anderson, Ms. Ashley Epperson, Mrs. Sonja Bradford, Mrs. Ashley Sturkie, Ms. Kusuma Buddhiraju, and Mr. Jason Jones.

Dr. Gustafson called the meeting to order at 11:04 AM.

The invocation was delivered by Reverend Foster.

Mrs. Paula Gray called the roll and a quorum was present.

**Adoption of the Agenda for the March 17, 2021, Meeting**

Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the agenda for March 17, 2021, as presented.

Dr. Hellams seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

**Approval of Minutes for 01/20/2021 and 02/03/2021, Meetings**

Dr. Hellams moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021, and February 3, 2021, meetings as presented.

Mr. Rodman seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

**Executive Session for discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements**

No Executive Session was needed.

**Action Items**

South Carolina Virtual Charter School Amendments	Presenter: Christy Junkins
<p>Mrs. Junkins presented the South Carolina Virtual Charter School Amendments and reviewed the requested changes to the bylaws. Mrs. Junkins added that staff recommendation is for approval of the amendments.</p> <p>Mr. Rodman moved to approve the South Carolina Virtual Charter School amendments as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Query and carried unanimously by roll call vote.</p>	

<b>Horse Creek Academy Amendments</b>	<b>Presenter: Christy Junkins</b>
<p>Mrs. Junkins presented the Horse Creek Academy amendments and explained the amendment is to allow the charter to add a 4K program. Mr. Li explained that at this time, Horse Creek Academy does not qualify for state funding for a 4K program.</p> <p>Mrs. Junkins stated that staff recommendation is for approval of the amendments.</p> <p>Rev. Foster moved to approve the Horse Creek Academy amendments as presented. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion.</p> <p>The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.</p>	
<b>Superintendent Evaluation</b>	<b>Presenter: Sarah Timmons</b>
<p>Sarah Timmons, Attorney for the Charter Institute at Erskine, presented this item and discussed the process for the Superintendent Evaluation.</p> <p>Dr. Hellams moved to receive the Superintendent's Self-Evaluation and process and to create a subcommittee to review and present the final review during the April Board meeting. Rev. Foster seconded the motion. The subcommittee will consist of Dr. Gustafson, Mr. O'Connor, and Mr. Rodman.</p> <p>The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.</p>	
<b>2021-2022 Institute Budget (First Reading)</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. John Li</b>
<p>Mr. John Li presented this item with a preliminary report from Mr. Runyan. Mr. Runyan stated that the goals of the budget are to meet the demands of growth and bring salaries to parity with the marketplace. Mr. Li explained the items in the proposed 2021-2022 budget and answered questions.</p> <p>Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the 2021-2022 Budget for First Reading. Mr. Rodman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.</p>	

## Information Items

<b>Financial Report</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. John Li</b>
<p>Mr. Li presented the Statement of Revenues and Balance Sheet reports and the current student enrollment report and reviewed both for the Board. Mr. Li stated that enrollment had a 35% increase in student growth.</p>	
<b>Charter School Funding Research Project</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. Cameron Runyan</b>
<p>Mr. Runyan reported that the Institute has partnered with the SC Public Charter School District and a third-party research group (Palmetto's Promise) to research funding for charter schools in other states and to look at possibilities for future funding in South Carolina. The report should be completed by summer to share with legislators for future funding opportunities.</p>	
<b>Procurement Update</b>	<b>Presenter: Ms. Haley Perez</b>
<p>Ms. Perez presented this item and reported that Title IV funds have been allocated from the State Department of Education for the Institute's schools. An assessment was done to determine what the schools' needs are and it was decided that they need Red Cross training and AED devices. The American Red Cross will provide training at the schools and the Institute will arrange the training schedules to eliminate the need for the schools to individually set them up. Also, AED devices will be purchased for the schools. All funding for these items will come from Title IV federal funds.</p>	

## Public Comments

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No public comments were submitted for this meeting.

## Superintendent's Report

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Mr. Runyan reported on the following:

- Leaders Conference – Since COVID has limited the face-to-face opportunities for meeting with the school leaders this past year, the Institute held a conference to try to bring everyone back together. Mr. Runyan shared a video of the conference and gave a shoutout to Grace Rubenzer and Ashley Epperson, both full-time college students, who essentially put the conference together themselves. Mr. Runyan would like to make this a regional event in the future.
- Funding Gap due to COVID – Mr. Runyan stated that COVID caused a major funding gap for charter schools and he and Mr. Neeley, Superintendent of the SC Public Charter School District, worked together with legislators and the Governor to be sure funding did not run out. On March 16, 2021, the Governor signed a bill to provide \$9,000,000 to charter schools to cover the gap. He added that things are coming together nicely with the two districts now working together.
- Reconnecting with Schools – Mr. Runyan stated that he and Mr. Rudrapati are working hard to reconnect with schools and meet with their leaders and board members. The Institute is trying to get back to a more normal way of working.
- Capacity Meetings – Mr. Runyan reported that capacity meetings are being held with the five applicants for charters and the ones going forward will be brought to the Board in April for hearings.

Mr. Rudrapati stated that he is phasing out into the background and having staff lead the operations pieces of the board meetings and letting them run the show. He will continue to work with staff but let them take the lead and show what they can do for the Institute and Erskine as they move into more leadership positions.

Dr. Gustafson gave kudos to all the staff for what they do and stated that it has been a phenomenal three years.

## Adjournment

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As there was no further business, Dr. Hellams moved for adjournment.

Rev. Foster seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned by acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at 12:18 PM.